On the possibility of Resolute Transcendentalism in the Later Wittgenstein

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Introduction

This dissertation articulates my position on the conflict between the so-called transcendental reading and resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein. As I initially understood these two camps, the former takes the later Wittgenstein to be inheriting from the *Tractatus* a conception of philosophy that aims at some kind of knowledge about the limits of thought. This knowledge is so fundamental that it becomes inexpressible. To communicate "it", philosophy resorts to the gesture made possible by the use of nonsensical expressions. On the other hand, the resolute camp takes the later Wittgenstein to be developing a "therapeutic aim" that is already in his *Tractatus*.[1] This therapeutic aim consists in his endorsement of a philosophy that eschews all theses through the investigation of an expression's context of use. This eschewal of theses applies even to the transcendental insights that are supposedly gestured at by nonsensical expressions. As my discussion will later show, this conflict has led to a dilemma: we are made to choose exclusively between, on the one hand, a reading of the later Wittgenstein that is consistent with his own remarks about a philosophy critical of metaphysics and its attendant theories (i.e., the resolute reading), and, on the other hand, a reading of Wittgenstein that has an intuitive appeal to a reader's need for philosophical insights (i.e., the transcendental reading). I have found this dilemma uncharitable to both camps since there are transcendental readers who do not think of their philosophical insights as metaphysical just as there are resolute readers who do not think of their therapeutic emphasis to be devoid of philosophical insights.

My dissertation attempts to overcome this dilemma. I do so by looking from within the perspective of the resolute reading, specifically from what I consider as a charitable approach to philosophical clarification that puts a premium on the notion of acknowledgment. My dissertation, especially in Part 2, Chapter 2, shows how this notion comes from Stephen Mulhall's (2007) discussion of Stanley Cavell. Drawing mainly from Cavell's polemic against Norman Malcolm's views about the privacy of experience,[2] I discuss how Mulhall presents the idea of acknowledgement by expounding on the kind of imaginative play essential to Wittgenstein's so-called grammatical investigations. In this approach, the philosopher employs a roundabout process of philosophical criticism that does not simply say that an interlocutor's desire for meaning is illusory or wrong. Instead, the philosopher sincerely attempts to

[1] See Conant and Diamond (2004: 64-65).
[2] See "Knowing and Acknowledging" in Cavell's *Must We Mean What We Say* (1976) which I discuss further in 2.2.4.2 (ii).

understand his interlocutor. The philosopher proceeds by engaging his interlocutor in a shared exploration of examples and contexts of use where his desires for meaning might be "articulated". This process of linguistic clarification involves an engaged and laborious dialogue. A philosophical claim is considered illusory only when the process of linguistic clarification is able to articulate an interlocutor's desire for meaning and he sees for himself that those desires are incoherent.

For my part, I develop this notion of acknowledgment more explicitly from Wittgenstein, through his remark in *PI* 116 where he says that his mode of philosophizing involves a way of "bring[ing] our words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use". With this remark as a guide, I have considered the idea of a resolute reading that can conduct a charitable mode of philosophical clarification on the transcendental reading's views about a later Wittgenstein constantly trying to communicate inexpressible philosophical truths. I have called this approach resolute transcendentalism. It consists of attempts to link the idea of limits of language in the later Wittgenstein to the idea of how philosophy involves the task of developing new and creative uses of language to overcome particular struggles for expression. As I see it, those creative uses, and the shared skill that comes with their acquisition, are what we need to be clear on whether a particular case of language use is difficult to express because it is logically basic or if it is simply incoherent.

I develop and present this idea of resolute transcendentalism in various stages. Parts 1 and 2 of this dissertation may be understood as my attempt to clarify the particular context under which this idea of resolute transcendentalism can have application. Part 3 is where I present the idea of Wittgenstein's resolute transcendentalism itself, and part 4 is where I illustrate how the idea might be applied on the issue of what Wittgenstein's philosophy implies to political thought. Let me give further details on what I discuss for those chapters.

Part 1 is entitled "Lear and the idea of transcendental later Wittgenstein". It involves my discussion of the idea of a transcendental reading of Wittgenstein's later philosophy in a way that is oriented towards the reading of Johnathan Lear. It includes a background discussion on Erik Stenius and Bernard Williams, both of whom are useful in appreciating the significance of Lear's transcendental reading. Lear's reading is focused mainly on the later Wittgenstein, but I believe it should be appreciated against the background of a perceived continuity between Wittgenstein's early and later work (i.e., the *Tractatus* and *Investigations).* This continuity, as I discuss it, lies in Wittgenstein's persistent emphasis on a conception of philosophy that aims to clarify the limits of thought; and hence, also to a kind of substantial nonsense that gestures at those limits. Stenius (1960) becomes a useful background figure in understanding the idea of

a transcendental reading of the *Tractatus,* while Williams (1974) becomes important in understanding the idea of a transcendental reading of the *Investigations*. Taken together Stenius and Williams provides a more or less holistic background under which Lear's transcendental reading might be understood.

Part 1, Section 1.1 on "Stenius' Transcendental Reading", is instructive because of its discussion of the Kantian significance of Wittgenstein's concern for nonsense. Drawing mainly from the *Tractatus*, Stenius (1960) says that Wittgenstein's interest in nonsense counts as a progress over Kant: Wittgenstein shows his greater awareness of how analysis of claims about the limits of thought end with some kind of nonsense (and not with some kind of *synthetic a priori* proposition as Kant had thought). I explain this by giving attention to Wittgenstein's puzzling remarks on how the law of causality cannot be expressed by plain affirmative statements such as "there are laws of nature" (*TLP* 6.36) or by remarks on how we cannot describe "whatever it is that the law of causality excludes" (*TLP* 6.31). I point out that for Stenius (1960: 216), these passages are Wittgenstein's "transcendental deductions". They are nonsensical remarks which aim to "show" the limits of our thought. Aiming at this kind of nonsense is important because it is the means through which Wittgenstein is able to clarify the limits of thought that "cannot be expressed by means of sentences" (ibid.: 219). Thus, we can say that Stenius takes Wittgenstein to be using a nonsense that is of a substantial or non-empty kind. My discussion of Wittgenstein's supposed use of a substantial conception of nonsense in this section can later be seen as operative in Lear. In the later sections, I present Lear as reader who situates this nonsense in terms of Wittgenstein's conflicted aim: i.e., of constantly wanting to express transcendental insights while at the same time not finding a language that is suitable for their proper expression. This involvement with nonsense of a substantial kind is an important point of emphasis. It will be the reason for why my later discussion in Parts 2 and 3 shall take Lear to be in conflict with Mulhall whom I present as a reader who takes Wittgenstein to be endorsing *only* a conception of nonsense that is of the "austere" or empty kind.

Part 1, Section 1.2 on "Williams' transcendental reading", on the other hand, is a section that I have found not just useful but necessary for understanding Lear. This is because Lear's transcendental reading draws and develops many of his fundamental ideas from Williams (1974). In this section, I emphasize Williams' views on 1) the problem of transcendental philosophizing in Wittgenstein, and 2) Wittgenstein's concern for a philosophy that seeks insights about ourselves as Kantian metaphysical subjects. Williams says that this metaphysical subject is a "Transcendental 'I'" in the *Tractatus*; the non-empirical and non-psychological self that philosophy seeks knowledge of (ibid.: 82, see also *TLP* 5.631-33, 5.641). While in the

Investigations, he says that this metaphysical subject becomes a "Transcendental 'We'" because of the plural form of the agency found in the more social conception of language that comes with Wittgenstein's later thought (Williams ibid.: 79). In both cases, Williams emphasizes the point that the metaphysical subject is *inexpressible* and that this is the reason why Wittgenstein attempted to talk about "it" by means of nonsense.[3] It is in this context that I discuss Williams' attention to *TLP* 5.62 where Wittgenstein writes "[W]hat the solipsist *means* is quite correct; only it cannot be *said* but makes itself **manifest**" (as cited in Williams 1974: 76, emphasis added). In relation to the *Tractatus*, I point out how this so-called "manifesting" can be seen in the paradoxical manner through which Wittgenstein refers to the "thinking subject". It is something that is not found in the world ("there is no such thing", *TLP* 5.631), and yet its absence is something significant (the thinking subject does not exist "in an important sense", ibid.). Thus, we can say that Williams takes Wittgenstein to imply that we come to know about the thinking subject through its "important absence". I take it that this "important absence" is the means through which Wittgenstein employs a conception of showing that becomes useful in communicating transcendental insights.

In relation to the *Investigations*, I point out how this "showing" can be seen in the uninformative manner through which Wittgenstein discusses what it means to follow a rule. To clarify Wittgenstein's answer to this question, I refer to *PI* 201 where Wittgenstein responds in a tone of redundance, "there is way of grasping a rule which is *not* an *interpretation*, but which is exhibited in what we call 'obeying the rule' and 'going against it' in actual cases". From the perspective of Williams, this type of redundance (or nonsense) is philosophically significant: it evokes knowledge so fundamental that it brings us to a direct experience of the limits of our language and thought. So, in both his early and later philosophy, Williams takes Wittgenstein to be interested in how nonsensical expressions might enable his reader to become aware of the limits of language and thought. And it is through awareness of these limits that he also comes to have knowledge of himself as a Kantian metaphysical subject.

An important aspect of my discussion of Williams is my portrayal of how his view of Wittgenstein's use of nonsense differs from that of Stenius. In the case of Williams, the gesturing made possible by Wittgenstein's nonsensical remarks refers to a metaphysical subject that is ultimately incapable of being described by language. To use Wittgenstein's metaphor in

[3] It is because of this inexpressibility that Williams puts the "I" and the "We" in scare quotes (e..g. Transcendental "I", and Transcendental "We"). This emphasis is something that Lear (1984) also adopts as he later refers to the "Transcendental 'We'" as the "Disappearing 'We'". To also highlight this inexpressibility, I adopt a similar convention of putting scare quotes when referring to the metaphysical subject.

TLP 5.633, I take Williams to say that the metaphysical subject cannot be described in the same way that the eye cannot see itself. Similar to how we can be aware of our eyesight only during cases when we are unable to see, we can only be aware of our knowing mind during cases when we find ourselves in a state of complete loss for understanding. And this is what happens when a reader encounters the nonsense that Wittgenstein attempts to evoke. So, for Williams, Wittgenstein's appeal to nonsensical expressions aims to make us understand that knowledge of ourselves as metaphysical subjects is impossible to express. Nonsense is meant to give us a sense of that impossibility by giving us direct awareness of the limits of our language. This view is in contrast with how Stenius conceives of Wittgenstein's use of nonsense as a gesture towards a transcendental idea that language *can* also describe. Stenius takes the nonsensical remarks in Wittgenstein to be also a part of how language works. By functioning as a non-conventional use of language, they help us clarify ideas that are difficult to express. Williams, on the other hand, does not treat nonsense this way; he presents Wittgenstein's use of nonsensical remarks to be aimed at conveying something that is beyond what language can hope to express. It is in this sense of *impossibility* of description that we can find Williams to be portraying Wittgenstein's appeal to nonsense as something that is more misleading rather than illuminating. For Williams, Wittgenstein ultimately depicts language in a negative manner. Nonsense points to a limit of language or to what language cannot do. Language cannot express ideas about the metaphysical subject even as it is what a philosopher persistently strives to express. This problematic character of language in relation to the aim of philosophy becomes the starting point of my discussion of Lear.

Part 1 culminates in section 1.3 through my discussion of Lear's transcendental later Wittgenstein and it focuses particularly on his "Transcendental Anthropology" (TA, 1989). In this section, I present Lear's transcendental reading in terms of how he responds to what was earlier raised by Williams as the problem of communicating inexpressible truths about the metaphysical subject. Lear now associates this metaphysical subject with the non-representational nature of the kind of "mindedness" that Wittgenstein aimed to convey through his idea of "form of life". That section is rather complicated because of how I present Lear's reading as a kind of development of the transcendental ideas that were earlier hinted at by Williams. To put it simply, I have discussed Lear's transcendental reading to be drawing mainly from how Wittgenstein attempted to "make meaning responsible to 'use'" by requiring a mode of philosophizing that speaks "the language of everyday".[4] This responsibility to "use" is what

[4] See *PI* 120 as it is used in Lear (1986: 279).

guided Lear to present Wittgenstein as a philosopher who employs a dialectical approach in the aim of clarifying ideas about the plural form of our non-empirical selves as metaphysical subjects. This is an idea which he now calls "our mindedness". In this dialectical approach, the use of nonsense in the later Wittgenstein is what induces philosophers to go outside their more established forms of conceptual inquiry. Lear (1989) says that what makes an inquiry philosophical is its involvement with insights about our mindedness. Thus, philosophers should be open to considering how more empirical studies like anthropology and sociology might involve modes of reflection that of deep philosophical significance. Like philosophy, those fields of study may end up engaging in modes of thought that involve insights about our knowing mind. From the perspective of Lear's so-called "transcendental anthropology", philosophical inquiry has become limited to a self-contained debate about its own concepts (e.g., sense-data and physical objects). But Lear takes Wittgenstein to be aiming to say that there is a coherent whole we can discern when we reflect on the mutual interaction between the empirical and non-empirical aspects of understanding a concept, and this interaction is found abundantly in Wittgenstein's discussion of following a rule. Likewise, Lear says there can be mutually beneficial relationships between the empirical sciences and philosophy in so far as ordinary empirical inquiry might also inform our more normative concepts in philosophy. The clarification made possible by this dialectical interaction overcomes the tone of inexpressibility and impossibility in understanding that is found in Williams.

It is in this context that I point out the achievement of Lear's transcendental reading. I explain that Lear's TA can be understood as advancing a reading similar to that of the "showing" found in Stenius; the manner by which Wittgenstein uses nonsense as a means for gesturing at transcendental insights is also something that can be located within the activity of striving for clear language use. In the case of Lear, there is an emphasis on how this appeal to nonsense involves a natural dialectic found in the everyday use of language. That dialectic functions as a kind of *via-negativa* approach which clarifies insights about our own mindedness without turning the non-representational character of those insights into something that is completely impossible to understand. I have called this *via-negativa* approach "transcendental negation" in relation to how it clarifies non-empirical insights about the limits of our thought by means of some form of negation. I point out that such a negation becomes a kind of transcendental gesture. Rather than lead to a skeptical claim or another empirical proposition, it leads to a kind of nonsense which enables the philosopher to clarify, by means of gesture, the nonrepresentational character of "our-mindedness".

Part 2 is about the resolute reading of Wittgenstein and it consists of two chapters. The first chapter is entitled "Is Mulhall's resolute later Wittgenstein plausible?" and the second chapter is entitled "Mulhall's resolute later Wittgenstein". The first chapter gives a background of Mulhall's resolute reading of Wittgenstein in *Wittgenstein and Private Language* (*WPL*, 2007), especially in the context of criticisms on how he was unclear and misguided in his idea of a resolute later Wittgenstein. The second chapter, on the other hand, is my own liberal exposition of Mulhall's idea of a resolute later Wittgenstein based on his own hints about the ways in which he was influenced by James Conant and Stanley Cavell.

Part 2, Chapter 1 is essentially a background of Mulhall's resolute reading in the context of the review made by Conant and Bronzo (2017), specifically in relation to the change of meaning involved in Mulhall's idea of a resolute later Wittgenstein in *WPL*. I argue that Mulhall's project of a resolute later Wittgenstein is in fact justified and worth pursuing. Despite his lack of clarity in presenting the idea of a resolute later Wittgenstein, I argue that Mulhall is indeed right: there might be an austere conception of nonsense found in the *Tractatus* just as there might also be an "austere conception of nonsense" that can be found in the *Investigations*. Drawing from Conant and Bronzo's emphasis on the logically posteriori character of the resolute reading of the *Tractatus,* I explain that there might also be a resolute reading of the *Investigations* that has a "logically posterior" character. This logically posterior character now relates to the kind of illusion that his later work is able to embody and overcome. I then point out that Mulhall may in fact be justified in clarifying a resolute philosophical method that is somewhat continuous between the *Tractatus* and *Investigations*. I discuss how this analogous resolute philosophical method in the later Wittgenstein can be clarified in terms of the parallel between Conant's and Diamond's reading of *TLP* 6.54 and Mulhall's reading of *PI* 374 and *PI 500.* In both cases, I point that that Wittgenstein refers to a conception of nonsense that is austere and that this austere conception is connected with a philosophical method that overcomes "psychologism".

This idea of psychologism is central. I have found it a necessary concept for understanding the resolute reading because of how it characterizes the object of criticism that the resolute reading pervasively contends with. Throughout my discussion in this chapter (and even in the succeeding chapters) I clarify the idea of psychologism by drawing from Conant. Conant (2001b: 34) takes Wittgenstein as someone who maintains a critical stance against psychologism which he broadly refers to in terms of any conception of meaning or philosophical insight that is understood outside our investigations of their use in ordinary language. I associate this notion of psychologism with what Wittgenstein refers to in *PI* 117 as

our tendency to think of meaning (and understanding) as if it were "an atmosphere accompanying the word, [which it carries] into its every application" (*PI* 117). In that remark, Wittgenstein says that conceptions of such kind are misleading because they impede our investigation of the actual use of language: i.e., they inhibit us to ask questions about "the special circumstances in which this sentence [i.e., the sentence we think we understand] is actually used".

In this context, I present the idea of psychologism in relation to philosophy's supposed interest in analyzing nonsensical sentences that have an intelligible but inexpressible content. Despite their being nonsensical, these sentences are thought to have a "meaning" that ordinary language is unable to clarify. They function as hints that help us access knowledge about the inexpressible limits of our language and thought. From the perspective of the resolute reading, this hinting is confused. It functions as a kind of justification for the illusion that "meanings" are entities that exist in our mind subsisting independently of our ability to communicate them clearly to others. With this idea of psychologism as the main target of criticism, I point out that the idea of a "logically posterior character" may also be used to describe the therapeutic nature of the "resolute philosophical method" Wittgenstein was bent on criticizing. In both *TLP* and *PI*, Wittgenstein employed a philosophical procedure that takes form only as a kind of response to the psychologism and particular illusion of meaning that it intends to overcome and dissolve.

My Part 2, Chapter 2 is essentially a continued clarification of what this "resolute philosophical method" is on the part of Mulhall's *WPL*. I point out that this resolute method is the firm application of the context principle in clarifying language and dissolving philosophical theories. This philosophical method in the *Investigations* becomes unique because of how it involves a writing style whose uninsistent tone becomes more conducive to the imaginative activity that comes with Wittgenstein's way of clarifying an expression's context of use. My discussion of this resolute philosophical method is developed by making a connection between Mulhall's actual exegesis of Wittgenstein's remarks on private language in *WPL* and his acknowledgment of the influence of Conant and Cavell in his introduction. I already make preliminary claims on this point in the previous chapter, but this chapter now pursues those links in more detail.

Simply put, my discussion in Part 2, Chapter 2 explores the link between what Mulhall describes as 1) Cavell's emphasis on the literary dimension of the *Investigations* and 2) Conant's Tractarian method of "exploding an illusion from within".[5] Both ideas involve

[5] I coin this label to refer to Conant (2002:424, endnote 132) as he describes Wittgenstein's 1931 remark in *Manuscript 110* as a philosophical procedure where "the illusion of sense is exploded from within".

reference to how Wittgenstein was firm in using the imaginative activity that comes with our shared investigation of an expression's context of use in ordinary language. That imaginative activity aims to give some form of expression to the illusions of an interlocutor so he can become clear, and also have a say, about the emptiness of his philosophical claims (e.g., the idea of a private language). I have found this approach similar to what Wittgenstein's seems to suggest in *PI* 52 on cases where one faces the task of having to persuade someone who believes that "a mouse has come into being by spontaneous generation out of grey rags and dust". To convince someone that such a belief is illusory, one should inspect every grey rag available and observe if the dust under it turns into a mouse. Likewise, I take Mulhall to say that for a philosopher to convince an interlocutor about the illusory nature of what he means by the idea of a private language, the philosopher must help the interlocutor investigate "grey rags" through an examination of the various examples of language use where that idea might be "articulated". Once the interlocutor feels that examples relevant to the idea of a private language have been exhausted, he might then also acknowledge that the idea is nothing but a fantasy. In this kind of investigation, he might realize that there is no such thing as the idea of private language just as there is no phenomena like the spontaneous generation of mouse under grey rags.

Let me now be more specific about my discussion of this resolute method of philosophical clarification by mentioning details of my discussion of the influence of Conant on Mulhall. I have taken Mulhall to be continuing Conant's (2004) reading of *PI* 500; that is, he takes Wittgenstein to be eschewing a nonsense that is at the same time intelligible by means of the firm application of the context principle. By taking cues from Conant's reading of *PI* 500, I have depicted Mulhall to be pursuing the view that Wittgenstein undermines the psychologism in the idea of "intelligible nonsense" associated with the so-called substantial readings of Wittgenstein's later philosophy. One of the ways in which this psychologism becomes manifested in the *Investigations* is through how the idea of a private language becomes linked with the idea of a limit of language. This "limit of language" is capable of being understood but it is something that cannot be expressed propositionally. The idea of a private language then becomes nonsensical in a substantial manner because it contains a content about the limits of thought that we can understand but not express. This idea of a limit is the "intelligible nonsense" we understand in a philosophical nonsense, and it is what Mulhall takes *PI* 500 to be explicitly warning against. Mulhall's mention of *PI* 374 now becomes useful in the context of undermining this psychologism and in eschewing the substantial conception of nonsense that comes with its view of the idea of a private language. The remark in *PI* 374 points out that the "yielding" to a temptation (e.g., of the idea of a private language) becomes

significantly similar to what Conant has described in "The Method of the *Tractatus"* (TMTT, 2002) as a method of exploding an illusion from within: it is a way of taking an interlocutors' illusion to be something that is "as good as money", and then of showing that such an illusion has no value in the actual transactions of everyday language. In explaining this method, I give significant attention to what Mulhall (2007: 3) mentions in his introduction as "the point of view of logic" endorsed by Wittgenstein. I discuss this idea in terms of the so-called "logical perspective" taken by philosophical elucidation and to what Conant (2002: 382) describes as the context principle that Wittgenstein "refashioned" from Frege.

For Conant (ibid.), Frege is someone who dithers in his view that one can only ask for the meaning of a sign in the context of its significant use in a proposition. In light of this, I point out how Conant takes Frege as someone who was not able to free himself from psychologism. This is because Frege has a conception of logical analysis that appeals to a "meaning" that is incapable of being described by means of language; and hence, to a conception of logical analysis that involves an appeal to a limit of language. I present Conant, and hence also Mulhall, to be taking Wittgenstein as someone who gives greater emphasis to the role of elucidation in philosophical clarification so that this idea of a limit of language can be overcome. The idea of elucidation is in fact a corollary the application of the context principle in so far as it refers to an indirect and "socially cooperative" way through which philosophy deals with the clarification of "logically primitive" concepts. Similar to my discussion of the transcendental reading of Wittgenstein in Part 1, we can find that Conant takes the idea of elucidation to be also employing intentional forms of nonsense to hint at uses of language that are logically basic. One of the ways in which I clarity this point is by drawing from Conant's discussion (2002: 403) of the example Wittgenstein used in *TLP* 3.323 "Green is green". The vagueness in that expression may be used as a form of intentional nonsense that a philosopher exploits to initiate a dialogue with his interlocutor on the possible meanings of the expression. That dialogue involves attempts to clarify the expression by connecting it to uses of language that can function as a context under which the expression can be understood as having a clear mode of signification. In this particular case, the expression "Green is green" might be connected with an assertion about identity that is expressed by the proposition "The color green is identical to the color green", or it may mean a kind of description on how an individual is regarded as having a particular color as expressed by the proposition "Mr. Green is green." [6] Conant (ibid.: 417) eventually portrays the idea of elucidation in Wittgenstein as helping the user of a language

[6] See more details of this from Conant's discussion in "The method of the *Tractatus*" (2002: 403,417).

to recognize the logical order or *Begriffsschrift* that is already found in our everyday use of language. In this view, an expression becomes nonsensical only when we are unable to connect it to that logical order found in everyday language.

In light of Conant's views, I have taken the idea of elucidation in the later Wittgenstein to be referring to the trial and error process through which a philosopher uses examples to be able to "hint" and clarify a relevant use in language. The clarification of this "use of language" requires an indirect approach. This is because they often relate to "uses of language" that have become so taken for granted by the user that his explanations become redundant and appear as a kind of gesturing. This time the idea of gesturing has a therapeutic function. The idea of gesturing that Mulhall adopts from Conant functions as a critical contrast to the "hinting" or "gesturing" found in the transcendental readers I discussed in Part 1. In the case of Conant and Mulhall, the hinting and gesturing made possible by elucidations do not imply a limit on our language. Since our understanding of these logically basic concepts is made possible by literary and metaphorical uses of language, I take Conant to interpret the use of nonsense and "gesture" in Wittgenstein as a way through which a philosopher overcomes the idea of a limit of language. So, in the context of Mulhall's concern for Wittgenstein's remarks on the idea of a private language, the idea of a limit of language comes to be seen as empty. The idea that there is "something" that language cannot express is undermined by how we are able to show that there are many things in ordinary language which we are able to describe as examples of the idea of a private language. The so-called therapeutic dissolution comes about when the interlocutor finally acknowledges that there is nothing in those examples which corresponds to his philosophical idea of a private language because we have exhausted relevant possibilities through which the idea can be expressed. In this sense, elucidations also help us become clear on how the nonsensical expressions associated with that philosophical idea have no meaning at all. When the signs associated with the idea of a private language are shown as nonsensical, they are no longer taken to convey an ineffable content about the limits of language. From the perspective that is bent on a thorough philosophical elucidation, they simply involve what Conant (ibid.: 404) calls a "failure to symbolize". To paraphrase what Wittgenstein says in *PI* 500, Conant simply reiterates the view that an expression becomes nonsensical only when we have failed to connect them with a context of significant use in ordinary language (not when they refer to something we cannot express).

Now, to go to my discussion of the influence of Cavell on Mulhall. I take Mulhall to be adopting Cavell's emphasis on the literary aspect of Wittgenstein's philosophy through its uninsistent tone and self-critical mode of writing. In Mulhall's *WPL*, this writing style seems

to function as Wittgenstein's way of being able to model the use of the context principle in its dual role of showing a metaphysical illusion to be empty and of bringing those "metaphysical uses" of words back to their everyday use in ordinary language. Here, I put emphasis on Wittgenstein's uninsistent mode of writing in so far as I have taken it to be Mulhall's way of giving attention to how Wittgenstein practices what he preaches. Mulhall takes this idea of "doing what one says" to be coming from Cavell's views about the perfectionist aspect of Wittgenstein's later philosophy. It also clarifies the unique form under which the idea of "style" and "content" of his philosophy becomes closely connected in Wittgenstein's later work. As it is found in the *Investigations,* Wittgenstein's later philosophy involves an uninsistent tone which amplifies the imaginative activity through which the elucidation of our words by means of the context principle can be pursued. It also provides a reflexive example of how that clarification might proceed.

My discussion of Cavell's influence on Mulhall also aims to further articulate my view on how the resolute way of revealing an illusion to be empty can have positive counterpart. Through inspection of various examples of what an idea of private language might mean in ordinary language the interlocutor may not just find his philosophical idea empty, he may also be open to accepting the view that a new and creative use of language *succeeds* in describing what he really means. I find this to be the case, for example, in Mulhall's Cavellian reading of *PI* 258 where the idea of a private language is considered to be a depiction of how Wittgenstein makes a metaphorical description of the experience of a reader who attempts to understand his unconventional mode of writing in the *Investigations*.

Based on this metaphorical description from *PI* 258, the *Investigations* may be understood as somewhat like a diary of Wittgenstein's private philosophical thoughts; it is "the keeping of a limited philosophical journal whose reading by others would be pointless or hopeless 'until the life, or place, of which it was the journal, was successfully, if temporarily, left behind, used up'" (see Mulhall 2007:107 citing Cavell's preface in *The Claim of Reason*). I have put a twist in my reading of this remark by taking Mulhall to be saying that the "innovation" in Wittgenstein's philosophical thoughts makes his philosophical ideas extremely challenging to understand. But just as an anthropologist may arrive at a country and acquire some understanding of the words he initially found strange and foreign, we might also say that a patient reader of Wittgenstein might perform some kind of anthropological investigation on Wittgenstein's uses of words and familiarize himself with his creative insights, say, for example, on the various ways in which his philosophical thoughts are not meant to be understood as a thesis or on the kind of self-understanding we might gain by investigating our

forms of life. Here, we might say that Wittgenstein, through his writing, extends the meaning of certain terms so that he can convey a new and creative insight on how to overcome the particular confusions that come with our metaphysical desires.

In sum, the whole of Parts 1 and 2 present the idea of the transcendental reading and resolute reading by themselves, but they also have the function setting the limit for the synthetic claims I advance in Part 3 on the possibility of resolute transcendentalism in the later Wittgenstein. Part 3, entitled "Between Lear and Mulhall: On the possibility of resolute transcendentalism", is the core of my dissertation. It is the chapter where I present my own view of how to reformulate the debate between the transcendental and resolute reading of Wittgenstein in a way that might become charitable to both camps. My discussion in Parts 1 and 2 are necessary to address the pervasive concern on how claims about the resolute reading and the transcendental reading should be made more specific in light of the subtle differences that are found among the writers that fall within those two camps (i.e., there are many transcendental readings just as there are many resolute readings of Wittgenstein). Given this worry, I limit my evaluation in Part 3 mainly to the transcendental reading of Lear that I have described in Part 1 and the resolute reading of Mulhall that I have described in Part 2.

What I have discovered in Part 3 is that there seems to be a kind of impasse between the transcendental reading of Lear and the resolute reading of Mulhall even in terms of their acknowledgment of the significance of Wittgenstein's writing style. It is not simply the case that Mulhall acknowledges the significance of Wittgenstein's writing style and Lear does not. Lear also acknowledges Wittgenstein's unconventional mode of writing. The difference is that Lear's recognition of Wittgenstein's writing style relates to the acknowledgment of the difficulty of expressing those transcendental insights about the metaphysical subject. Mulhall, on the other hand, may be understood as relating this kind of writing to Wittgenstein's way of acknowledging the difficulty of dissolving philosophical problems. Relative to Mulhall's exhaustive portrayal of the therapeutic aspect of Wittgenstein's later philosophy, I argue that Lear's reading contains substantial theses. Lear claims that the therapeutic insights in the later Wittgenstein is ultimately underdeveloped, and I have found this view inaccurate. But relative to Lear's and Williams' exegetical remarks on how the later Wittgenstein shows interest in the acquisition of knowledge of ourselves as a "thinking subjects", I have found Mulhall's resolute reading lacking; it contains no systematic discussion of Wittgenstein's supposed concern for the Kantian metaphysical subject, and it does not offer a clear guide on how that idea can be shown as illusory.

The solution which I have offered is to recognize that both the transcendental reading and resolute reading acknowledge the difficulty of articulating philosophical insights and that the resolute reading may in fact help the transcendental reading address its concern for articulating the idea of a metaphysical subject in a manner that does not imply a limitation on our language. It is in this latter aspect that I have found myself expressing partiality to the resolute reading. I have found it a clear advantage that its mode of exploding an illusion from within (by means of the context principle) also includes being able to help an interlocutor overcome his struggle for expression. Thus, I have given attention to how the resolute reading becomes heedful of Wittgenstein's remark in the "Big Typescript" (1991: 7) that an "important task [of philosophy] is to express all false thought process so characteristically that the reader says, 'Yes, that's exactly the way I meant it.'". I have taken this remark to be saying the same thing as the resolute philosophical method of exploding an illusion from within or even in what Wittgenstein says in *PI* 128 that "If one tried to advance theses in philosophy … everyone would agree to them."

I have found that my contribution consists in showing how such a resolute method can be seen as systematically applicable to the kind of inarticulate self-understanding that Lear attributes to Wittgenstein's use of the term "form of life". One of the ways in which I do this is to compare Lear's description of the non-representational character of our understanding of form of life to the kind of *reductio ad absurdum* that Wittgenstein applies to the idea of the tip of the tongue experience. I point out that Lear's description of form of life is comparable to how we might often find ourselves to be "just emit[ting] a particular sound" (*PI* 261) when we are at a loss for words in a certain "tip of the tongue experience". Instead of simply answering that there is no tip of the tongue experience, I bring attention to how Wittgenstein employs an imaginative activity that functions as part of the roundabout process of exploding an illusion from within. He asks his readers to imagine, "What it would be like if human beings never found the word that was on the tip of their tongue? (*PI* II, xi). I apply this same polemic to the supposed inability of our language to depict what Lear has described as the philosopher's inexpressible understanding of our "form of life". It will be absurd to say that there is *never* an instance where we found a language use from which to express the idea of form life. Even as Lear (1989:41) considers the idea of form of life as a fundamental philosophical concept that language can only show by its "absence", we might think of Wittgenstein as also transforming the concept of form of life into something that we can express through a creative use of our language. So, in those cases where we find ourselves unable to find a language to express Wittgenstein's idea of form of life, we might take Wittgenstein to say that "the word which

belongs here [to the idea of form of life] has escaped me, but I hope to find it soon" (ibid.). In this view, the idea of "showing" in relation to understanding our form of life simply becomes connected with the development of our practical competence for linguistic expression in everyday language.

I conclude my discussion of Part 3 by using the voice of McDowell (1992) as a point of contrast to Lear's understanding of the term form of life. I highlight McDowell's point that Wittgenstein's claims about the givenness of our form of life is not really meant "to adumbrate a philosophical response" but "to remind us that the natural phenomena that is normal human life is itself already shaped by meaning and understanding" (ibid.: 50-51). I take this remark to criticize how Lear's conception of form of life have unwittingly become a "philosophical response" that brings that idea outside their context of significant use in everyday language. I portray McDowell as also taking Wittgenstein to be a resolute transcendentalist in his firmness on conceiving of Wittgenstein's idea of form of life merely as a "reminder" on how we can make use of concepts of "meaning" and "understanding" as a part of everyday language.

The final chapter of my dissertation is entitled *"*Resolute Transcendentalism on the issue of Wittgensteinian political thought, Crary vs Nyíri". This chapter can be understood as a form of "resolute transcendentalism in action". It brings insights from the discussion of resolute transcendentalism in Part 3 into a charitable approach to analyzing the perspectives involved in the debate between Alice Crary (2000) and JC Nyíri (1982). This debate involves a conflict on whether to interpret the implications of Wittgenstein's later philosophy as supporting a liberalism of the kind that Crary describes or whether it implies "political conservatism" of the kind that Nyíri endorses. My conclusion in this chapter is that there is a kind of unexpected agreement between Crary and Nyíri on the importance of a gradualist approach to the implementation of normative concepts in politics. Both writers take Wittgenstein's later philosophy to be implying a way of overcoming failures of understanding brought about by the dogmatic imposition of concepts in the midst of social and political change.

My discussion makes many concessions to Crary's resolute reading of Wittgenstein; like, for example, the cogency of her claims regarding Wittgenstein's way of attending to use and on how that way of attending to use should not be understood as another philosophical view on fixing the limits of sense. I point out how her description of a later Wittgenstein critical of an external perspective on language becomes a correlate to what Mulhall and Conant describes as Wittgenstein's resoluteness in using the context principle to eschew philosophical theses (which are usually forms of "intelligible nonsense"). However, I reconsider her claims on how Nyíri endorses a notion of form of life that fixes the limits of sense. I do this by re-examining

Nyíri's remarks on what he considers to be the nature of Wittgenstein's neo-conservative solution to the problem of rule following. I point out that his claims about the "inexorability" of practices and forms of life should also be understood in light of their neo-conservative character. Those claims should also be considered in relation to a conservative mode of thinking that is "averse to theory" and that turns itself into a theory *only* as a response to criticism from abstract theories, like those which give an unlimited power to reason in affecting change (Nyíri 1982:47).

In this context, I consider the possibility that Nyíri's claims about the inexorability of our forms of life may in fact be taken as his way of describing the natural difficulty in understanding that we often encounter in the face of radical change or in our transactions with people having different uses of language. This reconstrual may be applied, for example, to Nyíri's use of Wittgenstein's remark, "What would a society be like that never played many of our customary language games" (*Zettel* 372, as cited in Nyíri: 60). That remark does not have a univocal connection with what Crary describes in Nyíri as a view of custom that fixes the limits of sense. On the contrary, I suggest that such claims have a stronger link with Nyíri's view of a Wittgenstein who believes that "all knowledge is fundamentally practical knowledge" (ibid.: 63). I point out that Nyíri's attention to Wittgenstein's emphasis on "practical knowledge" becomes compatible with Crary's claims on how Wittgenstein eschewed an external perspective on language. Crary's views on how Wittgenstein urged a way of being open to developing sensitivities that constitute what counts as the correct understanding of our concepts fares well with Nyíri's emphasis on the holistic nature of practical competence in language.

I have found my conclusion in this chapter to be both surprising and trite. At the outset, I have found the idea of liberalism and conservatism to be opposites so there was a sense in which I was not expecting Crary's support for liberalism to be compatible with that of Nyíri. But the course of my reading and writing has led to ample indications which support the view that these authors use those concepts in somewhat new and unconventional ways. Crary's liberalism takes the investigations of context of use (or the eschewal of an external perspective on language in Wittgenstein) to imply a certain kind of openness to being influenced and informed by our experience in a particular linguistic exchange. In such an experience, our mode of judgment also becomes more astute and skillful in recognizing and overcoming failures of language use. Nyíri, on the other hand, does not take Wittgenstein to support political conservatism per se. Rather, he takes Wittgenstein to be pointing to the importance of recognizing shared starting points under which they can come to agree and disagree. In fact,

there are indications that Nyíri portrays Wittgenstein's notion of form of life to also function as a kind of criticism of how writers like Ernest Gellner take the phenomenon of linguistic understanding as similar to how we are always trapped by the "conceptual cocoon" of our own cultural practices.[7] As I have understood it, Nyíri's depiction of the idea of form of life also refers to a practical competence that changes along with the particular needs and circumstances of people in a discourse. And though he is not a resolute reader himself, we can find his short descriptions of form of life as also connected with Crary's emphasis on the kind of natural projection in meaning that can be discerned in our investigations of an expression's context of use.

To my dismay, I have found that my insights on this debate are trite. I was unable to make any grand claims about how to change or influence world politics. The most that I was able say was the usual claim that Wittgenstein's later philosophy involves an emphasis on clarity in language that is critical of the dogmatic imposition of concepts (from politics or otherwise). However, I realize that the various routes under which Wittgenstein conveys this insight shows the depth under which he took the idea of non-dogmatism in language very seriously.

Now, as I reflect generally upon the whole of my dissertation, I realize that the resolute reading continues to be a misunderstood reading of Wittgenstein. This continued misinterpretation occurs because of what Conant and Bronzo (2017) describe as its essentially parasitic or "logically posterior" relationship with the illusions of a substantial reader of Wittgenstein. But if I may describe the resolute reading in a more positive manner relative to its supposed tension with the transcendental reading, I believe that the resolute reading has shown emphasis on a way by which Wittgenstein even in his later philosophy adopts the view that "Everything that can be said can be said clearly" (*TLP* 4.116). I merely point out my support for various writers who say that this clarity can be achieved once we bring our ways of "saying" back to their contexts of significant use in everyday language.

[7] See Crary (2002: 122, 143, endnote 18) as he refers to Gellner's discussion of Wittgenstein's conservatism in "A Wittgensteinian Philosophy of (or Against) the Social Sciences" (1975).

Part 1 – Lear and the idea of a Transcendental Later Wittgenstein

The term "transcendental" as it applies to the later Wittgenstein has been evolving. Writers who have worked on this topic have separated the idea of a transcendental Wittgenstein from Kant's *synthetic a priori* while maintaining that Wittgenstein's conception of philosophy is still transcendental. However, many Wittgensteinians are critical of this project. They raise concerns on how it risks confusing Wittgenstein's unique mode of philosophizing with that of Kant whose ideas have been inseparable from the development of transcendental philosophy. Haller (1988: 44), for example, claims that writers who undertake this project often advance insights that fail to recognize how Wittgenstein and Kant both have individual philosophies that are so unique that they have led to the beginning of distinct philosophical traditions. There is a prevailing view that the radical nature of Wittgenstein's philosophy makes it opposed to being assimilated with existing forms of philosophical thinking,[8] but the very attempt to understand Wittgenstein in a so-called transcendental manner inclines readers to this very assimilation.

Nonetheless, the project of articulating the transcendental aspect of Wittgenstein's later philosophy has persisted. There is, in fact, currently a huge literature on this that is still continuing to grow.[9] I think three points can be considered to better understand this persistence: 1) Wittgenstein's acknowledgment that his *Tractatus* was influenced by Schopenhauer's philosophy who was a Kantian of a certain kind along with Wittgenstein's explicit advice to use the *Tractatus* (*TLP*) as a background for understanding the *Investigations* (*PI*). 2) the view adopted by genetic readers that Wittgenstein is also a cultural entity whose ideas were influenced by the Kantianism of his time, [10] and 3) the appeal of using Kant as a heuristic framework for interpreting Wittgenstein's aphoristic remarks. Of these three, the first point seems to me as offering the strongest reason for embarking on this project of clarifying the idea

[8] See how Pichler and Säätelä raises this issue in the introduction to *Wittgenstein: the philosopher and his works* (2005: 16).

[9] Pioneering works on the transcendental reading include those by Erik Stenius (1960), PMS Hacker (1972), and Bernard Williams (1974) while more recent works include those of Johnathan Lear (1982, 1984, 1986, 1989), Newton Garver (1994), Hans Johann Glock (1997). This chapter shall focus mainly on the transcendental reading found in the works of Stenius, Williams, and Lear.

[10] As Stenius argues, "one did not need to have read Kant to be influenced by a more or less clearly stated Kantianism; it [Kantianism] belonged to the intellectual atmosphere of the German speaking world [of Wittgenstein's time]" (Stenius 1960: 214).

of a transcendental later Wittgenstein. So I shall proceed with my discussion in this chapter by focusing on that first point.

The idea of a transcendental later Wittgenstein is motivated by the belief that Wittgenstein's early philosophy was influenced by the Kantianism of Schopenhauer and that this Kantianism flowed through his later philosophy. This view on how Wittgenstein was influenced by Schopenhauer is supported by the biographical testimony of Wittgenstein's student and friend, Georg Henrik Von Wright. Von Wright (1958: 19) recounts how Wittgenstein professed only "glimpses of understanding" of Kant (along with Spinoza and Hume) but admitted having been greatly influenced by Schopenhauer's *World as Will and Representation* (*WWR*,1969). The extent of this influence is said to have made Wittgenstein adhere to a type of "Schopenhauerian epistemological idealism" in his "early philosophy".[11] While Schopenhauer has a philosophy distinct from Kant, Schopenhauer himself acknowledges having drawn many of his ideas from Kant. In the preface of the first edition of his *WWR* (1818), for example, we can find Schopenhauer claiming that his mode of philosophizing differs "completely from all other previous methods" and that he discovered "grave errors" in Kant's philosophy which he attempted to resolve.[12] But Schopenhauer also describes Kant's main works as "the most important phenomena that has appeared in philosophy for two thousand years" and he explicitly acknowledges his indebtedness to Kant.[13] Using a metaphor to describe this indebtedness, Schopenhauer explains that if Kant's work can be understood as performing a cataract operation on a blind man, his work can be understood as offering a pair of spectacles for those whom Kant's cataract operation have become successful. Likewise, in the preface to the 2nd edition of *WWR* (1844), Schopenhauer expresses the same recognition for Kant's philosophical achievement as he strongly recommends that his readers read Kant's "principal works" first-hand. Schopenhauer says that the extraordinariness of Kant's mind cannot stand the "filtration" of ordinary minds from which second-hand accounts of Kant's works ensues.[14] The effect of this so-called filtration, he says, can be

[11] Ibid. : 6. The literature on this, I believe, is as large as the literature on Wittgenstein and Kant. Most of these works, however, have been on the relationship between Schopenhauer and Wittgenstein's early philosophy, not on his later work. See, for example, Pitcher's *The Philosophy of Wittgenstein* (1964), Griffith's "Wittgenstein, Schopenhauer, and Ethics" (1973), and Young's "Wittgenstein, Kant, Schopenhauer, and critical philosophy" (1984).

[12] One among these errors, as Cahill (2011: 26-27) explains, is Kant's inference that moral knowledge can be derived from the properties of Reason which is faculty that involve only formal properties. Cahill explains that Schopenhauer attempted to become more consistent with Kant's claim that we know the world only as representation. Hence, there can be no knowledge about morality since moral knowledge somehow involves the *noumena* which (by its nature as a *thing-in-itself*) is something that cannot be known.

[13] See preface to the first edition of *WWR,* xv.

[14] See preface to the second edition of *WWR*, xxiv.

compared to the distortion of ideas that come from using "uneven mirrors"; they end up twisting the image of the objects they reflect and make the ideas of Kant "lose the symmetry of its [original] beauty" (ibid.: xxv).

With Schopenhauer's emphasis on the importance of being acquainted with Kant in understanding his philosophy combined with Wittgenstein's personal acknowledgment on having spent considerable time studying Schopenhauer and being inspired by his work (Von Wright 1958: 6), one may infer that Wittgenstein was indeed influenced by Kant at least through Schopenhauer. Furthermore, if we add to this line of thinking Wittgenstein's claim in the preface of the *Investigations* that his later work can be understood correctly "only by contrast with and against the background" of his "old way of thinking", one comes to have another reason to seriously consider Kant's transcendental philosophy as part of this so-called "background" to Wittgenstein's later thought. In this context, Kant's transcendental philosophy becomes an interesting framework for clarifying the content of Wittgenstein's own claims about the continuities and discontinuities in his early and later work.

So despite the risk of confusing Wittgenstein's ideas with those of Kant's, I believe that the project of clarifying the idea of a transcendental Wittgenstein is worth pursuing. And in pursuing this project, I believe that one can minimize the risk of conflating the ideas of these two philosophers by conducting a comparison by means of "family resemblances"; that is, by making a comparison where we understand a concept by means of its "similarities and differences" (*PI* 67) with another concept. I take this family resemblance approach to imply a type of reciprocal relationship between traits that are similar and the dissimilar. This means that the discovery of similar traits between two concepts may be compatible with our discovery of traits that are also different between them. In fact, these different traits may be made more clear and vivid as we become aware of shared aspects from where we are advancing our comparison. Likewise, as one finds aspects for comparing the similarity between Wittgenstein and Kant's philosophy, one may also become more attuned to discovering important differences that make the philosophy of Wittgenstein (or Kant) unique or even "monumental".[15]

Accordingly, my aim in this part of my dissertation is to contribute to the project of clarifying Wittgenstein's conception of philosophy by describing the important similarities and differences in the use of the term "transcendental" as it has been applied to the philosophy of Wittgenstein and Kant in the works of Erik Stenius (1960), Bernard Williams (1974), and Johnathan Lear (1982, 1984, 1986, 1989). I shall be concerned primarily with Wittgenstein's

[15] See Pichler and Säätelä's (2005: 13-14) discussion of the monumental approach to studying Wittgenstein, and how this approach to understanding his work as unique and exemplary also involves the danger of fanaticism.

later philosophy, but I shall acknowledge Wittgenstein's explicit remark about the importance of contrasting his two works and the mutual clarification that such a contrast can provide (see preface of the *Investigations*). Hence, I consider Stenius' *Wittgenstein's Tractatus* (1960) as a transcendental interpretation of Wittgenstein's early work and connect it with Williams' "Wittgenstein and Idealism" (WI, 1974) whose transcendental reading focuses on Wittgenstein's later philosophy. Taking these two works together, I aim to provide a more or less holistic framework for understanding what makes Wittgenstein's philosophy transcendental especially in relation to their conception of the role that nonsense plays in philosophy. Then, I shall evaluate the extent to which this transcendental conception of philosophy has been developed and articulated in Wittgenstein's later philosophy as found in the works of Johnathan Lear (1982, 1984, 1986, 1989).

At the outset, I would like to claim that the idea of a transcendental Wittgenstein that can be drawn from the work of Stenius, Williams, and Lear, involves a conception of philosophy that consists in the investigation of the limits of thought via reflection on when our claims become nonsensical. Philosophical claims essentially involve a form of nonsense that *shows* the limits of thought which cannot be expressed propositionally because they involve knowledge that are at the very limits of our language. In this sense, philosophy is concerned with a type of nonsense that has some form of intelligible content as distinguished, for example, from plain gibberish. This view of nonsense seems to me as containing fundamental ideas on the notion of substantial conception of nonsense often attributed to Hacker's reading by the so-called resolute reading that was originally associated with the works of James Conant and Cora Diamond.[16] This "substantial conception of nonsense" and its attendant conception of how philosophy is best understood to be using nonsense as a kind of pointing gesture for accessing knowledge about the limits of thought finds consistent expression in works of Lear (1982, 1984, 1986, 1989). Lear refers to these limits of our thought as "our-mindedness", and he associates it with the important difficulty of expression that Wittgenstein shared with his reader when he talked about the idea of "forms of life". By employing an indirect approach similar to Kant's dialectic, Lear argues that we can have some knowledge of our mindedness through a kind of transcendental anthropology that eschews the "sideways on" perspective. This sideways on perspective is what characterizes scientific approaches to understanding our knowing mind. When this indirect and dialectical approach is able to eschew the sideways on perspective, the transcendental insights in Wittgenstein turns into something inexpressible but not metaphysical.

[16] I shall discuss Conant and Diamond's ideas in part 2 chapter 1 of this dissertation as part of the background for clarifying the idea of a resolute later Wittgenstein that I associated with Stephen Mulhall (2007).

The transcendental reading of the later Wittgenstein has been made prominent by PMS Hacker's Kantian interpretation of the *Investigations* as found in the first edition of *Insight and Illusion* (1972). This is sometimes called "early Hacker" in contrast with the Hacker of the 2nd edition of *Insight and Illusion*. Bernard Williams reviewed this first edition and presented his own variant of that Kantian reading in his work "Wittgenstein and Idealism" (WI 1974). Most works on the transcendental reading of the later Wittgenstein start from these two authors (see Mulhall 2009). However, Hacker can be viewed as consistently distancing himself from the idea of a transcendental reading of Wittgenstein. This is shown not just in the revised edition of *Insight and Illusion* (1986), but also in his most recent works on the subject. Hacker's first edition of *Insight and Illusion* shows a Kantian reading of the later Wittgenstein in terms of its modest claims to knowledge. But in his 1986 revised edition, Hacker (ibid.: 147-48) insists on a clear distinction between the cognitive aims of Kant and the therapeutic aims of Wittgenstein and he maintains that the later Wittgenstein makes no epistemic claims at all. In his most recent work on the subject "Kant and Wittgenstein: The matter of Transcendental Arguments*"* (2013), Hacker continues to insist on his stand that the later Wittgenstein cannot be viewed as employing transcendental arguments and that the early Wittgenstein can be considered doing so only if transcendental arguments were conceived in a "loose sense". By contrast, Williams' position on reading Wittgenstein transcendentally can be understood as "non-committal".[17] As Mulhall (2009) notes, Bernard Williams does not seem to endorse this transcendental reading in his other works. And if we look more closely into Williams' article WI, we might find that while Williams gives more exegetical support for a variant transcendental reading that is in fundamental agreement with Hacker's earlier position, he can also be read as a merely articulating several ways on how to read Wittgenstein in a transcendental manner.[18] In this view, Williams simply describes those transcendental readings and identifies problems that come with their acceptance. Thus, there is also sense in which Williams exercises caution in articulating partiality to the transcendental reading by leaving to the reader the judgment on which interpretation of Wittgenstein to adopt. Given this background of a "wavering transcendental reading" in the work of Hacker and Williams, the works of Lear becomes significant. Lear's works not only provides an alternative context for understanding the idea of a transcendental Wittgenstein that has been incessantly associated with Hacker and Williams; they also articulate what seems to be a more persistent stance on what it means to read the later Wittgenstein in a

[17] I borrow this use of the term from my adviser Richard Sørli.
[18] One that refers to the transcendental as something that can be expressed by means of propositions and another one which criticizes its propositional expression.

transcendental manner. This part of my dissertation with its focus on Lear, thus, offers to describe a reading that is in clear contrast with the idea of a resolute later Wittgenstein which I discuss in Part 2.

Below are the main topics for my discussion in this chapter.

1.1 Stenius' Transcendental reading

1.2 Williams' Transcendental reading

1.3 Lear's Transcendental reading: a developmental account

1.4 Lear and the idea of a transcendental later Wittgenstein

1.1 Stenius' Transcendental Reading

A pioneering work on the transcendental reading of Wittgenstein which came earlier than those of Hacker , Williams, and Lear is Erik Stenius' *Wittgenstein's Tractatus* (*WT*, 1960). Though Stenius' *WT* focused mainly on the *Tractatus,* it foreshadows many of the transcendental ideas in Lear. In addition, Stenius also gave hints on how the *Investigations* involves a conception of philosophy whose use of nonsense has a significance similar to that of the *Tractatus*. So in this section, I will discuss Stenius' Kantian reading by describing the distinct transcendental deduction he associates with Wittgenstein's philosophy and the corresponding significance he attributes to Wittgenstein's use of term "nonsense". Drawing from "Wittgenstein as a Kantian Philosopher", the last chapter of his *WT*, I shall discuss Stenius' views about: 1) the achievement of Wittgenstein's so-called "transcendental deduction" on the limits of language in contrast with the transcendental deduction of Kant, 2) the notion of nonsense that is "in between" the view taken by Schopenhauer and the logical positivists, and 3) the significance of philosophical nonsense as a continuity between the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations*.

1.1.1 Wittgenstein's "transcendental deduction" on the limits of language

According to Stenius (1960: 218-22), the Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus* developed a "Kantianism of a certain kind" by performing a "logical analysis of language" similar to that of Kant's transcendental deduction. Kant's transcendental deduction involved the investigation of the "limits of theoretical reason" as they are constituted by the *a priori* forms of our "knowing mind" (ibid.: 216). Wittgenstein, on the other hand, performed a "transcendental deduction" by investigating the "limits of language" as they are constituted by forms of thought that can only be "shown not said" (ibid.). In this sense, the logical analysis of philosophical propositions in the *Tractatus* can be understood as aiming to end with a type of nonsense which *shows* the

inexpressible limits of sense. So from the perspective of Stenius, the idea of transcendental deduction can be construed broadly as a philosophical approach that deals with the investigation of *limits,* and this approach can used to describe the philosophical procedure that was employed by both Kant and Wittgenstein. For Stenius (ibid.), Wittgenstein's so-called "transcendental deduction" differs from Kant because of how it moved the investigation of *limits*, from the limits of reason to the limits of language.

Stenius explains that a central guide for Wittgenstein's "transcendental deduction" is his claim that he will investigate the limits of thought *not* by thinking from outside the thinkable but by thinking from within the thinkable and drawing those limits *in* language. Thus, Wittgenstein says that there is a sense in which the propositions of the *Tractatus* draw a limit not to "thinking [itself]" but to the "expression of thoughts" by means of language. Let me quote that part of the *Tractatus'* preface as it is cited by Stenius (ibid.: 220),

> The book will . . . draw a limit to thinking, or rather -- not to thinking, but to the expression of thoughts; for, in order to draw a limit to thinking we should have to be able to think both sides of this limit (we should therefore have to be able to think what cannot be thought). -- The limit can, therefore, only be drawn in language and what lies on the other side of the limit will be simply nonsense.

This passage raises important points of exegesis (e.g., the distinction between "simply nonsense" vs. "nonsense of the unsayable"). For the moment, I would like focus on what can be inferred from Stenius as the greater consistency that Wittgenstein's "transcendental deduction" achieved in contrast with Kant's. This seems to me as having to do with what Wittgenstein referred to as the difficulty that comes with "drawing the limits of thought". It is expressed by that part of the passage above which says: "in order to draw a limit to thinking we should have to be able to think both sides of this limit (we should therefore have to be able to think what cannot be thought)".

The challenge in interpreting this passage is whether to understand the parenthetical remark "we should therefore have to be able to think what cannot be thought" as implying a successful idea that is possible in some way *or* as implying an absurd requirement. To make a judgment, it might be helpful to clarify the ways in which we can picture scenarios of what constitutes the idea of drawing limits to what *cannot* be thought: One way *might* be to imagine being able to occupy both sides of the limit, the "thinkable" and the "unthinkable", and identify a boundary from both sides. Another way is to acknowledge that we can only occupy the side of the thinkable, and from there, set a boundary to the unthinkable.

To consider which option Wittgenstein takes, we can look again to Stenius' claim that Wittgenstein's "transcendental deduction" becomes guided by the idea expressed in *TLP* 4.114

that philosophy will "limit the unthinkable from within through the thinkable" (as cited in Stenius 1960:218). Given this guide, the picture of being able to occupy both sides of the limit falls out as an option and simply becomes an absurd requirement. Unless there is another alternative, this leaves us with no resort but to associate Wittgenstein's procedure with that of the second option; i.e., the case of acknowledging that we can only think the thinkable (not the "unthinkable") and clarify the idea of limits from within the thinkable. [19]

In drawing the limits of thought, one cannot, even for a moment, go outside the limits of thought, and from there, conduct the activity of setting limits. There is simply no space outside the limits of thought from where to draw the limits of thought. So, in drawing the limits of thought what one ends up drawing the limits of are not the limits of thought themselves but the limits for the expression of thoughts, which is language. For this reason, it is important to emphasize Wittgenstein's remark in the *Tractatus'* preface that though his book will draw a limit to thinking it is not really that of thinking which he will draw a limit to but that of language. The propositions of the *Tractatus* can be understood as "partially meaningful" provided that they are understood as claims about the limits of language; they cannot be understood as claims about the limits of thought because nothing meaningful at all can be said about the limits of thought. Yet, Wittgenstein can still be interpreted as drawing a limit to thought with the important qualification that these limits cannot be expressed.

That these limits are *there* but somehow unsayable may be inferred from what Stenius (1960: 218) mentions as another important guide to Wittgenstein's "transcendental deduction": "[philosophy] will indicate the unsayable by clearly presenting the sayable" (*TLP* 4.115). For Stenius, Wittgenstein's "transcendental deduction" presumes that there are indeed limits of thought, but those limits are "unsayable". This "unsayable" is *shown* in the nonsense that characterizes the *Tractatus*' analysis of ideas like the "logical form", "law of causality", and "metaphysical subject". Attempts to describe these ideas by means of propositions leads to nonsense. But this nonsense is instructive. It *shows* that they are concepts that constitute the inexpressible limits of thought (i.e., transcendental concepts).

From the perspective of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* as presented in the work of Stenius, the weakness of Kant's transcendental deduction is its lack of sensitivity to the inexpressibility that characterizes the limits of thought and the corresponding significance it gives to a

[19] There is indeed another option which I will discuss in part 2 as I introduce the idea of resolute reading of Wittgenstein. This alternative consists in how the resolute reading considers the very idea of "drawing limits" to be a metaphor that also misleads. It still makes us think that there is the "unthinkable". Resolute readers consider that metaphor as Wittgenstein's "bait" in articulating an illusion which he meant his readers to fully overcome.

clarification of language that ends in nonsense. By its very nature, the investigation of the limits of thought ends up compelling the philosopher to employ language in a non-conventional manner so that it can find a way to clarify the inexpressible. This lack of sensitivity has led Kant to transgress the limits of thought he has professed to respect. To be sure, both Kant and Wittgenstein can be understood as transgressing the limits of thought. But Wittgenstein was aware he was transgressing it. He writes, for example, "Don't *for heaven's sake*, be afraid of talking nonsense! But you must pay attention to your nonsense." (*Culture in Value* p. 56, *MS* 134, 1947) In this sense, we might say that Wittgenstein practiced what he preached: he was neither afraid nor evasive of nonsense talk; he also paid attention to his use of nonsense. If we relate this to Stenius reading, we might say that this attention to nonsense talk is what led Wittgenstein to a transcendental deduction that shows the nonsensicality of philosophical propositions. This kind transcendental deduction seems to call for a silence that comes with knowledge about the limits of thought and a mindful way of respecting those limits.

Kant's transcendental deduction consisted in investigating the limits of thought and in expressing the results of those investigations by means of synthetic *a priori* propositions. Wittgenstein's "transcendental deduction", on the other hand, consisted in showing that those propositions are nonsensical by some form of refutation. This refutation points beyond to some kind of understanding of the limits of thought whose transcendental nature is shown by how it resists analysis and by how we end up with something "inexpressible". Stenius (1960: 220) discusses this "inexpressibility" as he mentions Wittgenstein's transcendental approach to analysing the law of causality (which, for Kant, is expressed by the synthetic *a priori* proposition "Every effect has a cause"). He says that there is an "indescribability" we come to be acquainted with when we attempt to negate the claim "every effect has a cause" (ibid.). And that we cannot even begin to describe "whatever it is that the law of causality excludes" because the law of causality itself is the very condition for any meaningful description. Here, Stenius explains that the law of causality is a "logical form" and that "it is the only form under which connections in nature are thinkable".[20] So, there is a sense in which the propositional expression of the law of causality misleads. This finds support in terms of how Wittgenstein himself says that the law of causality cannot be expressed in a plain affirmative statement like "there are laws of nature" (*TLP* 6.36). The law of causality is a "logical form", a limit of thought. And being a limit of thought, its negation (or even affirmation) in language is "nonsensical".

[20] Stenius (1960:220) infers these insights from a combined interpretation of *TLP* 6.36 and 6.361.

One can have a better grasp of this "nonsense" by reflecting on Stenius' claim that for Wittgenstein "there cannot be any meaningful sentences *on* the 'form'[since] the 'logical form' [is the] 'form' of language." (Stenius 1960: 219). This remark can be taken to imply an analysis that proceeds in this manner: If we "think" we are able to propositionally affirm a "logical form" meaningfully, it implies that it is also possible to "think" of their negation. But if our affirmative propositions on the logical form were indeed expressive of the limits of thought themselves, then the negation of those propositions would not be a thought at all. Whatever that negation amounts to will not even be thinkable. Otherwise, this will imply that we can go beyond the "limits of thought" which is an idea we have just considered impossible. This creates the absurdity of an "intelligible nonsense" in philosophy: philosophical nonsense is not really empty; it has a content we can understand but not express.

Likewise, one can understand the propositional expression of the law of causality to be making it appear as if we can do the impossible, i.e., that we can go beyond the limits of thought and think the unthinkable. It creates the *illusion* that transcendental insights about the limits of thought can be negated meaningfully as if they were like a conventional proposition where we come up with a false statement. But in actuality, what we end up with is nonsense. Here, it might be important to contrast the term "nonsense" (*unsinnig*) with "senseless" (*sinnlos*). The nonsense Stenius refers to is not plain gibberish like "blahblahblah". The denial of "blahblahblah" is different from the denial of the statement "there are laws of nature". The former has no philosophical significance; it is senseless or *sinnloss* in that it is completely empty and does not point to knowledge of the limits of thought. On the other hand, the denial of the statement "there are laws of nature" in the statement "it is not the case that there are laws of nature" conveys a form of inaudible knowledge about the limits of thought. It involves a failure of meaning that is not completely empty. And so, it is nonsense (*unsinnig*) rather than senseless (*sinnlos*).[21]

Based from the work of Stenius, Wittgenstein's discussion of the law of causality involves a kind of transcendental deduction: he does not mean to show that the law of causality is false or that its negation is completely senseless or empty. There is no skeptical doubt about the truth of those transcendental insights, but it is difficult to convey those "truths" without making it appear that they can be falsified in a meaningful way. The suggested solution, as can be inferred from the work of Stenius, is to understand their 'inexpressibility' via the use of philosophical nonsense. The distinct kind of nonsense that emerges when one submits the

[21] For on extended discussion on this, see Von Wright's "*Remarks on Wittgenstein's use of the terms 'sinn', 'sinnlos', 'unsinnig', 'wahr', and 'gedanke' in the Tractatus"* (2005*)*

propositions of philosophy to logical analysis is a "nonsense" that *shows* the limits of thought (as opposed to a description of those limits by means of "saying"). Thus, Stenius writes that for Wittgenstein, insights about the limits of thought (or what for Kant is the *a priori* form of reality) "can only be *exhibited* by language but not expressed by sentences" (Stenius 1960:219). He italicizes the word "*exhibited*" to emphasize the special manner in which it is used to convey the inexpressible insights about the limits of thought. Notice also that this "showing" is also done by means of language.

So, for Stenius, Wittgenstein's greater consistency, as opposed to Kant, consists in the recognition that the limits of thought are inexpressible, and that philosophy must turn to non-conventional ways of using language to convey these limits. For this reason, the concept of *showing* and *silence* made possible by philosophical nonsense is important. With this context in mind, let me now discuss how Stenius' notion of philosophical nonsense functions as a kind of "in between" in relation to the position taken by logical positivists and the mystics.

1.1.2 Nonsense as "in between"

Stenius can be taken to propose a conception of nonsense that is transcendental in the sense that it does not go beyond the limits of thought and does not involve an empirical understanding of that limit. This can be inferred from how Stenius describes the inexpressibilty invoked by Wittgenstein's conception of nonsense as something that is distinct from the views of mystics and logical positivists, and how that inexpressibility prods the construction of a "step by step procedure" for clarifying the meaning of our expressions with clarity. The nonsense that is *shown* by the transcendental deduction of the propositions of the *Tractatus* can be characterized as a philosophical position that is "in between" the view taken by Schopenhauerian mystics and by logical positivists. It is a type of transitional tool for understanding which can be "thrown away" upon acquisition of the relevant competence for using of language. Rather than signal an idea of the inexpressible that goes beyond language, this transitional tool is best understood as clarifying an idea that falls within the various moods of language.

Let me quote one of the remarks from where this interpretation *can* be drawn in Stenius:

> [T]he difference between ethical judgements and scientific statements is not a difference between a transcendent reality and a reality of science, but a difference between two kinds of problems corresponding to different moods of language. What is of lasting value in the *Tractatus* is not the philosophical system which is its alleged result, but the views proposed in the different steps

> of the argument 'leading' to it, that is, of the ladder which according to 6.54 is to be thrown away after one had climbed up on it. (Stenius 1960: 224).

In the passage above, Stenius talks about how the distinction between the "transcendent reality" and the "reality of science" does not correspond to the distinction between "ethical judgements" and "scientific statements". Here, ethical judgments can be conceived as "transcendental" in the sense that it is neither about "transcendent reality" (which is totally beyond language) nor about "scientific reality" (which is not really the domain of philosophy). As Stenius notes, what is for Kant the aim of philosophy to set the limits of theoretical reason when it goes beyond the limits of all possible experience becomes in Wittgenstein as the aim of philosophy to "set a limit to scientific discourse" (ibid.: 217-218). However, this way of limiting scientific discourse and setting a domain for philosophy does not have to consist in a notion of inexpressible that implies the transcendent.

Stenius can be taken as tracing the "either or" view between "transcendent reality" and "scientific reality" to be coming from a failure to distinguish between "the inexpressible as inarticulate" and "the inexpressible as ineffable". Stenius notes, for example, that there is an ambiguity in how the German word "*Unaussprechlich"* in the remark in *TLP* 6.522. "*Es gibt allerdings Unaussprechliches. Dies zeigts ich, es ist das Mystische.*" In that remark, Stenius (1960: 223) claims that *Unaussprechliches* can be translated not just as "inexpressible" but also as "ineffable". Being mindful of this ambiguity, Stenius claims that "inexpressibility" indeed plays a part in Wittgenstein's conception of nonsense, but there has to be a distinction between "that which cannot be said but can be shown" from the "that which can neither be said and shown" (ibid.). Let me label the first sense of inexpressible as "transcendental inexpressible", and the second sense as "transcendent inexpressible". The transcendental inexpressible can be thought of as the inarticulate. Stenius explains that this includes the "framework of a world of description" referred to by the "things" of "Wittgenstein's logical atomism" (ibid.: 223). On the other hand, the transcendent inexpressible can thought of as the ineffable. Stenius explains that this refers to that which belongs to what is independent of the "forms of experience". Stenius says that this latter sense is alluded to by Kant's *ding an sich* and is also found in Schopenhauer as the "unreachable transcendent" (ibid.). This transcendent inexpressible can be taken to include talk about notions related to "God" and the "immortal soul". So, Stenius can be taken to suggest an understanding of the transcendental inexpressible as a means for undermining the "either or view" that conceives of philosophy as belonging either to science or to transcendent metaphysics. Philosophy, which includes judgments about the ethical and the linguistic, can be understood as falling within this domain of the transcendental inexpressible.

However, the idea of "transcendent inexpressible" also has strong resonance in the *Tractatus*. Stenius acknowledges this and he attributes to the *Tractatus* a sense of the "ineffable mystical" that Wittgenstein inherited from Schopenhauer. As Stenius explains, Schopenhauer's philosophy can be considered "transcendent" rather than "transcendental" because his views on practical reason involve a kind mystical access to absolute reality. This mystical access is not made *within* thought or language.[22] And Stenius notes that the *Tractatus* expresses this tone of "ineffable mysticism" in various ways. For example, in Wittgenstein's remarks on how the inexpressible is *shown* in the mystical (*TLP* 6.522), in how ethics seem to be completely beyond expression (*TLP* 6.421), in how the 'whatness' of the world itself involves a mystical feeling (*TLP* 6.44), and in how the deepest problems (of philosophy and life) are characterized by a depth that does not even allow them to be expressed (Stenius 1960: 222-24, see also *TLP* 6.5). Stenius also often pays attention to the inexpressible in the expression "There is indeed the inexpressible, and it *shows* itself in the mystical" (*TLP* 6.522). In this remark, Wittgenstein seems to be very explicit about how the inexpressible is meant to be conceived as type of "ineffable mystical". This also implies that philosophical propositions involve a kind of showing that involves the transcendent rather than the transcendental.

On the other hand, Stenius also highlights the significance of how Wittgenstein labels this type of inexpressibility as "nonsense" and how Wittgenstein's philosophy did not turn into a kind of Indian mysticism in the way Schopenhauer's philosophy did.[23] The use of the label "nonsense" can be taken to imply that the "inexpressibilty" Wittgenstein deals with refers to something negative. But it is also different from the purely negative view of logical positivists who give no philosophical significance at all to Wittgenstein's use of the term "nonsense" and consider Wittgenstein's interest in nonsense to be unworthy of any attention (Stenius 1960: 225). With this kind of dissociation from the position of Schopenhauer and the logical positivists, one can say that Stenius attributes to Wittgenstein a unique conception of "inexpressibility" or "nonsense" which is in between those two positions.

This conception of nonsense is truly transcendental in the sense that it is located at the limits of thoughts and language. It still acknowledges the inexpressible because of its function

[22] As Stenius (ibid.: 216) explains, Schopenhauer agrees with Kant that our knowledge of reality cannot have access to noumena because it is inevitably filtered by "forms of experience". This is "limit", however, applies to "theoretical reason", not "practical reason". Practical reason, on the other hand, is conceived by Schopenhauer as involving an ability to access absolute reality through the "intuition of the will". For Stenius, this kind "mystical access" through practical reason makes up Schopenhauer's 'non-Kantian turn'.

[23] In the preface to first edition of *The World as Will and Representation* (1818), Schopenhauer claims that the ones most prepared to understand his philosophy are those who have read or received divine inspiration from the Indian wisdom of the Vedas and Upanishads. He even claims that the utterances of the *Upanishads* can be derived from the thoughts found in his book.

as a *limit.* But it is not totally beyond language that we cannot find a way to convey it. It also does not fall too much "inside" the conventions of language that it simply becomes concerned with scientific or empirical content. This alternative conception of nonsense which I have described as an "in-between view" involves an instrumental or ladder-like conception of the idea of limits. It is a view that places the idea of nonsense as conveying something that is inclined toward the side of the inarticulate rather than the ineffable. This "inarticulate" is not to be taken as an empirical cause that can be explained away by science, but it can be understood in terms of an ever present ability to construct a step-by-step procedure for clarifying the meaning of expressions. Here is another remark about this point:

> I do not believe this thesis ['All philosophy is "Critique of language"' (4.0031)] to be an exhaustive characterization even of what ought to be the aim of philosophical analysis. But in so far as philosophy is critique of language it is an investigation which must be carried out step by step like investigations in science. This does not mean that philosophical investigations are 'empirical' -- their result is indeed 'clarity' rather than 'knowledge' in a scientific sense: 'The word "philosophy" must mean something which stands above or below, but not beside the natural sciences' (4.111). But *we cannot content ourselves with considering the results of philosophical analysis as inexpressible. We have to find means of expressing them, and expressing them with increasing clarity*, unless the philosophical activity is to remain an eternal vicious circle. (Stenius 1960:226, italics mine)

The passage above is Stenius' concluding remark and expresses his personal view on how to understand the *Tractatus* amidst the tension between aspects of logical positivism and mysticism that can also be found in that book. On the one hand, Stenius remark can be understood as containing ideas that is contrary to that of Wittgenstein, like for example his comparison of philosophical procedure to the "step by step" procedure of science or the idea that appeal to nonsense and inexpressibility results to a "vicious circle". But, on the other hand, if we now consider the various meanings of "inexpressibility" that Stenius has also distinguished, i.e., that inexpressibility can be taken to mean "inarticulate" rather than 'ineffable', then we can take his personal opinion as inclined towards a Kantian interpretation of Wittgenstein that is not metaphysical. In this interpretation, the idea of nonsense become "linguistic tools" that do not go beyond the limits of thought and language while having the function of pointing to those limits.

This interpretation gives attention to how Stenius might have taken seriously Wittgenstein's claim that he will "indicate the unsayable by clearly presenting the sayable" (*TLP* 4.114-115, as cited in Stenius 1960: 218). The "unsayable" or "inexpressible" limits of thought must become intelligible in some way and our only means of doing so is through

language. In this view, the limits of thought are inexpressible but they can be thought, and we can acquire this understanding by being clear in the relevant uses of our language. In cases we are not, one cannot take Wittgenstein (and Stenius' reading of Wittgenstein) to be leaving that unclarity as it is by using labels like "inexpressible" or "inarticulate". In these cases, Stenius can be taken to suggest the construction of a procedure for coming up with clarity in understanding. Here, the idea of nonsense is understood as a call to develop and try out different ways of using language that can help clarify concepts that are difficult to express. It is in this context that we can understand Stenius' view of the inexpressible as a kind of tool similar to a ladder: the idea of the inexpressible prods the philosopher to employ a "step-by step investigation" for discovering how to use linguistic expressions with "increasing clarity" (1960: 226). In doing so, he becomes competent in the different "moods of language" that Stenius mentions. It is through this linguistic competence that "ethical judgments" are not simply assimilated with "scientific judgments" or with "metaphysical claims". Once this linguistic competence is acquired, the idea of the inexpressible along with the *Tractatus*' claims about the limits of sense can be thrown away like a ladder one had climbed up on. The inexpressibility that previously implied confusion can now be understood as replaced by a silence that reflects how one has become clear and "knowledgeable" about the meaning of an expression. This "knowing silence" is not of the ineffable or of the sceptic but that of the linguistically competent.[24]

1.1.3 "Nonsense" as a significant philosophical continuity

Reflection on Stenius' work indicates two aspects under which Wittgenstein's philosophy in the *Tractatus* becomes continuous with the *Investigations*. These continuous aspects relates with: 1) the significance of "philosophical nonsense" as a cure for the illusion of being able to go beyond the limits of language, and 2) the intermediary role of nonsense in philosophy's approach toward linguistic clarification. The first one is a direct claim that Stenius makes while the other one can be inferred from his work. I now explain these two points below.

Stenius (1960: 225) claims that both the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations* involves a conception of philosophy that takes interest in "nonsense" as it gives philosophy the necessary "stopping point" to realize the "futility of its efforts". Philosophical activity essentially involves the perpetual attempt to use language to go beyond language. Hence, the aim of a

[24] I borrow the expression "knowing silence" from Cahill's *The Fate of Wonder* (Cahill 2011).

"transcendental philosophy" in the Wittgensteinian sense is to recognize that these efforts are futile. Once "transcendental deduction" of our philosophical propositions is performed, we reach a form of "nonsense" that makes us realize that our repeated attempts to use language to express what is beyond it have failed and have not conveyed anything meaningful. Our awareness of "nonsense" is a signal to stop such philosophical uses of language; and therefore, to stop philosophical activity itself.

However, Stenius can also be taken to claim that awareness of the futility philosophical activity is not wholly negative: while the *Tractatus'* conception of philosophy aims to *"*make philosophy aimless" by showing the nonsensicality of its propositions, this does not imply that "philosophy as an activity is aimless" (Stenius 1960: 225). Here, Stenius' vague remark can be clarified if we go back to his discussion of the sense in which the notion of nonsense can be important. For Stenius, Wittgenstein's notion of nonsense is indeed negative in the sense that it makes us realize that we are not saying anything meaningful. But this negative sense is not completely empty in the way logical positivists took it to be. Stenius (ibid.) says that the Tractarian notion of nonsense indeed has a "positive ring", but it need not be in the form of "reverence to the ineffable". One can understand it as a "transitional tool" for clarifying the inarticulate limits of sense. This latter meaning is likely to be the sense in which Stenius links the Tractarian notion of nonsense to a notion of silence which "shows" the inexpressible. The Tractarian notion of nonsense is important in its ability to make intelligible the transcendental limits of sense, which by their nature as limits can only be "shown" by a certain kind of silence. Here, indeed, the idea of "silence" connotes something that goes beyond language. That silence involves a type of meaning or "knowledge" which is best conveyed through some form of action (e.g., "how the word 'game' is used" in *PI* 78, "how a clarinet sounds" in *PI* 78, "how a man learns to get a 'nose' for something and how he uses it" in *PI* II xi). In these cases, Wittgenstein seems to have a peculiar concern for how certain uses of language becomes a kind of showing. For Stenius, that "showing" becomes essential. It proves to be philosophy's only option as it faces the task of clarifying concepts that resist empirical analysis while being careful not to turn that clarificatory activity into something that involves an appeal to the transcendent. This conception of philosophical clarification may be viewed as applicable, for example, to the type of clarification we deal with when we are communicating knowledge of concepts found in music, language, and ethics. Though Stenius presents Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* as involving a genuine ambivalence between the ineffable and the inarticulate, he also presents Wittgenstein's emphasis on the critical role of nonsense in philosophical clarification. Stenius takes this as an

indication that the "transcendental inarticulate" (rather than the "transcendental ineffable") has a stronger pull in Wittgenstein's conception of philosophy.

Likewise, Stenius (ibid.) claims that the *Investigations* also views nonsense as significant in terms of how it can function as a stopping point for philosophy; that is, in terms of how it can become a cure for how philosophy has imposed upon itself the illusory requirement of going beyond the limits of language and thought. This can be inferred from Stenius' claim that the *Tractatus* conceives of philosophy as an activity that essentially involves the use of nonsense with the aim of "making itself futile" and also from his claim that Wittgenstein's later work "made no essential change in his attitude toward the aim of philosophy" (ibid.: 226). Thus, the significance that the *Investigations* gives to nonsense can also be conceived in terms of the *Tractatus*' view that it is a stopping point that "shows" the transcendental limits of sense. The difference, according to Stenius, is that it is no longer a nonsense that serves as a "once-and-for all remedy" for philosophical illusion. In this latter view, Wittgenstein's use of "nonsense" takes the form of various stopping points which is in contrast with his early view of having one stopping point of language that is "isomorphic" with the stopping point of reason.[25] The basis for Stenius' inference comes from *PI* 133 where Wittgenstein talks about various therapies and methods instead of one philosophical method. Though it is not mentioned in *PI* 133 itself, these methods are also referred to as Wittgenstein's employment of "language-games". So it seems that Stenius now associates Tractarian nonsense with the various "methods" offered by the later Wittgenstein's use of language-games. This can be taken to mean that what "nonsense" is able to "show" in the *Tractatus* is now what language-games are able "show" in the *Investigations*. Similar to the role of nonsense in the *Tractatus*, these language-games might also be conceived as attempts to convey the inexpressible limits of sense.

Another point of interest is Stenius' description of how language-games, along with the forms of nonsense associated with it, take on an "intermediary form". Notice that in the previous section, I have argued that the nonsense in Stenius' reading of the *Tractatus* implies a notion of inexpressible or transcendental that is "in-between" scientific judgments and metaphysical judgments of mystics. In so far as the *Investigations* is concerned, Stenius now describes how the nonsense encountered in language-games comes to involve judgments that are in between

[25] Stenius indirectly touches on the idea of isomorphism between language, thought, and reality in the way he talks about how these three have limits that coincide with each other. Stenius (1960:218) writes: "the investigation of this limit [of theoretical discourse] is the investigation of the 'logic' of language, which shows the 'logic of the world'." `

"the statement of a personal predicament" and "a general rule for acceptance" (ibid.: 226). Given this similarity, it can be inferred that the conception of nonsense as "in-between" flows in the philosophy of Wittgenstein from his early work in the *Tractatus* to his later work in the *Investigations*. Thus Stenius writes, as he refers to *PI* 133:

> This passage, in its formulation strangely intermediate between the statement of a personal predicament and the establishment of a rule for general acceptance, can be regarded as a pathetic expression of Wittgenstein's struggle with the problems of philosophy. And *it gives us an idea of the form in which the belief in the nonsensicality of philosophical statements is retained in the thought of the later Wittgenstein*. (Stenius 1960:226 italics mine)

Stenius' remarks on Wittgenstein's *Investigations* are instructive but scarce because his focus was mainly on the *Tractatus*. So, as a kind of supplement, I now turn to Bernard Williams' work on how the use of nonsense in philosophy also becomes a special feature of the transcendental idealism found in Wittgenstein's later work.

1.2 Williams' transcendental reading

Bernard Williams' article "Wittgenstein and Idealism*"* (WI, 1974) is among the most significant articles about the transcendental interpretation of the later Wittgenstein's philosophy. Mulhall (2009) claims that most discussions on the transcendental reading of Wittgenstein often start with ideas from Williams' article, and even critics of transcendental idealist interpretations of Wittgenstein like Dilman (2002) consider Williams' position admirable. In developing his own transcendental reading of Wittgenstein, Lear defends many ideas from Williams' work and explicitly acknowledges Williams' help in the various footnotes of his works on the subject. A critical account of Lear's reading of Wittgenstein will be incomplete without a discussion of Williams' work on Wittgenstein's transcendental idealism.[26]

In this section, I shall connect Stenius' work to Williams' by clarifying the conception of nonsense found in the transcendental idealism Williams attributes to the later Wittgenstein,

[26] In "Leaving the World Alone*"* (1982), Lear acknowledges Bernard Williams' help in the process of writing the paper. He specifically mentions the influence of Williams' article "Wittgenstein and Idealism*"* (WI, 1974) and his personal discussions with him on the topic (p. 382). In "The Disappearing 'We*'"* (1984), Lear mentions Williams in footnote 16, 37, 49, and 56. In footnote 56, Lear once again expresses his gratitude for the discussions he had with Williams. In "Transcendental Anthropology" (1986), Lear explicitly states in footnote 9 that the article is an attempt to formulate a response to the problem of transcendental idealism that was posed by Williams article *WI*. And in "On Reflection: The Legacy of the Later Wittgenstein" (1989), Lear again acknowledges the "penetrating criticisms" of Williams in the last footnote. As I see it, the extent of Lear's acknowledgement for Williams' ideas does not imply that Lear does not present an original reading of Wittgenstein. I mention these acknowledgements here to point out how a deeper understanding of Lear's transcendental Wittgenstein would inevitably have to involve some understanding of Williams' transcendental reading and how Lear's reading can be understood as a kind of extended discussion of the earlier ideas that can be found Williams. This also explains the significance of this section.

specifically in relation to insights about the plural form of the "thinking subject" called the "transcendental 'we'". Later, I shall connect this conception of nonsense to the distinctive kind of nonsense found in Lear's "Transcendental Anthropology" (1986) and to how Lear conceives of Wittgenstein's philosophy to be aimed at some kind of knowledge which avoids the "sideways on" perspective.

The conception of nonsense that is found in Williams' transcendental reading of Wittgenstein can be further clarified if we have an understanding of: 1) the "idealism" that has led to the notion of a "transcendental 'we'", 2) the global conception of language associated with the "transcendental 'we'", 3) the vagueness of insights about the "transcendental 'we'" and how that vagueness can be understood as a form of showing, and 4) the implication of "nonsense" to the limits of "philosophical knowledge". Let me proceed with the first point.

1.2.1 Nonsense and the "transcendental 'we'"

The conception of nonsense that can be attributed to Williams' transcendental reading comes from the attempt to articulate insights about the "transcendental 'we'", the plural form of the Tractarian thinking subject which Williams associates with the later Wittgenstein. This "transcendental 'we'" shares the non-empirical features of the "thinking subject" mentioned in *TLP* 5.631 and the "metaphysical subject" mentioned in *TLP* 5.641. And so, any claim about the "transcendental 'we'" either leads to a "false empirical claim" or to an "empty tautology" (Williams 1974: 83, 95). However, such claims are best understood as nonsensical, not in the sense that they are gibberish but as failed attempts to convey transcendental insights about the inexpressible limits of sense. Awareness of these limits becomes inseparable from some kind of awareness of ourselves as metaphysical subjects. In this context, Williams argues against the early Hacker's view (1972) that Wittgenstein's repudiation of the metaphysical subject in the *Tractatus* is like that of a Humean sceptic. It is not a denial of the "knowing self". It is not one which adopts an empiricist view of the nothingness that results from not finding anything that corresponds to one's experience of the knowing mind (e.g., no sense data and no sense impressions). On the contrary, Williams thinks that Wittgenstein's treatment of the "metaphysical subject" is that of a Kantian philosopher who employs some kind of transcendental reasoning to clarify the idea of a metaphysical subject: in showing that there can be no empirical or scientific proof for the existence of the metaphysical subject, Wittgenstein indirectly clarifies the "transcendental existence" of the metaphysical subject (ibid.: 77).

Williams does not describe details about the particular form that this transcendental reasoning takes in the *Tractatus*. But this can be drawn from his reference to *TLP* 5.631 and from his mention of the similarity between Wittgenstein's refutation of the metaphysical subject and Kant's refutation of Descartes' *res cogitans* (Williams 1974: 77-78). Both forms of refutation can be understood in the context of employing a transcendental argument to bring attention to a transcendental condition that has been taken for granted. From those cases, Kant can be understood as inverting Descartes' claim "I think. Therefore, I exist" into "I exist. Therefore I think" to bring attention to how "one's existence" is a transcendental condition for any thinking at all. This kind of "transcendental existence" has no proof but it cannot be doubted because it is a condition for doubting itself. Similarly, the metaphysical subject exists as a transcendental condition for affirming or denying of empirical existence. There cannot be any empirical proof for its "existence" [27] but it will be presupposed by any meaningful empirical proof.

This form of Kantian (transcendental) reasoning applies to understanding Wittgenstein's denial of the metaphysical subject, and I will now cite Wittgenstein's discussion of that reasoning as it occurs in Williams' text:

> There is no such thing as **the subject that thinks** or entertains ideas.
> If I wrote a book called *The World as I Found it,* I should have to include a report on my body, and should have to say which parts were subordinate to my will, and which were not, etc., this being a method of isolating the subject, or rather of showing that **in an important sense there is no subject**; for it alone could not be mentioned in that book. (*TLP* 5.631, as cited in Williams 1974: 77, emphasis added)

As I understand Williams, when Wittgenstein claims that "in an important sense, there is no [thinking] subject" (*TLP* 5.631), the claim "there is no [thinking] subject" does not involve a conventional use of negation; it does not negate the claim "there is a thinking subject" as if the thinking subject were an empirical entity. One may get a hint of this transcendental reasoning from the way "no" in the passage "there is no [thinking] subject" is referred to as "important". It indicates that the negation is used in the context of a transcendental argument:

[27] I attribute the term "existence" to the metaphysical subject with the qualification that this "existence" is of a transcendental kind that does not allow for a contrary concept (i.e. non-existence) that can be understood meaningfully. The transcendental nature of the existence of the Tractarian metaphysical subject can be compared more to Parmenides idea of "being" and how it does not allow for the contrary idea of non-being. To understand "that which is not", one has to turn it into "that which is". Hence, even the idea of "that which is not" also belongs to the idea of "being". Otherwise, "that which is not" becomes totally unintelligible. I use the term "transcendental existence" as opposed to "being" because I find the latter a philosophically loaded word that will make my discussion unnecessarily complicated.

it aims to convey a sense of absurdity in denying a transcendental condition; and in doing so, provide indirect support for that condition. In the context of the passage above, the transcendental condition is the "thinking subject". And in the *Tractatus*, this "thinking subject" can be taken synonymously with the "philosophical self" or the "metaphysical subject" mentioned in *TLP* 5.641.

The "thinking subject" is significant because it is the necessary condition for the transcendental idealism that Williams associates with Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*. It cannot be proved by any empirical proposition, but the fact that it cannot be denied by it either is meant to imply that it is not empirical at all. Williams (1974: 77) claims that for Wittgenstein "that which I confusedly had in mind when I set out to look is something which could not possibly be in the world." But here Williams also suggests that "not being in the world" does not imply that the "thinking subject" does not exist. The "thinking subject" is still there in some way like the fulcrum of a lever that is untouched but whose presence makes the lever function. To relate this idea to Wittgenstein's own claims, we can say that the presence of the "thinking subject" is "the limit of the world" which is at the same time "not part of the world" (*TLP* 5.632, 5.641, see also Williams 1974: 77).

Williams can be taken to interpret transcendental idealism as the Kantian view that all instances of knowledge are constituted by forms of cognition that come from the knowing mind. Because of the constitutive function of these forms of cognition, all our claims are dependent on the knowing mind. For Kant, this implied that we do not have knowledge of things as they exist by themselves; whatever we know is already a function of how the mind has imposed an order in the object of knowledge via our forms of cognition.[28] These forms include space, time, and causality. They are *a priori* forms in the sense that they are not inherent features of experience, but they are conditions that we necessarily employ to have knowledge of objects in experience. So for Kant, all that we know are appearances in so far as these *a priori* forms constitute the coherence necessary for the very possibility of having knowledge of objects in experience. This is Kant's transcendental idealism, and Williams suggests that this idealism is expressed in various forms in the *Tractatus* and in Wittgenstein's later work.[29]

[28] See Stenius' discussion of this view in "Wittgenstein as a Kantian philosopher" (1960: 216)

[29] In the context of Williams' article WI, Wittgenstein's later work' pertains to both the *Investigations* and *On Certainty*. The passages Williams cites are mostly taken from Wittgenstein's "*On Certainty*", but he can be taken to apply this transcendental idealism to Wittgenstein's *Investigations* especially if we consider themes about the limits of justification that are also profusely found in the *Investigations*. My discussion of the transcendental subject in the later Wittgenstein is more oriented towards the *Investigations*.

As I have mentioned previously in the section on Stenius, Kant thought it possible to express necessary conditions of the transcendental kind and these necessary conditions are the important link that explains how our phenomenal knowledge depends on our knowing mind. Explanations of these necessary conditions come in the form of synthetic *a priori* propositions like, for example, the proposition "every cause has an effect". Now, here comes the critical contribution of Stenius. Stenius (1960) claims that Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* considered such propositional expressions as transgressions of the limits of thought. The transcendental deduction that can be found in the *Tractatus* implies that the "relation of dependence" between the knowing mind and the objects of knowledge is something that defies articulation. This is because the knowing mind is "the limit of the world, [that is] not part of it" (*TLP* 5.641, as cited in Williams).[30] Here, the "knowing mind" can be taken synonymously with the "thinking subject" or "the subject that thinks and entertains ideas" in *TLP* 5.631. It can also be taken to refer to the "philosophical self" or the "metaphysical subject" discussed in *TLP* 5.641.

No meaningful proposition can be advanced about the "metaphysical subject" because the "metaphysical subject" has no location in space and time and it is distinct even from "the self psychology deals with" (ibid.). Yet, like the transcendental idealism of Kant, all our claims to knowledge are in some sense dependent on the "metaphysical subject". Williams agrees with Stenius that this dependence of our claims on the metaphysical subject leads to a form of inexpressible solipsism that is nonetheless "correct".[31] Thus, Williams begins his piece by citing the *Tractatus*' remark on solipsism which I would also like to quote below:

> [W]hat the solipsist *means* is quite correct; only it cannot be *said* but it makes itself manifest. The world is *my* world: this is manifest in the fact that the limits of language (that language which I alone understand) mean the limits of *my* world. (*TLP* 5.62 as cited in Williams 1974: 76)

The passage above claims that there is a kind of truth involved in solipsism by describing it as something that is "correct" but whose 'correctness' is something that "cannot be said". This can be taken to mean that "Solipsism, in the transcendental sense, can only be shown or manifested". How is it manifested? Here, Wittgenstein's answer as found in the passage above sounds vague: "in the fact that the limits of language mean the limits of *my* world". To clarify this obscurity, we can take Williams to suggest that such vagueness relates to how Wittgenstein gave special attention to the use of nonsense. "Nonsense", as Williams says, "seems to be the only way Wittgenstein's philosophy can talk about anything" (Williams 1974: 78). So, here is how the clarification of the above remark might go: "things in the world" do not become

[30] See also Williams citation of this in (1974: 77)
[31] See Williams (1974: 76) and Stenius (1960: 222)

"things" to me at all. In fact, they become nonsensical when they are no longer intelligible from within the limits of "the language which I alone understand". [32]

This construal makes transcendental idealism in the passage more evident especially if we consider those "nonsensical things" to be analogous to Kant's noumena, and how the "things in my world" are analogous to "phenomenal knowledge". Taken this way, the "limits of language" that constitute the "transcendental existence" of the thinking subject also determine, in some way, the limits of "*my* world". And like Kant's transcendental idealism, this has the implication that what we know are only phenomenal knowledge in so far they are already put into a certain form by the "limits of our language". However, Williams can be understood as endorsing the view that the "truth" of this implication cannot be said. It can only be shown by the fact that some things make sense to us and not others (Williams 1974: 84).

The term "*my* world" in the remark "The world is *my* world" and the "the limits of language… mean the limits of *my* world" (see *TLP* 5.62 as quoted above) also points to the limitation of the "thinking subject" in the *Tractatus:* It has a singular form; it is a "transcendental 'I'". This becomes a limitation because we end up with solipsism: each person has a language and a world of his own, and each person is confined *in* his own language and *in* his own world. To address this limitation, Williams considers the possible advantage of a notion of thinking subject which shifts from the singular form "I" to the plural form "we". Williams opines:

> [P]erhaps there is a form of transcendental idealism which is suggested, not indeed by the confused idea that the limits of *each* man's language mean the limits of *each* man's world, but by the idea that the limits of *our* language mean the limits of *our* world. This would not succumb to the arguments which finished off solipsism, for those arguments are all basically the move from 'I' to 'we', and that, in this version, has already been allowed for. (Williams 1974: 82)

Williams claims that this shift from the "transcendental 'I'" to the "transcendental 'We'" can be drawn from Wittgenstein's later work as it now comes to have a conception of language that is essentially social and part of our customs and practices. Williams (1974: 79) can be viewed as drawing this interpretation from his agreement with Hacker's observation about the difference in the conception of language that can be found between the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations*. He explains that the conception of language in the *Tractatus* is impersonal,

[32] There is a difference in the translation of *TLP* section cited by Williams and the translation of the Side-by-side-by-side edition of the *TLP* (2015) by Ogden/Ramsey and Pears/McGuinnes. In the passage cited by Williams the parenthetical remark says "that language which I alone understand", but in the Side-by-side edition it says, "that language which I understand". The word 'alone' is omitted. I find this omission important because the passage with an omitted version gives stronger affinity to the social nature of the 'transcendental/metaphysical subject' that is supposedly found in Wittgenstein's later work.

timeless, and not located while the conception of language in the *Investigations* is embodied in human needs and social activities (ibid.). For Williams, such a difference imply a corresponding difference in their underlying "thinking subject". Thus, the "thinking subject" in the *Tractatus* becomes solitary and solipsistic (i.e., a "transcendental 'I'"), while the "thinking subject" in the *Investigations* becomes a kind of collective, i.e., a form of "we".

In this context, the so-called "we" embedded in customs and practices become the transcendental condition, upon which our claims are dependent. And like other transcendental conditions, its immunity to direct proof also translates to a difficulty in expression. This again leads to a corresponding difficulty in understanding the dependence of our claims about the "thinking subject". Thus, Williams (1974: 95) notes how a plain statement about transcendental idealism in the later Wittgenstein, like that of the early Wittgenstein, ends up being understood as nonsensical. There can be no meaningful statement about the dependence of our claims about the customs that make up the "transcendental 'we'". This implication is the context behind Williams remark, "if our talk about numbers has been determined by our decisions [as constituted by our customs and practices], then one result of our decisions is that it must be *nonsense* that anything about number has been determined by our decisions" (1974: 95, italics mine). Let me further clarify this point by discussing Williams' distinction between the position taken by Wittgenstein and the position Williams associate with Michael Dummett.

Williams' emphasis on the nonsensicality of philosophical propositions, which are claims that relate to the "transcendental 'we'", can be understood as a context for his criticism of "Dummett's constructivism". According to Williams, Dummett's constructivist reading of Wittgenstein can be taken as "idealist" in its view of "how our sentences have the meaning we give them" and how "the logical consequences of our sentences do not go beyond whatever we have put into it [via our practices]".[33] But Williams' qualifies that this reading cannot be taken as "transcendental idealist" because it does not recognize the inexpressibility of transcendental conditions in Wittgenstein and it does not give attention to how this inexpressibility makes philosophical claims nonsensical.

Dummett's constructivist reading of Wittgenstein involves the view that our sentences can be clarified by the conditions for their meaningful assertion. These conditions can be expressed via propositions about a particular convention or judgment which then fixes the meaning of our expression (Williams 1974: 94). But Williams describes a reading of Wittgenstein that considers such "fixing of meaning" as failing to give adequate attention to

[33] Williams (ibid.: 93) here refers to Dumett's "Wittgenstein's Philosophy of Mathematics" (1959).

that "sense of what is natural" which "guides" the decisions of different human groups "when they face conflicts with what they think they already know" (ibid.: 89). In this remark, Williams can be understood as presenting a reading of Wittgenstein which criticizes the idea that "constitutive conditions" can be asserted meaningfully at all if they are to make genuine reference to the "transcendental 'we'". So, Williams writes in his concluding paragraph:

> The dependence of mathematics on our decisions… in the only sense in which it obtains is *something which shows itself* in what we are and are not prepared to regard as sense and *is not to be stated in remarks about decisions*; *and similarly in other cases*… (Williams 1974: 95 italics mine).

This passage illustrates Williams' view that the relationship of dependence between the "transcendental subject" and his "decisions" is inexpressible. Here Williams' use of the term "decision" is conceived as a kind of "transcendental 'we'"; it is a decision that is made possible by means of mastery of custom and practice that has the nature of a transcendental condition. Given the transcendental nature of such a "decision", the dependence of mathematics on "our *decisions"* is not to be stated in remarks about decisions. To put it more concretely: it *may* be a philosophical truth that "1+1=2" is correct because we have been trained to use the symbol "+" in that manner, but the "correctness" of that claim is not something that can be stated without losing the sense of what is *natural* in that "philosophical truth". Any propositional expression of that "transcendental truth" will make it make it appear as if it we are talking about something that can be falsified in a meaningful manner and it will end up making that "philosophical truth" a matter of empirical inquiry (rather than that of philosophical inquiry). And so, we can take Williams to say that the "transcendental 'we'" in the later Wittgenstein is a "metaphysical subject" that is essentially inexpressible. As such, there can be no meaningful way of saying that our claims are "dependent" on something inexpressible. That kind of dependence holds, but "it" cannot be described propositionally.

The foregoing discussion also shows that Williams interprets Wittgenstein's later work as not really leaving behind the inexpressibility of the "correctness" that characterizes the transcendental solipsism of the *Tractatus*. In fact, Williams says that "transcendental solipsism" in the later Wittgenstein is not really lost. It only takes on a different form, shifting from an "I" to a "we" (Williams 1974: 79). It is in this context that we can understand Williams' portrayal of Wittgenstein as someone who is consistent with his view that "philosophical talk is nonsense talk". Even in his later philosophy, Wittgenstein endorsed the view that philosophical nonsense is the only tool for conveying the "correctness" of transcendental solipsism without letting that "correctness" lose its essential nature as something inexpressible. Williams' emphasis on this

inexpressibility and the importance of philosophical nonsense in *manifesting* this inexpressibility can be taken as a way of paying attention to the larger background of transcendental facts that cannot be explained at all by spoken language.

1.2.2 Going outside the "global conception of language"

Another way to clarify the nonsense involved in Williams' transcendental reading is to understand the global conception of language that Wittgenstein's philosophy is concerned with and to relate that idea with the nonsense that results from the illusion of thinking that one can go outside that global conception. The global conception of language is significant because it is the conception of language that constitutes the "transcendental 'we'". For Williams, the tendency to turn this global conception of language into something empirical has led critics to attribute relativism to Wittgenstein's later work. But just like the inexpressible solipsism of the *Tractatus*, that "relativism" cannot even be raised in language. Attempts to express that "relativism" involve the illusion of being able to find a language outside the limits of language of the "transcendental 'we'" and confuses philosophical investigation with empirical investigation. This empirical approach to describing the "transcendental 'we'" involves a "side-ways on view" of the global conception of language. It is an approach that undermines the immediacy of the first person perspective character of our knowledge of the "transcendental 'we'" (Williams 1974: 79, 80). For Williams, we are always immersed in the global conception of language that constitute the "transcendental 'we'". Hence, any attempt to describe the "transcendental 'we'" ends up describing something else. This makes descriptions of the "transcendental 'we'" nonsensical.

According to Williams (1974), a common feature of the "transcendental 'I'" and the "transcendental 'we'" is that they both involve a first person perspective on language. This first person perspective can be understood as relating to Wittgenstein's early and later work in this manner: whereas in the *Tractatus* the "limits of language" refer to a language "which *I* alone understand", in the *Investigations* the "limits of language" refer to a language that "*we*" alone as native speakers understand.[34] Notice that even as the former comes in the singular form while the latter comes in the plural form, both involve a certain understanding from within. This is because the "limits of language" associated with the "transcendental subject" is a pervasive condition that accompanies all our uses of language. It is a perspective from which there can be no meaningful alternative (Williams 1974: 86). In the case of the "transcendental 'we'" in

[34] There is an allusion here to *TLP* 5.62 as cited in Williams (1974: 76).

Wittgenstein's later work, the social customs and practices that constitute "the limits of language" have become so linked to our consciousness that they have also become the inexpressible limits of whatever we understand.

This implies that the limits of language associated with the "transcendental 'we'" is different from the limits of language of various ethnolinguistic groups where each language stand to each other as alternative means for thought and communication. According to Williams (ibid.: 83), this ethnolinguistic conception of language is the narrow conception of language that the global conception of language stands in contrast with. It takes a third person perspective to language which turns our reflection on language into something empirical and denies the "transcendental subject" altogether. Thus, it ends up with a conception of language that is of scientific, rather than philosophical, concern. [35] Williams (1974: 83-84) associates this narrow conception of language with that of Whorf. For Williams, Whorf gives an empirical interpretation to the Wittgensteinian maxim "the limits of our language are the limits of our world". He takes the term "our language" to mean the language of a particular ethnolinguistic group like English, Norwegian, or Filipino. Such a conception of language allows for different kind of concepts within a particular cultural group while excluding other meaningful concepts in the culture of other languages. In that conception, the denial or exclusion of one language over another implies alternative languages that are equally intelligible and capable of being explained from outside that particular language.

By contrast, the conception of language associated with the "transcendental 'we'" is so pervasive and part of our thinking that it has become inseparable from our thinking itself. Williams explains that the "transcendental 'we'" is a metaphysical subject and a metaphysical subject is "the condition of being something in the world as I experience it and yet at the same time [something that is] necessarily there whenever anything was there" (ibid.: 78). Here Williams' description of the metaphysical subject can be read as also implying a conception of language that is global in a way that it is inseparable from our consciousness itself. In this sense, the language of the "transcendental 'we'" becomes something like a language which functions as the very form of our thought. Since at any moment there is no way outside our own thinking and the forms of language that constitute it, it follows that there is no direct way to describe the "transcendental 'we'".

[35] Williams seems to also associate this tendency to give an empirical description for the "transcendental 'we'" as an attempt to eliminate the existence of the observer presupposed by empirical phenomenalism and to actualize Carnap's conception of sense data as a "given that has no subject" (Williams 1974: 81)

Hence, the global conception of language that constitutes the "transcendental 'we'" does not allow for any explanation at all. There is simply no alternative language from outside the global conception of language from which affirmations or denials about the "transcendental 'we'" can be advanced. There is a type of language that we use when we understand and learn an ethnolinguistic language that is distinct from (and in a sense prior to) that ethnolinguistic language. That form of language which functions as pervasive condition of our thinking when we understand anything at all is the global conception of language associated with the "transcendental 'we'". It is, as *TLP* 5.62 says, "the limits of my language" which also determine the "limits of my world". In this conception of language, Williams (1974: 84) says that there is no possibility for explaining what I cannot understand in the way Whorf might be able to explain alternative modes of understanding from another language.

The global conception of language of the "transcendental 'we'" is not a perspective we can leave for a moment to take on the perspective of another language. Being the world view that we always embrace (Williams 1974: 86), it is a language we employ even as we use another language. There is no other language from where it can be described or explained, but its presence is felt in its pervasive use. That use of language is characterized by a first person perspective that is inseparable from our direct experience of the form of our thinking itself. Williams refers to this direct experience of our form of thinking and use of language as the "first-person immediacy" that characterize the transcendental subject (Williams 1974: 80). Attempts to describe this "first person immediate experience" by means of language implies losing that immediacy. That description is misleading because it goes outside our concern for the thinking that constitutes our very mode of cognition at the particular moment. This implies a failure to describe the "transcendental 'we'" altogether.

This is the reason why the issue of relativism cannot even be raised against the "transcendental 'we'". The very idea of relativism implies the possibility of describing alternative world-views whose relationship to the "transcendental 'we'" can be described in a meaningful manner (whether it is one of falsity or incommensurability). But the relationship between our world view and the "transcendental 'we'" cannot be expressed at all. Since the global conception of language that makes up the "transcendental 'we'" is the world view we always embrace, any linguistic expression undermines its feature as something that comes from the "first person perspective". This turns the limits of language into the narrow conception of language (like that of Whorf) where we are able to distinguish "our" language from those of "others" (ibid.: 84).

To this narrow conception Williams writes:

> Nothing will do for an idealist interpretation, which merely puts any given 'we' in the world and then looks sideways at us. Under the idealist interpretation it is not a matter of recognising that we are one lot in the world among others, and in (principle at least) coming to understand and explain how *our* language conditions *our* view of the world, while that of others conditions theirs differently. *Rather, what the world is for us is shown by the fact that we can make sense of some things and not others*: or rather --- to lose the last remnants of an empirical and third-personal view ---in the fact that some things and not others make sense. (Williams 1974: 84 italics mine)

The passage above shows that for Williams, the narrow conception of language allows for a difference in meaning and thinking that can be understood and explained (ibid.). Those differences involve a contrast that allows for the identification and use of meaningful alternatives. However, the supposed alternatives to the language associated with the "transcendental 'we'" are alternatives that we cannot even begin to make sense of. From the perspective of the "transcendental 'we'", we are always completely immersed in the limits of our own language. These limits are also the limits of our thinking itself. It is in this sense that descriptions of the "transcendental 'we'" become pervasively vague, redundant, and ultimately nonsensical. That nonsensicality shows that we are actually trying to explain the very limits of our thought and language.

1.2.3 Showing what cannot be said

The fact that the limits of our language are "transcendental" provides the context under which descriptions of the "transcendental 'we'" become pervasively vague. This vagueness can be understood as the counterpart of what is nonsensical in Wittgenstein's later work. Williams explains that Wittgenstein's uses of the term "we" is characterized by a vagueness that reflect their nature as attempts to describe the transcendental "limits of thought". Thus, Wittgenstein's use of "we" becomes inescapable vague and nonsensical because they refer to *limits* that can only be *shown* not said.

Williams does not specify any particular passage where this "we" occurs, whether, for example, it refers to the "we" that describes Augustine's system of communication or the "we" that responds by pointing to other systems of communication (see *PI* 3). But one can take it that Williams is not really referring to the use of "we" itself as the term occurs in Wittgenstein's later work, Williams seems to locate this "we" in the context of the vagueness that characterize Wittgenstein's remarks on when we have knowledge of what an expression means or when we know how to apply a rule in a particular situation. This explains why most of the passages that

Williams' cites from Wittgensteinian are those related to the limits of reason or justification. These passages come mostly from *On Certainty* (*OC,* 1969). Williams, for example, cites *OC* 94 where Wittgenstein explains that a world-picture is acquired not because of its correctness but because it is "the inherited background against which [one] distinguishes between true and false", *OC* 298 where Wittgenstein talks about certainty that is not really the certainty found in each individual but that of the certainty that comes from "belong(ing) to a community bound together by science and education", and *OC* 559 where Wittgenstein talks about how language-games are "not reasonable or unreasonable" but there are just there "like our life".[36]

In the context of Williams' essay, these remarks from *OC* are cited to show how Wittgenstein denies the possibility of an evaluative comparison between different world pictures. But these remarks also illustrate how Williams understands knowledge about the "transcendental 'we'" as something that involves a certain inability of language to talk about its own limits. In this regard, Williams claims that the transcendental nature of Wittgenstein's later philosophy can be understood as involving attempts to go beyond the limits of language (Williams 1974: 93). Descriptions of these attempts inevitably result to an inescapable vagueness characteristic of nonsense because they involve a failure of language to go outside itself in the attempt to describe its own limits.

This can also be understood as the reason why Williams often ends up with the same vagueness as Wittgenstein when it comes to talking about the "transcendental 'we'". When we reflect about the "transcendental 'we'", Williams (ibid.: 85) says that "what one would become conscious of… is something like: *how we go on*. And how we go on is a matter of how we think, and speak, and intentionally and socially conduct ourselves". The "transcendental 'we'" cannot be explained by reference to particular linguistic groups and that it can only be "shown by the fact that we can make sense of some things and not others" (ibid.: 84). Here, the vagueness of Williams' remarks about the "transcendental 'we'" can be compared to the same vagueness that characterizes Wittgenstein's responses to the rule sceptic. Wittgenstein, for example, says in *PI* 201 that "there is way of grasping a rule which is *not* an *interpretation*, but is exhibited in what we call 'obeying the rule' and 'going against it' in actual cases".

In understanding these remarks by Williams and Wittgenstein above, a reader may ask, "What does 'how we go on' mean?", "What is it that constitutes the fact that we can make sense of some things and not others?", and "What is it that is exhibited by things that we call 'obeying the rule'?" The reader may complain that both Williams and Wittgenstein do not seem to be

[36] See Williams (1974: 88-89).

responding with a determinate content that would make their remarks informative. But one can understand the reason for this vagueness and indeterminacy as coming from the fact that they are stating transcendental claims about limits of our language: they are remarks that try to state what cannot be stated. One clarificatory hint for the reader about this is on how Williams used the term "show" in "shown by the fact that …" (ibid.: 84) and how Wittgenstein uses "exhibited" in "exhibited in what we call …" (*PI* 201). Through these hints, the reader might realize that both Williams' and Wittgenstein's remarks are not meant to be understood in the usual way: they are both grammatical remarks that have the function of *showing* the transcendental limits of language.

Thus, Williams claims that the main difficulty of Wittgenstein's philosophy is the difficulty of appealing to nonsense as the only viable alternative for making us understand "philosophical truths". Williams writes:

> The diffidence about how to put it comes once more from a problem familiar in the *Tractatus*: how to put a supposed philosophical truth which, if it is uttered, must be taken to mean an empirical falsehood, or worse. For our course, if our talk about numbers has been determined by our decisions, then one result of our decisions is that it must be nonsense to say that anything about a number has been determined by our decisions. (Williams ibid.: 95)

The passage above says that when philosophy uses language to go outside the global conception of language that constitutes the "transcendental 'we'" it comes up with a claim that seems to be empirically false, e.g. "numbers are determined by our decisions". And so, a way to salvage our understanding of the "truth" in that philosophical proposition is to interpret that claim as a nonsensical claim. That form of nonsense is used as a type of negation for conveying a non-empirical insight about the "transcendental 'we'". This approach is similar to my earlier discussion of how the negation of the empirical existence of the Tractarian metaphysical subject has the effect of "showing" its transcendental nature. Williams acknowledges that this way of understanding by means of nonsense is equally misleading. But his discussion of the non-empirical nature of the "transcendental 'we'" along with how philosophical talk on that subject becomes nonsensical indicates his inclination to treat Wittgenstein as someone who indeed ends up treating philosophical claims as nonsensical. Here, the use of nonsense (in relation to the vagueness of Wittgenstein's uses of the term "we") functions as ways of showing the transcendental nature of the plural form of the metaphysical subject that is indirectly referred to in Wittgenstein's later work.

So, the problem of Wittgensteinian transcendental idealism as described by Williams can be understood via a constructive dilemma: If transcendental claims are expressed

empirically, they are understood as false, and if they are expressed non-empirically they are understood as nonsensical. Since transcendental claims are expressed either empirically or non-empirically, then either they are understood as false or nonsensical. Williams can be understood as adopting the second horn of the dilemma; that of taking Wittgenstein to be endorsing transcendental insights in a non-empirical manner; and consequently, also of using "nonsense" as means for "showing" philosophical truths.

However, it bears noting how Williams' use of the term "nonsense" differs from that of Stenius. Both Williams and Stenius use the term nonsense as "*unsinnig"* rather than "s*innlos"*. However, Stenius' use of nonsense can be linked with the idea of inarticulate limits which can be clarified by the non-conventional or transitional uses of language. This inexpressibility and its attendant conception of nonsense goes away upon acquisition of the relevant competence in language in a mode of discourse. On the other hand, Williams' use of nonsense is closer to the idea of an ineffable limit. Though it is different from the ineffable mysticism of Schopenhauer, the "truth" of transcendental idealism and the determination made possible by the "transcendental 'we'" remain inexpressible even upon clarification. This inexpressibility, however, is coherent enough to be understood as somehow "correct" just like the inexpressible but correct solipsism of the *Tractatus*. In Williams, the use of negation seems to lead to the idea of transcendental truths, where the term "transcendental" means inexpressible rather than inarticulate. Both Williams and Stenius, however, have a conception of nonsense that is of special interest to philosophy in so far as it is concerned with the kind of nonsense that results from the need to articulate transcendental insights about the limits of our thought.

1.2.4 On the nature and limits of "philosophical knowledge"

An important implication of Williams' transcendental reading of Wittgenstein is that the investigation on the limits of thought turns philosophy into a reflective activity whose primary result is self-knowledge. Philosophy is concerned with the limits of *our* thought, and so it is first and foremost a criticism of our concepts and our ways of life (rather than others whose ways of life are different from us). This is a consequence of the transcendental solipsism that Williams (ibid.: 79) attributes to Wittgenstein's early and later work. The transcendental solipsism that is also found in Wittgenstein's later work can be understood as leading philosophy into a kind of inward turn toward investigating the self as a transcendental subject. In the later Wittgenstein, it now occurs in plural form as the "transcendental 'we'" but it is the same metaphysical subject that the *Tractatus* was concerned with (*TLP* 5.641). The difficulty of this inward turn to the transcendental subject is also the sense in which nonsense becomes

significant for Wittgenstein's conception of philosophy. The idea of nonsense serves as a reminder that our claims become philosophically relevant not when they are proven true or false by some form of empirical inquiry (even if that inquiry were that of an ethnolinguistic or anthropological kind), but when we realize that they lead us to some form acquaintance with the limits of our language and thought.

In this regard, reflection by means of language-games can be compared to reflection about the limits of language that constitute the "transcendental 'we'". Both involve acquaintance with differences in the use of language that we cannot explain because of how they press us to think outside the practices that constitute the very limits of our thought. Here, the result of attempts to reflect on alternative language-games is also the same as the result of attempts to reflect on an alternative forms of "transcendental 'we'". It results to nonsense in so far we cannot really understand anything outside the limits of our own thinking. To this problem, Williams writes:

> [T]he difficulties we have now run into raise the question of whether Wittgenstein is really thinking at all in terms of actual groups of human beings whose activities we want to understand and explain. I think the answer to that is basically 'no'. We are not concerned so much with the epistemology of differing world views… but with ways of exploring our world-view. We are concerned with the [the use of] imagination; to make a different practice a more familiar idea to us, and hence to make us more conscious of the practice we have. Seen in this light, the alternatives are not the sort of socially actual alternatives… Rather, the business of considering them is part of finding our way around inside our own view, feeling our way out to the points at which we begin to lose hold on it (or its hold on us), and things begin to be hopelessly strange to us; they are alternatives for us, markers of how far we might go and still remain within our world- a world leaving which would not mean that what we saw was something different, but just that we ceased to see**.** (Williams ibid.: 91-92)

In this passage just cited, we can pay attention to how Williams talks about leaving a world "which would not mean that what we saw was something different, but just that we ceased to see". Here, Williams is being metaphorical, perhaps unavoidably. This is because when he takes Wittgenstein to be taking interest in an exploration of different linguistic practices those "differences" cannot be understood. Hence, they also cannot be explained in language. When we "leave" the different practices or language-games that constitute the world-view that makes up our "transcendental 'we'", it does not imply an understanding of "something different". It implies a failure to understand altogether. Leaving the limits of language that constitutes the "transcendental 'we'" implies putting our faculty of understanding to a breaking point and failing to understand anything at all. Thus, the "markers" Williams alludes to in the above passage can be understood as referring to cases when Wittgenstein's philosophical remarks

present nonsensical "alternatives". These are not genuine alternatives at all in the sense that they are options out there in the world where our failure to understand simply leads us to choose another meaningful alternative. Rather, these "alternatives" compel us to reflect on the things we may have to change in ourselves and in our way of thinking as a kind of gestalt shift to develop the ability to understand what is at hand.

Thus, Williams (ibid.: 90) can be understood as saying that when we reflect on the conception of language of the "transcendental 'we'", we will come to realize that the transcendental subject, which is none other than us, is completely submerged in our own world-view. Hence, either the world view of other groups becomes a function of our own world-view, or the transcendental subject has a world view identical to the world-view we intend to study and we end up with some kind of redundant description of what our own thinking is like (ibid.: 91). In both cases, we are led to a conception of philosophy whose only claim to knowledge is knowledge of the limits of *our* thinking and of how those limits constitute who "we" are from a philosophical perspective.

1.3 Lear's Transcendental Anthropology: a developmental account

Finally, we now reach Lear's transcendental reading of Wittgenstein. Aside from its contrast with Stenius, an interesting aspect of Lear's transcendental reading is how it develops salient aspects of Williams' reading of Wittgenstein into his own transcendental reading and how that reading gives a more definite and committed tone to the idea of a transcendental Wittgenstein. I believe that one of the most significant ideas that can be attributed to Lear's transcendental reading is his way of solving the dilemma of transcendental philosophizing by putting that dilemma in the context of a Kantian dialectic. Lear affirms Williams' reading on how Wittgenstein's later philosophy involves a Kantian concern for self-understanding via inquiry on the "transcendental 'we'", and Lear now calls that idea "our-mindedness*"*. Yet, Lear differs from Williams in terms of he frames that inquiry in a dialectic which demonstrates a conception of philosophy that "ripples through the rest of our lives" (Lear 1986: 283). This can be taken to imply that transcendental philosophy can give importance to the metaphysical subject without necessarily turning that sense of importance into something solipsistic (even if it were of the inexpressible kind that William's depicted). For Lear, this dialectical relationship between the transcendental and the anthropological, i.e., the idea of a transcendental anthropology, is something that Wittgenstein himself was not able to formulate because his philosophy was confined to a "reflective account of unreflective practices" (ibid.: 283). Hence,

we can find that Lear takes Wittgenstein's later philosophy to be having a therapeutic strain that is "not developed" (ibid. 1989: 38).

To date, Lear has published four articles that present a significant discussion of his views on the transcendental nature of Wittgenstein's later philosophy. These are: "Leaving the World Alone" (LWA, 1982), "The Disappearing 'We'" (TDW, 1984), "Transcendental Anthropology" (TA, 1986), and "On Reflection: The Legacy of Wittgenstein's later Philosophy" (OR, 1989). Among these articles, I believe that TA contains Lear's most recent and focused version of the transcendental nature of the Wittgenstein's later philosophy. His later article OR has a broader scope and merely elaborates the transcendental ideas he has already been discussing in TA.[37] The earlier two articles on the other hand LWA and TDW involve views on nonsense and inexpressibility that are not as pronounced in his later work. With minor revisions, TA has been reprinted together with TDW in Lear's book *Open Minded* (1998) with TDW as the concluding article. So, one can at least consider these two articles as consistent with each other. But TA is still the more recent work in the sequence of publication and presumably also in the development of Lear's transcendental reading of Wittgenstein.

Furthermore, while Lear acknowledges Williams' help and influence in all his works, it is in TA that Lear explicitly states his intention to reply to the dilemma of transcendental philosophizing raised by Bernard Williams (1974).[38] Hence, my plan for discussion in this section is to present the idea of a transcendental Wittgenstein by focusing on Lear's TA. However, my discussion of TA shall also make use of the various amplifications and contrast provided by Lear's other works. I believe that there is a kind of development in Lear's transcendental reading of Wittgenstein and that this development can be made evident if Lear's TA is presented in a comparative manner, i.e., as providing some contrast with his other works.[39]

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[37] In OR, there is a sense in which Lear attempts to synthesize all his articles on the idea of a transcendental reading of the later Wittgenstein via the problem of philosophical consciousness. However, its main thesis, on how Wittgenstein fails to consider the reflective aspect of primitive practices, can already be found in TA.

[38] See Lear's TA in *Open Minded* (1998) especially footnote 9 in p. 335 and footnote 31 in p. 336.

[39] Note that the reprint of TA in *Open Minded* (1998) is not completely identical with the earlier version of TA as it appears in *Subject, Thought, and Context* (1986). The reprinted article contains additional explanations that are not found in the earlier version. For example, the first paragraph of p. 269 in the 1986 version of TA is rephrased and elaborated further in p. 249-252 of the 1998 version, and p. 249 up to the end of the section in p. 252 of TA in the 1986 version is not found in the 1996 version. In the 1998 version of TA, Lear raises the idea of a non-relativist Wittgenstein immediately in a way that foreshadows his discussion of this issue in the latter section. It also contains a formulation of transcendental reasoning via modus ponens and a citation from *On Certainty* (p. 250-251) which is not found in the early version. For purposes of my discussion which involves the aim of tracing a certain development in Lear's position, I shall cite mostly from the old version of TA and then shift to the 1998 reprint for explicit claims not found in the 1986 version.

My discussion shall proceed in the following order of topics:

1.3.1 The dilemma of Wittgenstein's transcendental philosophy

1.3.2 Response to the dilemma: Dialectical Interpretation

1.3.3 Philosophical knowledge: self-understanding as pure apperception

1.3.4 On avoiding the side-ways on view

1.3.1 The dilemma of Wittgenstein's transcendental philosophy

In LWA, Lear does not mince words in saying that Wittgenstein's early and later philosophy consist of the aim and burden of conveying transcendental insights. He writes:

> Wittgenstein's dilemma is that that he wants, as a philosopher, to convey transcendental insights but realized that there is no language in which to communicate them. When the philosopher, in the hope of saying something philosophical, tries to stretch beyond the bounds of language, he lapses into nonsense. (Lear 1982: 383)

In TA, this dilemma, I think, finds expression in the conflict between the so-called transcendental and anthropological elements in the *Investigations*, and in how Lear (1986: 266) describes the conflict between them as the philosophically significant reason why the *Investigations* remained an "unfinished work". This is an interesting claim given that we can ask whether Wittgenstein was simply unable to finish the work or whether he simply moved to another topic due to the philosophical reason that Lear mentions. An author usually begins a work with the intention of finishing it and there is biographical support that Wittgenstein continued to work on his philosophy even after having been diagnosed with the disease (i.e., cancer) that led to his eventual demise. Erbacher (2016: 29), for example, describes letters and conversations which showed that Wittgenstein's failing health did not prevent him from continuing to write and work on his philosophy. However, what Wittgenstein worked on were themes on knowledge and certainty which he did not intend to include in the *Investigations*. And so, we can indeed ask if Wittgenstein was unable to finish the *Investigations* due to reasons that are biographically accidental or whether he simply left it unfinished due to reasons that are philosophically significant, i.e., because of the natural conflict between transcendental and anthropological elements in the *Investigations* (Lear 1986: 266).

At the outset of Lear's discussion in TA, he draws the anthropological element in the *Investigations* from Wittgenstein's emphasis on the notion of language-games and how the term highlights the fact that the speaking of a language is part of an activity or a "form of life" (*PI* 23). Lear (ibid.: 266-67) takes this to mean that philosophy involves an investigation of language that is inseparable from the study of customs and practices. The transcendental

element, on the other hand, is drawn by Lear from Wittgenstein's insistence that reflection on the language involved in those practices is not of the empirical kind. For Lear, Wittgenstein's inquiry on the nature of rule-following can be compared with Kant's *a priori* inquiry on the application of concepts to objects. They both result in non-empirical insights (ibid.: 270). In the case of Wittgenstein's *Investigations,* this non-empirical insight refers to insights on *how we go on* with the application of our concepts and on how those applications also involve self-understanding (which Lear refers to as insights about "our mindedness"). So Lear claims that the notion of transcendental inquiry does not have to be construed in terms of *a priori* or necessary structures, it can also be taken to apply to Wittgenstein's non-empirical insights about rule-following and the self-understanding that comes with it (ibid.).

According to Lear, the transcendental element of rule-following is in tension with the anthropological element because the anthropological is often construed empirically while the transcendental is often construed non-empirically (or in a manner that is exclusively *a priori)*. In this context, anthropological inquiry turns philosophical insights into something too contentful; it becomes in danger of being collapsed into the empirical sciences. Transcendental inquiry, on the other hand, turns philosophical insights into a kind of non-empirical investigation that often becomes empty and useless (ibid.: 270-72). In TDW, Lear can also be understood as saying the same thing. The dilemma of transcendental anthropology is formulated through Williams' dilemma on how to understand insights about the "transcendental 'we'". The challenge is to be able to communicate those insights through descriptions that can be understood in ways that are neither completely vacuous nor completely empirical. Lear writes:

> If, on the one hand, the 'we' does disappear, then it seems we are left investigating the 'conditions of thought' or 'the way the world must be', having lost the insight of their essential relation to our mindedness: of our routes of interest, perceptions of salience, feelings of naturalness. If, on the other hand, we try to make the 'we' vivid, then Wittgenstein's philosophy collapses into philosophical sociology, studying how one tribe among others goes on. (Lear 1984: 238)

In this passage, Lear refers to Williams' "transcendental 'we'" by means of "we" and the so-called disappearance of the "we" refers to the emptiness that results from when the 'transcendental 'we'' is subjected to analysis. As Williams has earlier argued, there is simply no space outside the limits of our thinking through which that analysis can be made. The limits of language associated with the plural form of the metaphysical subject, which Lear also refers to in his "we", encompass all instances of thinking and understanding. It is a conception of *limits* that is global. Hence, when we deal with what is mentioned above as the "conditions of thought" or "the way the world must be" in a way that treats them as truly transcendental, we

are left with words that are not able to convey anything. In this sense, the passage can be understood as saying that our philosophical claims become empty because they "lose their essential relation to our mindedness". On the other hand, when philosophical claims are made more vivid, which in the language of TA means being "more contentful", then the concern of philosophical inquiry becomes no different from those of sciences like philosophical sociology or empirical anthropology.

Hence, the dilemma of transcendental anthropology that is expressed in Lear's TA can be understood as a culmination of the problem of transcendental philosophizing that was earlier raised not just in Lears' LWA and TDW but also in Williams' WI: how can we have a philosophy that is able to adopt both the transcendental stance and the anthropological stance simultaneously? (Lear 1986: 270).

While Lear seems to be talking about the same problem in all his three articles mentioned (LWA, TDW, TA), it seems to me that there is some change in his reading of Wittgenstein's response to the dilemma. I would like give an outline of this change by contrasting his position in LWA and TA.

In LWA, Lear can be understood as saying that the dilemma between the transcendental and the anthropological is something that Wittgenstein was not really able to resolve, and this is shown by the manner in which Lear describes Wittgenstein as uncomfortably inconsistent in his treatment and attitude to transcendental philosophy (Lear 1982: 383). Lear explains that the traditional understanding of transcendental philosophy implies a search for a language outside our form of life from which to philosophize (ibid.: 383; 1986: 268). In this sense, the anthropological stance of not going outside our form of life is actually a call to end philosophy (an interpretation of Wittgenstein that was earlier advanced by Stenius). Philosophy's concern with the investigation of language essentially involves the illusory task of stepping outside the limits of language to find another perspective from which to understand language in a reflective manner. Yet, Lear claims that Wittgenstein in both his early and later philosophy finds himself doing just that, i.e., philosophizing about language and taking the illusory external perspective which he has considered to be nonsensical (Lear 1982: 383).

In TA, there seems to be some change in Lear's position, Lear still maintains that the dilemma between the transcendental and the anthropological is something that Wittgenstein was not able to resolve. But Lear now provides an outline for the idea of a transcendental anthropology that can be drawn from the dialectic found in the *Investigations*. For Lear, philosophy is primarily concerned with insights about our mindedness. But insights about our mindedness need not be non-empirical in a way that they become *a priori* and empty, neither

do they have to be contentful in a way that they become empirically contingent or false. For Lear, a middle way of understanding philosophical insights is if we conceive of the transcendental and the anthropological as having a dialectical relationship. And so, I now turn to Lear's response to the problem of transcendental anthropology via what he calls "dialectical interpretation".

1.3.2 Response to the dilemma: Dialectical Interpretation

The dialectical interpretation of the relationship between the transcendental and the anthropological can be understood by contrast with what Lear calls the split-level interpretation. Hence, I will first clarify Lear's idea of the split-level interpretation and its underlying treatment of the transcendental and anthropological elements in the *Investigations*. Then, I shall draw a contrast that has the effect of defining Lear's dialectical interpretation. Lear's conception of the transcendental and the anthropological seems to vary depending on whether we are talking about the split-level or the dialectical interpretation. Lear's dialectical interpretation gives only a heuristic definition of the transcendental and the anthropological due to the interactive *and* constitutive nature of the dialectic that can be found in the *Investigations*. Hence, there is a sense in which this definition by means of contrast is necessary to clarify Lear's idea of dialectical interpretation. I believe that this dialectical interpretation is essential for understanding Lear's idea of transcendental anthropology itself. So, let me begin by discussing the split-level interpretation and how that interpretation becomes elaborated in Lear's other articles on the transcendental reading of Wittgenstein.

In the split-level interpretation, the transcendental and the anthropological are considered to have dichotomous domains and functions. In this interpretation, the anthropological offers a genuine empirical explanation for the different applications of a concept, while the transcendental offers "a reflective account of what the explanation consists in" (Lear 1986: 277). Lear explains that the anthropological element is at play when we act on the basis of reasons, which are essentially the rules defined by our customs and practices that do not depend on our consciousness. The transcendental element, on the other hand, is at play when we reflect on the content of our mind in the course of those activities and we realize that we are "acting blindly" because those rules fail to explain the variety of ways by which we actually go about in applying our concepts (ibid.: 278).

To illustrate the idea of the transcendental and the anthropological in the context of the split-level interpretation, Lear gives the example of a person engaged in cooking (ibid.: 260-261, 281). On the anthropological level, a person may be cooking because his behaviour accords

with the practice of cooking. But this anthropological view is different from the person's "transcendental experience" in the act of cooking itself, and this may consist of his mind's preoccupation with a philosophical essay. The person is still cooking though his mind is somewhere else because he has been acquainted with the practice of cooking and his behaviour can still be distinguished from that of a man who does not have any knowledge of cooking at all. For this latter case, Lear (ibid.: 281) gives the example of a man who eats only raw food or who pours flour to predict the weather. The example of the absent-minded cook is still anthropologically intelligible in comparison to the behaviour of a man who eats only raw food and has had no similar experience of what we consider as cooking. The latter behaviour, on the other hand, would be completely strange for us.

We can have a clearer idea of what Lear means by the "transcendental element" and "anthropological element" if we consider Lear's TDW (1984). In that article, the transcendental element may be understood as the subjective aspect of rule-following which signals the "inner experience of comprehension". The anthropological element, on the other hand, refers to the objective aspect of rule-following which signals the relevant outward behaviour or practical ability (ibid.: 225). The subjective element of rule following is described as the inner experience of understanding a rule which comes to our mind in a flash and does not "fit a use" extended in time (*PI* 139). [40] Lear (ibid.: 231) also says it is this subjective element which Wittgenstein refers to when the learner in *PI* 151-152 says with confidence "Now I understand!". The fact that this subjective element of rule following has the immediacy of a first person perspective that resists further analysis provides grounds for associating it with the transcendental element. On the other hand, Lear's TDW also describes the objective aspect of rule following in terms of the practical ability manifested in the relevant outward behaviour (Lear ibid.: 225) . The fact that this objective element is determined by our customs and practices provides grounds for associating it with the anthropological element. It is characterized by a "third person perspective" that does not depend on the personal experience of rule-followers. Thus, as mentioned earlier, a man may have the practical ability to cook regardless of whether his mind is somewhere else. Because of some prior experience or training, his behaviour will still be intelligible for us as "cooking".

Lear explains that both the "transcendental-subjective" and the "anthropological-objective" elements are constitutive of what it means to follow a rule. But it is also important to note that they cannot be reduced to each other (ibid.: 231). And so the need for transcendental

[40] See Lear 1984: 224-25.

deduction comes about because there can be a disconnection between the subjective aspect and the objective aspect of rule following. This disconnection, however, is at the crux of how the split-level interpretation views the relation between the anthropological and transcendental as one of dichotomy.

In the split-level interpretation, the dichotomous relationship between the anthropological and transcendental puts the philosophical in a contrary relationship with the empirical. If an inquiry is anthropological, then it is a form of empirical inquiry which also implies that it is not transcendental. Conversely, if an inquiry is transcendental, then it is a form of non-empirical inquiry which also implies that it is not anthropological. In this view, the anthropological is strictly associated with empirical inquiry (i.e. empirical anthropology) while the transcendental is strictly associated with non-empirical inquiry. There is no possibility for the empirical or the transcendental to influence each other. Since the transcendental is exclusively associated with the philosophical this also leads to a corresponding dichotomy between philosophical and empirical inquiry.

Lear explains that the split-level interpretation has the advantage of accounting for Wittgenstein's claim that philosophy "leaves everything as it is" and that philosophy does not interfere with the work of the sciences (Lear 1986: 270, 278, 282). For this point, Lear makes ample reference to his earlier work LWA (Lear 1982). In LWA, one can find the split-level interpretation in terms of Lear's depiction of the revisionary and non-revisionary elements of the *Investigations*. The anthropological element Lear refers to in TA can be understood as the *Investigations'* revisionary element in the sense that its empirical nature allows for a causality that has substantial influence on the world and our practices. The non-revisionary element, on the other hand, can be understood as the transcendental element. This transcendental element does not really aim at the understanding of the world but at the understanding of self. So, it is not concerned with causality and explanation in an empirical sense. Hence, in the split-level interpretation, the philosophical does not conflict with the empirical and vice versa. Each are left to a particular domain where they do their own work. This has the advantage of explaining the example above on cases where we can have an explanation for our cooking behaviour while at same time have no explanation for the transcendental content of our mind in the course of that behaviour. However, Lear (1986: 279) also claims that the split-level interpretation has the disadvantage of being unable to account for Wittgenstein's view on how meaning is responsible to use. [41]

[41] For Lear's actual discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of the split-level view, see TA (1986: 281-82).

Lear considers this latter implication as a great weakness. For him, philosophy is also an activity that people engage in and he claims that there is no such thing as a human activity that is so distinctive that it has no relationship at all to the rest of our lives. In this sense, Lear believes that philosophy is also a human activity that involves uses of language that has a natural flow and connection to our other activities in our everyday life, and this includes those activities in the domain of the empirical sciences (ibid: 279-80). So for Lear, if meaning is in fact responsible to use, then the split-level interpretation cannot maintain its implicit view that the distinction between the philosophical and the empirical is fixed (ibid.). Lear draws the idea that "meaning must be responsible to use" from Wittgenstein's claim that philosophy must "speak the language of everyday" (*PI* 120, Lear 1986: 279). For Lear, this call to "speak the language of everyday" does not imply that philosophy is not meant to stretch the meaning of our concepts. Rather, it should be taken to mean that philosophy should refrain from taking a God's perspective and that it should ground concepts in our particular activities (ibid.). Lear points out that words may acquire different meanings as we use them in our activities and "outstrip everyday use" (ibid.: 279). He says that this actually happens in legitimate philosophical activity, and he points out that Wittgenstein himself does this in his use of the term "language-game" (ibid.). Lear does not give much elaboration on this and so let me do it for him.

One can take Lear as saying that Wittgenstein's use of the term "language-game" is acceptable even though it expresses a special meaning because it is a term whose use remains grounded in particular activities or forms of life. Lear can be understood as emphasizing this "groundedness" [42] in the beginning parts of his essay as he discusses the *Investigations*' anthropological stance in relation to the study of language, i.e., the study of language is "naturally connected" to the study of specific activities (Lear 1986: 266-67). These particular activities or forms of life, however, are meant to be understood in terms of their function as the transcendental condition that allows for the possibility of assigning a determinate meaning to our claims. If we apply this idea to the case of the philosophical term "language-game", Wittgenstein was able convey a unique insight that would not have been possible with the term "language" or "game" alone by identifying many cases and contexts under which the idea of language-games is manifested (which also brought out the idea of family resemblances). These cases, along with the links we make of them, serve as the transcendental condition that give the

[42] The term "grounding" may not be the right word to describe the transcendental nature the inference that happens when philosophical concepts are given their meaning. Transcendental reasoning is non-foundational because transcendental conditions do not really allow for support. Their support can only be understood as something indirect as a result of a sense of absurdity discerned by an interlocutor. To the extent that an interlocutor does not see this absurdity, the transcendental argument fails.

term language-games its grounding and which enables it to convey the "philosophical" meaning it now has in Wittgenstein research.[43]

As I see it, Lear's description of the split-level interpretation implies a certain way of how philosophy secures a distinctive and protected domain against the empirical sciences, but this so-called securing of a philosophical domain also seems to make philosophy impotent and irrelevant to everyday life. This is unacceptable for Lear given that he views the practice of philosophy as doing the opposite: it is intermeshed with our daily activities and it also ripples through the various aspects of our lives in a "gradual way".[44] Note that Lear gives a negative assessment of Wittgenstein in the sense that he was not really able to fully develop this more interactive stance. And he (1980: 283) attributes this failure to how Wittgenstein confined himself to "giving a reflective account of unreflective practices". However, it seems that Lear also acknowledges Wittgenstein's intention to develop a conception of philosophy that is connected with our daily lives and this conception can be found in his discussion of how Wittgenstein endorsed a philosophy that "speaks the language of everyday" (Lear 1986: 279). In this aspect, Lear's takes Wittgenstein's *Investigations* as also *allowing* for the view that there is a continuous interaction between philosophical activity and our everyday activities, and that such interaction involves tension and conflict. This tension induces a kind of synthetic understanding that brings mutual benefit to both philosophical activity and everyday activity (say, for example, in the gradual creation of new terms for understanding and criticizing divergent action). To clarify this synthetic understanding further, let me discuss Lear's so-called dialectical interpretation.

According to Lear, the anthropological and the transcendental elements in the *Investigations* do not make a coherent whole, but they are "intended to make a coherent whole" (1986: 272). It is in the context of the process to clarify this "intended coherent whole" which we continually create that the dialectical relationship between the transcendental and the anthropological comes into play. Lear says that the dialectical interpretation views the anthropological as something that can be used "in the service of the transcendental" (ibid.). In this context, the tension between the transcendental and the anthropological is understood as something productive. By reflecting on how our concepts become naturally woven into our

[43] See also *Culture and Value* p. 50 where Wittgenstein becomes more explicit about how he applies words "in opposition to their original usage". He only makes the qualification that his way of extending the use of words should be distinguished from the approach used by science. His extension of words do not come with the support of "true or false opinions about natural processes".

[44] This gradualism can be inferred from Lear's citation and discussion of Wittgenstein's remark in *On Certainty* on how the notion of "our mindedness" is compared to the "movement" of the riverbed and how our practice of giving reasons can be understood as the water that flows through the riverbed (*OC* p. 91, Lear 1998:251).

customs and practices, we gain non-empirical insights on how we go on in the application of our rules and concepts. And Lear (ibid.: 273) says that some of these insights are normative just as the norms of language-use cannot be simply derived from a mere physical disposition to respond.

Lear suggests that the dialectical interpretation is sensitive to Wittgenstein's call on making "meaning responsible to use" (1986: 279; 1998: 262). In the dialectical interpretation, philosophical debate on the uses of an expression can inform our uses of language in everyday life and vice versa. This kind of responsibility of meaning to use is not found in the split-level view since the transcendental is placed in a different domain from the empirical. As I see it, this placing of the transcendental in a different domain can be understood as a consequence of the solipsistic conception of the transcendental subject that is found in Williams' reading of the later Wittgenstein.[45] Let me again explain how this is the case for the position portrayed by Williams and how that position can be construed as an instance of the split-level view. If Wittgenstein's philosophy is indeed concerned with acquiring and articulating insights about the "transcendental 'we'" and if everything depends on the "transcendental 'we'" in an inexpressible manner, criticisms about philosophical activity that come from the sciences will be confused in the same way that philosophical criticism of scientific inquiry will be inappropriate. However, if we are now asked what the specific domain of philosophy is, the split-level interpretation taken by Williams (1974) might simply say that it is misleadingly nonsensical to talk about a philosophical domain because it belongs to the transcendentally inexpressible. This transcendental-inexpressible solipsistic view is implicit in the split-level interpretation, and it seems to clarify Lear's remark on how the split-level interpretation conceives of philosophy as a "self-contained activity that provides insight to other activities which are themselves unaffected by philosophical reflection." (Lear 1986: 282). In the case of Williams, those insights are indeed philosophically true, but their transcendental nature renders them inexpressible. The problem, however, is that this notion of transcendental-inexpressibility comes with a great weakness: i.e., it presents philosophy as having no effect on our everyday life at all.

In this context, the dialectic interpretation between the transcendental and the anthropological can be construed as an indirect criticism of the transcendental solipsism found

[45] This idea is also found in Hacker not just in his 1972 edition of *Insight and Illusion* but also in his later work "Wittgenstein and the Autonomy of Humanistic understanding" (2001). In that later article, the emphasis on the autonomy of the transcendental subject seems to be transferred to the autonomy of grammar in a way that it becomes independent from the encroachment of the sciences.

in Williams' portrayal of the later Wittgenstein. Lear can be understood as agreeing with Williams' view that Wittgenstein's later philosophy is similar to his early philosophy in the concern for gaining insights about the metaphysical subject.[46] But Lear differs from Williams in denying that this concern is solipsistic (even if that solipsism were conceived as inexpressible). This solipsism is addressed by the idea of dialectical interpretation between the transcendental and the empirical and by a conception of philosophy as a human activity that forms a "webbed whole" with other activities (ibid.: 280). This connected and dialectical relationship undermines the view that there is a stable distinction between the philosophical and the empirical (ibid.: 279). It also undermines the view that there is a type of language use that belongs uniquely to the domain of philosophy, e.g., those uses of language that are linked with the idea of "philosophical nonsense".

Hence, I believe it is important to note how Lear's TA can be understood as dropping the idea of a "philosophical nonsense" that can be found in Williams, Stenius, and even in Lear's own earlier works (LWA, TDW). In TA, philosophical claims are still not true or false in the way empirical claims are, but there is no longer a distinct domain for philosophical inquiry that it no longer seems fitting to use the term "philosophical nonsense". Thus, Lear claims that under the dialectical interpretation philosophical reflection no longer leads to a uniquely philosophical view on the practice of giving explanations. What it leads to is an attitude to the practice of giving explanations that permeates through the various reason-giving activities in our lives. This practice of explanation may extend, for example, to ordinary activities like that of flour-measuring (see Lear 1986: 282-283). TA still involves a conception of philosophy that emphasizes the difficulty of dealing with a nonsense that avoids the idea of a sideways on perspective. It still involves the challenge of being able to say that there is nothing outside the limits of language while not ending up being "on the outside" looking in. However, this kind of transcendental nonsense is interspersed in all domains of discourse, not just in philosophy.

According to Lear (1986: 280), the dialectical interaction between the transcendental and the anthropological has the consequence of taking away the isolation and immunity of philosophical discourse. In this interpretation, philosophy is no longer a self-contained activity. It is viewed as open to engaging in the reflective activity of empirical anthropology to come up with non-empirical insights about the limits of the meaningful application of our concepts and on how those limits bring insights about "our mindedness". Lear writes:

[46] See, for example, Lear's more explicit reference to the metaphysical subject in TA (1986: 292-93)

> It is therefore too quick to assume that empirical anthropology must be a less reflective discipline than transcendental anthropology. Empirical anthropology may incorporate a tremendous amount of self-reflection and self-understanding. To remain empirical, it need only continue to offer explanations of the tribe it studies: explanations which may cover the anthropologists in the tribe who are doing the explaining.
> There can, therefore, be no isolated and immune level of philosophical discourse; though not for the reasons usually advanced. Words may acquire a special meaning within philosophical activity. However, since our lives form a (perhaps webbed) whole, this use tends to work its way into 'ordinary use'. Furthermore, philosophical activity is not the only reflective activity there is. In so far as the special use is the outcome of reflection, it may engage with the claims of other reflective enterprises, such as empirical anthropology (Lear ibid.: 280)

The context of this passage comes from Lear's attempt to distinguish philosophical from empirical inquiry in light of the dialectical interpretation. Philosophical inquiry is usually associated with transcendental inquiry, while empirical inquiry is usually associated with anthropological inquiry. However, Lear's dialectical interpretation seems to undermine this common association. Because the domain of the transcendental is viewed as having a mutual interaction with the domain of the anthropological, the corresponding distinction between the philosophical and empirical becomes blurred. Hence, we can find the passage above showing that, for Lear, it is not reflective activity and self-understanding which distinguishes the philosophical from the empirical sciences. Empirical anthropology may in fact be also involved those kinds of activities. For Lear (ibid.: 280), what makes reflective activity philosophical and transcendental is that "purports to provide non-empirical insight". In the case mentioned above, empirical anthropology remains empirical, as opposed to philosophical, because it continues to offer explanations of the tribe as if from the outside. No such explanation is relevant if we consider the "first person access" which characterize the non-empirical nature of philosophical insights. In this context, Lear takes insights to be philosophical if they have something to do with claims about "our-mindedness" (ibid.: 284).

In clarifying this point further, it will be useful to draw a distinction between "non-empirical insight" and "non-empirical inquiry". Lear can be understood as associating philosophical and transcendental inquiry with "non-empirical insight" rather than "non-empirical inquiry". Under the dialectical interpretation, Lear says that what makes a subject matter transcendental or empirical is not the subject matter itself but how the subject matter is considered (ibid. 1986: 283-84; 1998: 266). Though Lear does not directly say so, it seems that the dialectical interpretation implies that empirical inquiry can also be philosophical if it ends up with non-empirical insight about "our mindedness". As in the case of the empirical

anthropologist, the course of his inquiry on the practices of other tribes might lead him to insights about himself and the limits of how he views the world through an examination of the waxing and waning of meaning that characterize his judgments of other practices. Though they come from an inquiry that is supposedly empirical or scientific, these insights are non-empirical, and hence, philosophical, for being involved in an inward gaze toward the empirical anthropologist's own consciousness. In that instance, the empirical anthropologist becomes a philosopher (or what Lear might call "transcendental anthropologist"). The anthropologist's insights are now philosophical because they are not explanations. They are not about things in the world or about items in our mind, but about our "form of awareness of the judging activity itself" (Lear 1986: 286).

For Lear, this form of awareness is the main concern of Wittgenstein's philosophy and it is the reason why his philosophy is transcendental. This form of awareness cannot itself be an object of predication or judgment because it is characterized by "a first person access to our lives" that we cannot go outside of and observe (ibid.: 284). In this remark, Lear can be taken to allude to the "first person perspective" feature that characterize Williams (1974) "transcendental 'we'" as he notes that "access" rather "perspective" is the right word to characterize the immediacy which characterize the transcendental insights emphasized by Wittgenstein's work (ibid.). This form of awareness is "our mindedness", and Lear says that "a person is minded in a certain way if he has the perceptions of salience, routes of interest, feelings of naturalness in a following a rule, and so on which constitute being part of a certain form of life" (see Lear 1986: 275; 1998: 249,250).

Lear's definition of 'our mindedness' sounds like some sort of paraphrase of what Cavell (1962:74) earlier wrote in "The Availability of Wittgenstein's Later Philosophy" : "on the whole what we do is a matter of our sharing routes of interest and feeling, modes of response, senses of humour and of significance and of fulfilment, of what is outrageous, of what is similar to what else, what a rebuke, what forgiveness, of when an utterance is an assertion, when an appeal, when an explanation all the whirl of organism Wittgenstein calls 'forms of life'". Lear also seems to draw the problem of transcendental philosophizing by drawing inspiration from Cavell's insights on how the *Investigations* involves a fundamental concern for self-knowledge via knowledge of our forms of life. Hence, Lear formulates the difficulty of philosophical self-knowledge in terms of an analogy with the difficulty of coming to understand Kant's pure apperception. So I now proceed to discuss Lear's notion of "our mindedness" and how it leads to the idea that philosophy aims for the kind of self understanding expressed in Kant's pure apperception.

1.3.3 Philosophical knowledge: self-understanding as pure apperception

In this section, I will clarify the sense in which Lear shares Williams' view that Wittgenstein's later philosophy finds the investigation of a metaphysical subject important. Specifically, I shall discuss Lear's views on how the dialectical relationship between the transcendental and the anthropological becomes a significant approach to acquiring insights about the metaphysical subject. In Lear's works, the Tractarian metaphysical subject and Williams' "transcendental 'we'" can be correlated. We can find that Lear refers to Williams' "transcendental 'we'" in terms of the later Wittgenstein's concern for "our mindedness". And so, I shall discuss how Lear's concept of "our mindedness" possess features similar to the inarticulate versions of Wittgenstein's form of life and Kant's pure apperception. As I see it, Lear follows Williams in arguing that the later Wittgenstein's concern for the metaphysical subject turns philosophy into a reflective activity that is mainly concerned with self-understanding. But Lear develops in more detail the Kantian aspect of the difficulty that comes with this self-understanding through the non-representational nature of pure apperception. Lear is also more explicit in expressing the indirect nature of the method for acquiring this self-understanding, specifically in terms of how "our mindedness" becomes clarified through a form of "transcendental negation".

Lear's TA shows that "our mindedness" cannot be understood directly because it involves an "unconditioned activity" that functions as the "permanent possibility of reflective consciousness" (Lear 1986: 285,287; 1998:267, 269). Any representation we make of "it", no matter how accurate, will fail to capture what it really is. Hence, Lear says that "our mindedness" can only be clarified *via negativa,* by a process of eliminating the things that it is not (Lear 1998:255). This mode of understanding *via negativa* can be compared to Williams' transcendental interpretation of Wittgenstein's denial of the metaphysical subject. In the case of Williams, the fact that the Tractarian metaphysical subject is *not* in the world implies that the term "not" is used in a transcendental manner: it is used an indirectly means for conveying how the metaphysical subject is a non-empirical limit through which the world becomes the world for us.

In the case of Lear, I believe that one can find a similar use of "transcendental negation". Consider for example Lear's statement:

> The outcome of Wittgenstein's investigation is…**not** meant to be the empirical discovery that…there is **no** mental item, present to consciousness…which determines my rule-following behaviour. The outcome is supposed to be the philosophical realization that **no** such mental item could possibly explain or legitimately rule following activity. (Lear 1986: 284-85, emphases mine)

In the passage above, one might notice how Lear expands the transcendental negation found in Williams to apply not only to empirical causes of rule-following but also to mental causes ("**no** mental items"). In this extension, one can take Lear to say that these causes (whether they be empirical or mental) are not Wittgenstein's main concern because they are objects of understanding rather than the actual conditions or forms of understanding. By the term "our mindedness", I take Lear to be referring to the actual conditions of understanding whose holistic and all-encompassing nature does not allow for direct understanding.[47] Thus, it is not an empirical item that explains my rule-following behaviour and neither is it a mental item that goes on in my mind in the course of applying the rule. Rather, it is a certain consciousness of our "unpredicable self" that we come to be conscious of upon realizing that our explanations are inadequate or that they serve only as components of a dialectic which we can use to acquire some kind of understanding of "our mindedness" (Lear 1986: 286; 1998: 268).

Thus, what I described in the previous section as Lear's dialectical interpretation between the transcendental and the anthropological is the larger context under which this clarification by negation (transcendental negation) of our-mindedness takes place. To further clarify this notion of "our mindedness" and our indirect way of understanding it, Lear contrasts that which in Kant would be the "I think" from the transcendental anthropologists concern with "I:" The "I think" is an object of representation we can predicate. The "I:" , on the other hand is the form of self-awareness accompanying our representation that is not capable of being predicated and it can be known only indirectly by being able to understand something in our failure of predication.

Lear explains that the "I think" which we can predicate functions as a *dialectical tool* in the aim of recognizing the form of self-awareness alluded to by the "I:" (1986: 286; 1998: 268). The "I:" is an apperception that is *pure* because it is distinct from the form of self-conscious awareness that is "no more than another judgment occurring within the conscious life of a self-conscious being" (ibid.). Lear says that the "I:" is not really a term Kant formulates, but it expresses an idea that is found in Kant as he refers to the idea of an original apperception that cannot itself be represented by the "I think" but is in some way responsible for that representation (ibid.). Lear explains that for Kant the "I think" is a "transcendental condition of

[47] One can for example notice how Lear describes the Wittgensteinian anthropological stance to the study of language as something that is "all embracing'". Everything that we do are materials for the anthropological stance. Even philosophical problems are formulated in a language connected with a set of customs and practices that is included by that anthropological stance. (Lear 1986: 268; 1998: 248-49)

self- consciousness which defines what it is for a representation to be my representation", but there is an original apperception incapable of being predicated by the "I think" which nonetheless *generates* the representation "I think" (ibid.). And this original apperception, which is pure apperception, is required to bring all our representations of "I think R" [where R is a representation of an object] into a single consciousness (Lear 1986: 285-286).

For Lear, Kant should have also introduced the term "I:" to mark up the idea of pure apperception to distinguish it from forms of apperception that we can predicate. To supports this need for terminology, Lear cites a passage from Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason (CPR)*:

> I call it *pure apperception,* because it is that self-consciousness which, while generating the representation 'I think', … cannot itself be accompanied by any representation (*CPR B132,* as cited in Lear 1986: 285*)*

To clarify the context of this remark in my discussion, let me recap what seems to me as three important distinctions in the notion of pure apperception in Lear's TA. First, there is the "R" which is the representation of an object mental or otherwise. Then there is the "I think" in "I think R" which symbolizes how I become aware of a representation as *my* representation. This awareness of the representation as being mine is apperception. Finally, there is a the "I:" which is pure apperception, the pure form of self-awareness distinct from anything we can predicate. As the passage above seems to imply, pure apperception is different even from the representation "I think" itself. And though it cannot be conveyed by any representation, it is condition for being able to understand that my representations are part of a single self-consciousness. Here, one can take it that the comprehension of a concept or of its various instances ends up mirroring a kind of comprehension of a self that is nonetheless incapable of being represented.

In "On Reflection" (1989), Lear gives another explanation for distinguishing the 'I:' from the "I think". He says that during apperception where we attribute the "I think" to one of our representations, our consciousness changes from on the one hand, "merely having a representation" to, on the other hand, being able to "treat the representation as an object of consciousness". However, that "I:" of pure apperception refers to "what perpetually escapes the net of self-conscious attention" because it is the very "subject who is self-consciously treating various representations as objects of thought" (Lear 1989: 20).

From the way Lear distinguishes the "I:" from "I think", we can probably take the "I think" to refer to the anthropological and the transcendental elements of the *Investigations.* The "I think" and its various instances refer to items that can become legitimate objects of explanation in the process of a dialectic. The "I:", on the other hand, is the pure form of self-awareness made possible by reflection on various cases of "I think". It cannot be captured by

any representation, even mental ones, since it is the (transcendental subject which serves as) condition of all representation or predication (1998:274-275). However, Lear also says that once we recognize the "I:", we can "kick away" the "I think". Let me cite Lear on this:

> Once I have recognized the distinct forms of apperception, I can kick away the 'I think': any predicating or judging I do - any activity of applying a concept to an object - may be accompanied by this awareness ['I:'] (Lear 1986:286; 1998:268)

In this passage, we can recognize Lear's heuristic conception of the "I think". It seems to relate to particular instances of philosophical reflection where we encounter and make a connection between the so-called transcendental and anthropological elements of our rule following. These elements are important in so far as they are necessary stepping stones in acquiring pure apperception. Once pure apperception is acquired, the "I:" can be made to accompany any judgment and its association with particular instances of "I think" can be "kicked away" (ibid.). Lear does not give an example on how one "kicks away" the "I think" while being able to retain the "I:". He also does not present this kicking away of the "I think" as if the "I:" can be understood by itself without any association at all from particular instances of "I think". But Lear (ibid.) says that the "I:" can be made to accompany other instances of "I think" as if the "I:" does not have to be tied to a particular instance of "I think" alone. One can probably understand Lear's metaphor of "kicking away" of the "I think" in relation to how the "I:" seems to acquire some kind of independence. This seems to happen when we are able to discover and bring into play a kind of reflective awareness of our consciousness as engage with different activities like cooking, baking, or hiking and become maybe more competent in the various kinds of linguistic experience that come with them. One can make sense of this interpretation as coming from Lear's claim that pure apperception is "required for the representation 'I think R' to be … part of a larger single self-consciousness" (Lear 1986:286). It can also be drawn from his claim that the *self by itself* can be understood not in terms of the beliefs and desires we have constructed but in terms of the "human agent embodying those beliefs and desires" and in terms of the "we who live in the world" (ibid.: 292).

Lear says that "if I am a competent speaker of a language, the 'I:' which can accompany my use of a predicate ought to provide a consciousness of the unfolding of a concept." (ibid.: 287). But Lear notes that this consciousness of the unfolding of a concept is in the end something that is connected to the anthropological stance of finding ones "activity in a larger context of use in customs and practices" which one may not have reflective understanding of (ibid.: 288). So, as I see it in the context of Lear's transcendental anthropology, the transcendental and anthropological remain separate elements that are connected to each other

by certain acts of self-consciousness which is discerned or formed in the dialectical interaction between the transcendental and anthropological stance. The form of this self-consciousness which Lear refers to as Kant's pure apperception is partially constitutive of the meaning of our concepts (ibid.: 287, 289). And the aim of philosophy is to gain insight into this kind of self-understanding.

According to Lear, the idea of a transcendental anthropology implies that the anthropological stance is essential for the transcendental stance because we may not always have a reflective understanding of the customs and practices where the use of an expression is embedded (ibid.: 288). But Lear notes that this anthropological stance is different from that of empirical anthropologist who goes out in the world to observe the actual practices of tribes. The transcendental anthropologist makes use of practices that are "artefacts of philosophical inquiry". They are tribal practices we *construct* in the course of philosophical reflection so we can imagine a concrete context for locating our rule following activities (ibid.: 289). Similar to the case of the reading taken by Williams, the alternative practices that Lear's transcendental anthropologist considers are not socially actual alternatives but alternatives we construct to aid our imagination in finding our way in the use of our concepts and in discovering "our mindedness". Echoing the words of Williams (1974: 91), Lear writes:

> The chief is a mere posit, a heuristic device to help us in our exploration of mindedness. Wittgenstein occasionally postulates a tribe whose interests and activities are dependent upon the interests we have. But it is a mistake to think of these tribes as providing concrete examples of other-mindedness. In so far as we can make sense of their activities and interests, that is, in so far as we can fill out the picture, they do not turn out to be other-minded. We are discovering more about what our form of life is like, not what another form of life would be like. (Lear 1998:251)

So for Lear, the aim of Wittgenstein's later philosophy is to gain insight about "our mindedness" which is the transcendental idea implied by Wittgenstein's notion of " our form of life". Here, the notion conveyed by the term "our form of life" becomes shown as transcendental in a way similar to pure apperception; it is the condition of the unity in representation which is at the same time also incapable of being thought of coherently as the object representation (Lear 1986: 290). Thus, Lear claims that Wittgenstein should have also made a distinction between the idea of a "We*"* and the idea of a "form of life*"* in the way Kant should have made a distinction between the "I:" and the "I think". Just as when we try to become reflectively aware of "I:" we end up with an "I think", so does it also happen that when we reflectively become aware of the inarticulable "We" we end up with "our form of life" (Ibid). Lear introduces the idea of a transcendental "We" to convey the idea that philosophical talk

about form of life involves an attempt to describe something that is *not* a possible object of judgment even if the result of our talk (about form of life) always ends up with an object of judgment. Hence any talk about form of life will end up failing to express that which we intended to express. So, the conclusions that apply to acquiring insights about pure apperception also apply to insights about the notion of "our mindedness" implied by Wittgenstein's use of the term "form of life": it is important to understand these notions *via negativa* (Lear 1998: 255), by means of how it is something other than what we have been able to represent or talk about (1986: 292), i.e., by means of nonsense (1998: 252, 279).

I believe that it is in this more persistent stance on nonsense that we can distinguish Lear's position from that of Williams. They share the same emphasis on how Wittgenstein finds the notion of nonsense important in understanding philosophical insights (which are essentially insights about a transcendental metaphysical subject). However, Lear does not have a tone of ambivalence in construing the nonsensicality of philosophical claims. His notion of nonsense has the tone of the inarticulate but it does not have the tone of the inexpressible. To clarify this point, we can look at the reprint of TA (1998). In that reprint, there are additional paragraphs where Lear says that one of the outcomes of Wittgensteinian reflection is the acceptance of the claim that "Only because we are minded as we are do we see the world as we do" and that such an acceptance does not imply "delimit[ing] one possibility among others" (ibid.: 252). I think that the basis for such a kind of acceptance comes from Lear's emphasis on how the counterfactual of "our mindedness" is nonsense (ibid.). In so far as insights about "our mindedness" are concerned, there is no such thing as truth about "other mindedness" that is somehow excluded. This is because philosophical insights are about pure apperception, about the very form of our self-consciousness.

To be sure, Williams does not say that there is an inexpressible truth about other mindedness just as he does not say that there is an inexpressible truth about our mindedness. But from the perspective of Lear's TA, the main difficulty with Williams' reading of Wittgenstein is how it leaves open the very of idea of a truth that is nonetheless inexpressible. As I see it, this is something that can also generate inexpressible inconsistencies, or maybe an inexpressible consistency, and so on in a vicious manner. Lear's position in TA has the implication of putting an end to these vicious "inexpressibles" by situating philosophical claims in the context of the dialectical relationship between the transcendental and the anthropological. Hence, even if Lear's TA still gives attention to what I would like to call the idea of "Wittgensteinian noumenal self" brought about by pure apperception, Lear can be understood as dropping the idea of nonsense that conveys an inexpressible truth. In Lear's TA, there is still

the Wittgensteinian noumenal self, but this noumenal self is now presented in a dialectic which provides the context for understanding its nature as a kind of pure apperception. Even though claims about our noumenal self are still nonsensical, those nonsensical expressions are not taken to evoke something that is completely beyond what our language can clarify. Their use for philosophical self-understanding is now appraised as part of how our everyday language works.

Let me now clarify what I mean by the "Wittgensteinian noumenal self" which I have attributed to Lear in light of his discussion of how transcendental anthropology leads to a pure apperception where we are able to become aware of our "self as it is in itself" (Lear 1986: 292). Lear describes the later Wittgenstein as seeking for self-knowledge. But this self-knowledge has the difficulty that comes with knowledge of Kantian pure apperception. The anthropological stance becomes necessary for transcendental inquiry because it allows for a means for dealing with the difficulty of pure apperception. To point out this difficulty, we can consider Lear's (ibid.: 291) claims on how "our own beliefs and desires are not immediately transparent to (our) consciousness" and how the "human agent" sought by a Wittgensteinian pure apperception is something that always escapes even the most accurate of representations (ibid.: 292). In light of these difficulties, Lear says that the anthropological stance functions as a tool for the construction of beliefs and interests that allow "the self to appear to itself" (ibid.). Yet, it is by virtue of these appearances, and the examination they make possible, that the "self at is in itself" comes to light. I believe that this "coming into light" is made possible by means of the various contrasts and refutations in the context of using a transcendental dialectic that enables us to realize the sense in which those customs and practices are also our own constitutions. In doing so, the agent comes to have a non-empirical insight of his own mindedness and he is able to see himself in a non-observational way.

A point of interest, however, is how Lear describes this Wittgensteinian noumenal self in a phenomenological rather than metaphysical manner. Lear says that "the self as it is in itself" is the "human agent embodying the beliefs and desires which the representation ascribes" or the "we who live in the world" (Lear 1986: 292; 1998: 274). In contrast with the Kantian noumenal agent that is outside space and time, "the self as it is in itself" which Lear (ibid.) associates with Wittgenstein's concern for a Kantian pure apperception is "an ordinary being engaged in living his life". Lear says that the Wittgensteinian noumenal self, or the "We" that accompanies our activities, is not a bare metaphysical subject. The transcendental anthropology that can be drawn from Wittgenstein's later philosophy can help us realize that this metaphysical subject is the "we in our ordinary lives who can accompany our activities with consciousness" (ibid.1986: 298; 1998: 281).

So if this Wittgensteinian noumenal self is now located in our ordinary activities, why is it that we cannot represent it? Or why would our talk about it be nonsensical? Perhaps Lear's answer would point to the non-observational nature by which we are able to access ourselves and how we constitute ourselves in the process of being aware it. Such a non-observational relationship seems to connect with Lear's view of how the later Wittgenstein views meaning as an unfinished business and of how we constitute meaning as we try to determine what that "meaning" is (ibid. 1986: 289). I think Lear refers to this non-observational aspect in terms of the transcendental condition of subjectivity that also constitutes what it means to follow a rule (ibid.: 288). To elaborate these ideas further I now move on the Lear's idea of how transcendental anthropology presents a conception of philosophy that avoids the side-ways on perspective.

1.3.4 On avoiding the sideways-on perspective.

If we accept Lear's view that philosophical knowledge is a kind of pure-apperception, we also have to accept that philosophical reflection cannot take a sideways-on perspective. In TA (1998: 252), Lear refers to the sideways on perspective in terms of the illusion that the anthropological stance provides an instance of other-mindedness and that awareness of the conditions of our-mindedness does not imply the delimitation of possibilities. I believe Lear also refers to the sideways-on view in terms of how traditional philosophy is in a constant search for a perspective outside our practices in order to acquire insights on how things are (ibid.: 248). Lear says that Wittgenstein shows that search to be illusory because of the all-embracing nature of the anthropological stance that goes with our form of life.

> But let us consider Lear's actual use of the term "sideways on perspective" in TA:
>
> When I take on the anthropological stance with respect to my cooking activities, I cannot genuinely be in the role of observer. **The 'sideways-on perspective' is not a perspective**, it is an imaginative fiction. The anthropological stance is confronted with a distinct transcendental condition of subjectivity: **I cannot stand in the relation of observer to myself.** And this condition has its dual in the first person plural: we cannot stand as observers to ourselves. (Lear 1986: 288, emphasis added)

This passage shows a link between the idea of sideways-on perspective and Lear's idea of the transcendental condition of subjectivity. For Lear, the transcendental condition of subjectivity forms a part of what it means to follow a rule and use language (Lear 1986: 286). It means that there is an "I:" which accompanies all instances of my application of a rule and use of a concept, and that this "I:" is something that we cannot take an observational stance

from. Lear contrasts this non-observational relationship to how reflection on the different physiology between bats and human beings leads us to the insight that the consciousness of a bat is inaccessible to our consciousness (ibid.). That insight is a consequence of a reflective activity, but it is not a transcendental experience that involves the pure apperception presupposed by Wittgensteinian philosophical reflection. It involves an insight to our mindedness whose acceptance entails a limitation: a limitation in understanding other possible modes of consciousness that our current mode of consciousness prevents us from making sense of. In contrast to this reflective insight about our inability to understand bats, it seems that one can understand Lear as saying that insights about "our mindedness" are not insights about limits as limitations but as the actual conditions of understanding as we use language in everyday life. The "facticity" of these conditions makes it impossible even to think of other modes of consciousness (even those of bats). This is because in thinking of other modes of consciousness we end up assimilating them to our consciousness.

This seems to me as another context for making sense of Lear's view on how a mental or reflective experience does not necessarily imply pure apperception. There is pure apperception only when we are able to recognize and do not eliminate the transcendental condition of subjectivity. As I see it, this transcendental condition of subjectivity emphasizes the immediacy of certain beliefs, interests, and experiences to the extent that reason becomes irrelevant. Those interests make up the very "I:" we are trying to acquire insight on and they form part of what it means to follow a rule and apply concepts meaningfully. Here, there seems to be a vicious circle: our beliefs and concepts form a part of who we are but we realize upon reflection that those beliefs are at the same time our creations. This perception of a vicious circle, however, may be understood as coming from the sideways on perspective and from the failure to recognize the dialectic between the transcendental and the anthropological.

To further understand how the eschewal of the sideways on perspective results in a Wittgensteinian pure apperception that is not really vicious, we can consider Lear's claim on how "meaning is an unfinished business". He writes:

> We are self-conscious, reflective beings, and the meaning of our activities does not determinately exist, waiting to be grasped by self-conscious reflection on the context of use: self-conscious reflection is partially constitutive of the context and thus of meaning. The context of an expression's use includes agents who are taking the anthropological stance with respect to that context, and the content of the expression is partially constituted by the self-conscious judgments of the self-appointed anthropologists as to what the expression means. **Meaning is by its nature an unfinished business: it continues to be constituted by those self-conscious interpreters who seek to comprehend it by 'observing' the context in which it is used.** (1986: 289, emphasis added)

The passage shows that the non-observational relationship of the "I:" to the various instances of language use does not imply that the meaning of an expression cannot really be accessed or that there is no such thing as its meaning. The passage says that we also understand meaning "by 'observing' the context in which it is used". Here I believe that Lear uses the term "observe" in the context of the active synthesis of the "I:" which Lear now refers to as the "self-conscious interpreters who create the very meaning they intend to grasp". The meaning of a word is also something that we make. And this constitution of meaning is part of the natural phenomena of language use. This constitution of meaning, however, is transcendental and comes from the perspective of the language-users themselves. We access that "constitution" by means of introspection not by experimentation or additional information. We reflect on the information and experiences we already have. And in the process of comparison and contrast, we discover the relative weight we have given to them. So in understanding the meaning of a word one is also offered a way to understand oneself. I say "offered a way to understand" rather than "being able to understand" because it seems to me that the self-awareness that comes with philosophical understanding of language also implies an element of conscious decision (or the creation of a decision) that creates the very idea of an embodied human agency itself. This embodied human agency is something that cannot be captured by the sideways-on perspective on the study of language, but it is available to agents as they actively engage and reflect on their everyday uses of language.

In this sense, it seems to me that Lear makes an implicit parallel between the unfinished nature of the *Investigations* and the unfinished nature of meaning that the idea of transcendental anthropology conveys. The parallel allows for the idea of an embodied notion of human agency whose synthetic activities render "meaning" whole for particular contexts.[48] The transcendental and the anthropological elements in the *Investigations* by themselves are not a whole, but a self that is consciously aware *makes* them a whole. And it is that self that inevitably has to come to the fore to make the *Investigations* or any instance of language-use "complete" or meaningful. That self is in perpetual change and it is also influenced by our acts of self-understanding. The dialectic between the transcendental and the anthropological allows for the acknowledgement of this perpetual change and active constitution in a way that the philosophical self becomes something that is neither purely empirical nor purely metaphysical. In this context, the notion of nonsense that is found in Lear does not seem to be something that connotes a transcendental

[48] Lear, for example, mentions the significance of making the form of life vivid to assure content for the laws of thought. He also mentions how the law of non-contradiction can in certain cases be also understood as a statement that counts as a particular move in our language-games (Lear 1986: 297).

inexpressible. It is rather a nonsense that points to how we can understand ourselves as a whole while being in the process of change in our uses of language; i.e., of how the unfolding of a concept is also the unfolding of our selves.

So it seems to me that there is an early Lear and a later Lear in terms of how Lear ended up with varying conceptions of nonsense. The early Lear can be understood as consisting of LWA and TDW, while the later Lear consists of TA and OR. The early Lear can be characterized by a conception of nonsense whose notion of the transcendental is synonymous with the inexpressible. Here philosophical claims are nonsensical in the sense that they are essentially ways of showing transcendental insights that are inexpressible (a view similar to Williams). On the other hand, the later Lear can be characterized by a conception of the philosophical that is situated in the context of the dialectic between the transcendental and the anthropological. In the later Lear, the idea of the transcendental as something inexpressible seems to fall out and becomes replaced by philosophical insights whose meaning is in continuous change and in flow. In this view, "meaning is an unfinished business" and it is created and influenced by the language-users themselves.

However, I also find it significant to bring attention to Lear's claim on how the later Wittgenstein was not completely able to avoid a sideways on perspective. Lear (1986: 281) says, "If we take simple cases of tribal behaviour Wittgenstein actually considered --- both the empirical and the transcendental anthropologist are on the outside looking in. (None of the people piling lumber is wondering how this activity could be best understood)." By contrast, the idea of transcendental anthropology Lear introduces implies a form of philosophical reflection via a certain understanding from within. And that reflection, though primarily addressed at our self, is supposed to affect a change in the agent as an active creator of the practices he engages in.

Lear says that though the idea of transcendental anthropology can be drawn from the *Investigations*, Wittgenstein himself was not able to develop the idea of the dialectical interpretation himself because of his lack of consideration for reflective activity (Lear 1986:20). So Lear (ibid.) claims that the therapeutic strain of Wittgenstein's later philosophy is something that is not fully developed and this is shown by his conflicted attitude about stopping and going on with philosophical activity.

1.4 On the idea of a transcendental later Wittgenstein

Let me now summarize what can be taken as the idea of transcendental later Wittgenstein based on the work of Stenius, Williams, and Lear.

For Stenius, the idea of a transcendental later Wittgenstein comes from the idea of how we can understand the limits of thought via the limits of language. The Kantian aspect of Wittgenstein's philosophy comes from how Wittgenstein proposed to set the limits of language in a way similar to how Kant proposed to set the limits of theoretical reason. Philosophy is an investigation on the limits of thought and it takes interest in the occurrence of nonsense in the philosophical uses of language because it functions as a creative way for conveying the inexpressible limits of language. Stenius construes nonsense as a stopping point for philosophy's tendency to go beyond the limits of thought, and he interprets the intermediary nature of nonsense in the *Investigations* as a kind of transitional tool for understanding and clarifying the meaning of expressions in cases where there are shifts in the moods of language.

For Williams, the idea of a transcendental Wittgenstein comes from the aim of being able to acquire insights about the plural form of the metaphysical subject which he calls the "transcendental 'we'". A special kind of nonsense comes about when philosophy aims to articulate these insights which are transcendental in the sense that they are inexpressible. Williams is clear on how such philosophical insights should not be understood empirically like those in ethno-linguistics, but he leaves open the possibility for inexpressible truths, which though not transcendent are still inexpressible. This idea of transcendental inexpressible allows for a nonsense that is intelligible enough to be understood as philosophically true because of how it becomes a kind of showing.

Lastly, in the case of Lear (in TA), the idea of a transcendental Wittgenstein comes from how philosophy involves non-empirical insights about an embodied plural form of metaphysical subject which Lear now calls "our mindedness". The idea of nonsense becomes significant not because it provides a gesture towards the inexpressible, but because it reminds us of the emptiness of taking a sideways-on view in the investigation of "our-mindedness". Philosophical claims are about the basic conditions of "our mindedness", and "our mindedness" is an inarticulate part of all instances of our language use and judgment. Eschewing the sideways-on view implies being more open to taking the anthropological stance as a tool for self-understanding in so far as it allows the self to appear to itself. The dialectical relationship between the anthropological stance and the transcendental stance allows for the possibility of synthesis which allows the Wittgensteinian noumenal self to emerge in the form of the embodied human agent. This human agent, however, is something that evades representation because it is a whole that is continually influenced by our acts of self-understanding.

Part 2, Chapter 1 – Is Mulhall's resolute later Wittgenstein plausible?

This chapter is concerned with providing what seems to me as an important background for understanding the significance of Stephen Mulhall's work *Wittgenstein's Private Language: Grammar, Nonsense, and Imagination in Philosophical Investigations, §§ 243-315* (*WPL*, 2007*)* in the context of the evolution of the idea of a resolute reading.

The idea of a resolute reading has been associated mostly with the works of James Conant and Cora Diamond on the therapeutic conception of philosophy found in the *Tractatus*. Mulhall's *WPL*, on the other hand, is considered to be the first to provide a sustained application of Conant's and Diamond's resolute reading to Wittgenstein's later philosophy.[49] Yet, Mulhall's work has met with much ambivalence even from proponents of the resolute reading themselves. This ambivalence comes from the sentiment that Mulhall is unclear in his use of the term "resolute reading" and that this lack of clarity has added to the confusion that now surrounds the debate on the topic.

Given this context, this chapter shall provide a detailed account of that unclarity in Mulhall's *WPL* by taking cues from Conant and Bronzo's article "Resolute readings of the *Tractatus*" (RRT, 2017). I shall point out the change in meaning that is involved in Mulhall's idea of a resolute reading by comparing it with the resolute reading of Conant and Diamond. Then, I shall explain the sense in which Mulhall is still justified in pursuing that idea in *WPL* especially with regards to how he develops therapeutic ideas from James Conant and Stanley Cavell. Finally, I conclude with a remark on the significance of Mulhall's work on the idea of a resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein.

Below are the main sections of this chapter:

[49] See Schönbaumsfeld (2010: 650).

2.1.1 The idea of a resolute later Wittgenstein: an extension in meaning

The so-called resolute reading was initially developed by Conant and Diamond as an exegetical program for the *Tractatus.*[50] But writers now use the term to refer to a parallel exegesis of Wittgenstein's later work, and sometimes even to a conception of philosophy that is no longer concerned with exegesis but with a philosophical method that is inspired by the resolute reading of Wittgenstein's early work in the *Tractatus*. According to Conant and Bronzo (2017), this has led the term "resolute reading" to acquire meanings that do not have the same logical features as the resolute reading that was earlier proposed by Conant and Diamond. Conant and Diamond (2004:47) have agreed to take on the label "resolute reading" that was coined by Thomas Ricketts because of how the term highlights a certain firmness in understanding the nonsensicality of Tractarian propositions as involving only an austere conception of nonsense. However, it seems that the uses of the term "resolute reading" have gotten out of hand to the extent that it now leads to superficial disputes. So while the main proponents of the resolute reading acknowledge a certain lack of control in the use and evolution of the term, they also highlight the need for writers to exercise more clarity when using the term and writing on subject.

In this task of clarification, I believe that two works deserve to be mentioned. The first one is Conant and Diamond's "On Reading the *Tractatus* Resolutely" (ORTR, 2004). This joint article may be understood in the context of how the resolute reading have become a serious and persistent challenge to standard readings of the *Tractatus* and how its main proponents needed to respond to various critics. This article is written in a way that responds to Meredith Williams' (2004) and Peter Sullivans' (2004) assessment and criticism of the resolute reading. Williams' and Sullivan's criticism may not necessarily be understood as a defense of the standard reading of the *Tractatus*. But Conant and Diamond's clarificatory response to their criticisms is undoubtedly useful in addressing the many ways in which the resolute reading have become misunderstood and misrepresented by the so-called standard readers of the *Tractatus*. ORTR is also important given that Conant and Diamond have independent works on the resolute reading. That joint article puts into writing their shared views on the idea of a resolute reading of Wittgenstein.

The second and more recent clarificatory work is Conant and Bronzo's "Resolute Readings of the *Tractatus*" (RRT, 2017). This article can be viewed as a rephrasing of that early

[50] For their earliest articles on resolute reading, see "Must We Show What We Cannot Say" (Conant 1989) and "Throwing Away the Ladder" (Diamond 1988). See also their joint article "On reading the *Tractatus* Resolutely" (2004).

article by Conant and Diamond (2004) in the context of the increase in variants of the resolute reading, some of which they find too loose (or even confused) to be considered as acceptable variants. This latter article is more relevant for this chapter because of how it specifically mentions Mulhall's resolute reading in *WPL* as providing an instance of an unclear terminological use of the term "resolute reading". In the passage I cite below, Conant and Bronzo point out this unclarity as found in the work of Stephen Mulhall and in the work Genia Schönbaumsfeld. Conant and Bronzo says:

> There has been a tendency in the secondary literature to extend the term "resolute" in a variety of ways, including to other texts and to other matters. The term is sometimes applied to exegetical questions extending far beyond the interpretation of *Tractatus* (so that some now speak, for example, of a **resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein**)….Thus Stephen Mulhall (2007) has defended a "resolute reading" of the private language argument, and Genia Schönbaumsfeld (2008) has criticized it. Now there may be some justification for calling certain readings of the later Wittgenstein "resolute" – for instance, in order to highlight significant forms of continuity between the views that those readings attribute to the later Wittgenstein and those that resolute readers (in the original sense of the term) attribute to the *Tractatus*. What is essential, in this case, is that one makes clear what one means by a "resolute later Wittgenstein." This is not usually done. Not surprisingly, people on either side of the resulting debate can be found to be talking past one another (Conant and Bronzo 2017: 189, emphasis added)

So the passage above shows Conant and Bronzo's view that Mulhall (2007) has rendered the idea of a "resolute later Wittgenstein" unclear and that the dispute he now has with Schönbaumsfeld (2008) [51] is a result of this lack of clarity. It also shows their view that Mulhall has extended the meaning of "resolute reading", but he was not explicit on how he extended it. Based on Conant and Bronzo's article, this extension and change in meaning can be understood as a consequence of what they refer to as the "third logical feature" of the resolute reading which seems to make it inseparable from the *Tractatus.* This is how Conant and Bronzo describes this feature:

> In addition to its logically posterior and highly generic character, there is a **third logical feature** that belongs to the concept of a resolute reading originally employed by Conant and Diamond. It is a feature which may seem to be so obvious as not to be worth mentioning – namely, that **it is the concept of an exegetical program of how best to read the *Tractatus***. That is to say, it is the concept of an exegetical program for how to make the best possible sense of *one*

[51] Aside from Schönbaumsfeld's (2008) review of Mulhall in *Mind* she has also published an elaboration of that review in *Metaphysics* with the title "A 'resolute' later Wittgenstein" (2010). Conant and Bronzo refers only to Schönbaumsfeld's 2008 review but their claim about a bogus dispute brought about by Mulhall's lack of clarity in the use of the term may apply to Schönbaumsfeld's later article as well. My discussion shall set aside the question of Schönbaumsfeld use of the term "resolute reading" to focus on comparing Mulhall's use of the term with that of Conant and Diamond.

> *particular work* of philosophy – and in the first instance, only this one work… (Conant and Bronzo 2017: 177 emphases mine)

So the passage says that there are three logical features of the concept of resolute reading in the original sense it was used by Conant and Diamond: 1) It is logically *posterior,* 2) It is highly generic, and 3) it is an exegetical program intended for the *Tractatus.* When these features are used to evaluate Mulhall's "resolute reading", the most salient difference is how it fails to comply with the "third logical feature" because it is an exegesis of Wittgenstein's remarks on private language which is found in the *Investigations* not the *Tractatus*. This non-compliance, however, is significant given how it plays a central role in influencing those two other features. In the above passage, for example, this significance seems to be indicated by the exclusive tone through which Conant and Bronzo describe that third feature. The resolute reading, they say, is something that is "in the first instance, only" intended to apply to the *Tractatus*. This exclusive tone becomes understandable given Conant and Bronzo's attendant claim that the application of the term "resolute reading" to other works and other contexts also affects the highly generic and logically posterior character of Conant and Diamond's conception of the resolute reading (ibid.: 182, 189).

Conant and Bronzo do not go into details on how this change in logical features takes place in Mulhall's work. Perhaps this is because of the foresight that such an account would imply a discussion similar to comparing apples and oranges. The "resolute reading of the *Tractatus"* and the "resolute reading of the *Investigations"* are indeed both readings of Wittgenstein's work but a resolute reading of the *Tractatus* will mean something significantly different from a resolute reading of the *Investigations* (just as apples and oranges are in the end different fruits). Nonetheless, I shall pursue this comparison to show how it involves important asymmetries that need to be taken into account if we are to be clear about Mulhall's idea of a resolute later Wittgenstein. So in what follows, I shall provide details of how Mulhall's resolute later Wittgenstein involves a change in the first and second logical features that come with the original use of the term "resolute reading". Here, I shall no longer discuss Conant and Bronzo's "third logical feature" because of how I view it as also connected to the first and second logical feature of the idea of a resolute reading endorsed by Conant and Diamond.

2.1.1.1 Change in the "highly generic character" of the resolute reading

Mulhall's resolute later Wittgenstein affects what it means for Conant and Diamond's resolute reading to be highly generic because his reading is already a detailed exegesis of a

stretch of remarks in the *Investigations* (*PI* 243-293) and because the *Investigations* cannot be said to have a remark comparable to the framing function of *TLP* 6.54.

Conant and Diamond (2004) earlier described the highly generic character of the resolute reading in terms of how it is a reading only of *TLP* 6.54 and how it leaves a significant degree of openness for interpreting the rest of the *Tractatus*. Hence, Conant and Diamond (ibid.: 88) say that the resolute reading is not really a "reading" of the *Tractatus* but merely a programmatic guide for developing what can count as a reading. It does not provide a "full story" of the *Tractatus* (ibid.). It only provides constraints on what will count as an acceptable reading of the remaining passages of the *Tractatus* in light of an understanding of *TLP* 6.54 as saying that Tractarian propositions are *Einfach Unsinn* or "simple nonsense".

While I shall discuss more of *TLP* 6.54 later, let me give some preliminary claims about it. *TLP* 6.54 has generated considerable attention among writers on Wittgenstein because of how it is understood to raise a paradox. It says that he who understands Wittgenstein (as the author of the *Tractatus)* understands his propositions as nonsensical and that person "throws away" the propositions of the *Tractatus* like a ladder one has already climbed up on. Conant and Diamond's resolute reading differs from "standard readings" of the *Tractatus* because of how it understands the nonsensicality of Tractarian propositions as empty. This emptiness is the reason why it is associated with an austere conception of nonsense as opposed to a substantial conception of nonsense. The substantial conception of nonsense, on the other hand, is attributed to standard readings of the *Tractatus*. The label "substantial" is meant to indicate how the so-called standard reading gives the nonsensicality of Tractarian propositions a "content", whether that content comes in the form of an explicit theory on logical form or merely an implicit claim that gestures at that logical form as if it were an ineffable truth. As I see it, Conant and Diamond's resolute reading is essentially in a kind of critical relationship with these substantial readings because of how it insists on also "throwing away" and showing as empty any of this "content". I shall say more about the critical and negative character of this kind of throwing away in the next section. For now, let me focus on illustrating how this resolute understanding of *TLP* 6.54 is merely of a programmatic nature.

This is what Conant and Diamond (2004) writes to clarify the the loose and general character of the resolute reading:

> To undertake to read the work resolutely means nothing more than to undertake to read it *in a certain way* – and thus to introduce certain constraints on what will count as an acceptable reading (and, in particular, on what will count as having thrown away the ladder). But to commit oneself to reading the text in such a way is not yet to have a reading, if what one means by 'having a reading' is to have

> a full story about each of the rungs of the ladder and each of the transitions from one rung to the next (ibid.: 88 endnote 5)

The "highly generic" character of the resolute reading is described above in terms of how the resolute reading merely offers a set of constraints that leave much openness for interpretation. This generic character enables the resolute reading to include within its domain the interpretation of writers who have strong differences on how to consider as nonsensical other important notions in the *Tractatus*. Silver Bronzo (2012: 54), for example, refers to how Conant and Diamond's resolute reading has allowed other resolute readers such as Juliet Floyd and Rupert Read to have a different view on how to throw away the *Tractatus*' conception of logical analysis.[52] Here, the divergence in views within the resolute reading is described in terms of labels that involve an analogy to the kind of internal hostilities in the French revolution. The resolute reading can be understood as starting a war, "*Tractatus* wars" as referred to by Read and Lavery (2011), and this war aims to overthrow the standard reading of the *Tractatus* in a way similar to how parties in the French Revolution aimed to overthrow the French monarchy. The looseness that comes with the programmatic nature of the resolute reading has allowed conflicting approaches for challenging the standard reading. And the intensity of this conflict is likened to how parties in the French revolution went through violent dissent with each other despite having a common goal. The resolute reading of Conant and Diamond and those who adhere to it are called *Girondins*, a label which alludes to the major party in the French revolution whose methods were characterized by moderation and compromise. The resolute reading of Floyd, Read, and Deans, on the other hand, are called *Jacobins*. The label "Jacobin" alludes to the party that dissented with the *Girondins* and whose methods were known to be extreme and radical because of their "strong resolution" to succeed in bringing about change. In the case of Floyd, Read, and Deans, this radical or extreme stance consisted in their position on how a resolute reading also throws away and considers as nonsensical the *Tractarian* idea of a complete logical analysis, an idea which the Girondin reading of Conant and Diamond retains (ibid.: 55).

Despite such disagreement, the main proponents of the resolute reading (to which I now include Bronzo because of his joint article with Conant), may be understood as maintaining their claim about the highly generic character of the resolute reading. To look into their reason for such a claim, we can refer to what Conant and Diamond earlier said about the issue:

> To be a resolute reader is ***to be committed at most to a certain programmatic conception of the lines along which those details are to be worked out***, but it

[52] See also Conant and Diamond (2004:87-88, endnote 4)

> does not deliver a general recipe for reading the book… And we do not apologize for this. For we think that this is how it should be. There should be no substitute for the hard task of working through the book on one's own. A resolute reading does not aim to provide a skeleton key for unlocking the secrets of the book in a manner that would transform the ladder into an elevator; so that one just has to push a button (say, one labelled "austere nonsense") and one will immediately be caused to ascend to Tractarian heights, without ever having to do any ladder-climbing on one's own (Conant and Diamond 2004: 47 emphasis added)

The above passage can be taken as a direct suggestion that the idea of a "highly generic" character that Conant and Diamond ascribe to the resolute reading cannot be ascribed to Mulhall's resolute reading in *WPL*. One reason for this, which I have earlier mentioned, is that the work already contains a detailed exegesis of *PI* 243-315, often known as Wittgenstein's remarks on private language. The nature of Mulhall's exegesis can still bring out disagreement in detail but it is a disagreement different from the disagreement in detail that resolute readers of the *Tractatus* have among each other. This kind of disagreement in detail, for example, can be found not just between *Girondins* and *Jacobins* but also among *Girondins* themselves. This view can be inferred from Conant and Bronzo's concluding remark in RRT (2017: 192) that a beginning reader of the resolute reading can still choose among the Girondin readings of Ricketts, Goldfarb, and Diamond. For Conant and Bronzo, each of these *Girondins* can be understood as involving different paths and details in developing their view on the emptiness of Tractarian nonsense mentioned in *TLP* 6.54. This kind of openness in choice is available to a neophyte reader even if we accept Conant and Bronzo's claim that some resolute readings like that of Read and Deans have "lost track" of the topic (ibid.). There can be various forms of resolute reading that even conflict with each other because those resolute readings are still guided by a minimally shared agreement on how to interpret *TLP* 6.54. This leads to another important reason why the attribution of a "highly generic" character to Mulhall's resolute reading becomes problematic.

The *Investigations* has no equivalent of *TLP 6.54* as a kind of "framing remark". And so, this makes the previously discussed idea of a highly generic or programmatic reading seemingly awkward or just plainly inapplicable when transferred to the idea of a resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein. As Schönbaumsfeld (2008: 189) points out, there is nothing in the *Investigations* like *TLP 6.54* which says that all its propositions are nonsensical. Mulhall has indeed referred to passages which he considers central to a resolute reading of the *Investigations*, i.e., *PI* 374 and *PI* 500. These passages are supposedly similar to *TLP* 6.54 in understanding Wittgenstein as endorsing, rather uninsistently, an austere conception of

nonsense. However, there is a significant dissimilarity in those passages given the unique manner by which *TLP* 6.54 functions as a framing remark.

According to Diamond (2000: 152), *TLP* 6.54 along with the *TLP* preface and Wittgenstein's letter to the publisher von Ficker are remarks aimed at framing the reader's understanding of the *Tractatus*. These "framing remarks" are Wittgenstein's most direct instructions on how to understand the *Tractatus* given his expectation that the average reader will find it difficult to understand (ibid). Partly because the *Investigations* have not been completed and partly because of its more fragmented structure, there is quite a difficulty on how to justify *PI* 374 and *PI* 500 in terms of how it functions as "framing remarks". *PI* 374 and *PI* 500 may, of course, still have a kind of programmatic character, but it will be "programmatic" in a different way than that of *TLP 6.54*. The preface of the *Investigations,* for example, talks about how the remarks of the book have a structure similar to "sketches of landscapes… made in the course of … long and involved journeyings". In one sense, because the *Investigations* was not finished, it has no concluding remark that can confirm the importance of understanding the *Investigations* as a work that merely involves "sketches". In another sense, which I take to be more important, it is because of the difference in the structure of the *Investigations* itself (that it merely involves "sketches") that the expectation of a concluding remark may be unwarranted. The motley structure of the *Investigations* just seems to make the very idea of searching and finding a Tractarian framing remark (like *TLP* 6.54) spurious.

Because of this dissimilarity between the structure of the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations*, it seems that Mulhall has no alternative: in developing what he calls a "properly resolute reading of the *Investigations"* (Mulhall 2007: 10), he has to draw from a conception of austere nonsense based from the debate between the resolute and standard reading of the *Tractatus*. The insights drawn from this debate (e.g., what counts as Wittgenstein's philosophical method) becomes the logically prior concept which can be used to understand the so-called austere conception of nonsense described by *PI* 374 and *PI* 500. Then, an understanding of these passages can be used as a "resolute guideline" for an exegesis of particular passages in the *Investigations*. However, such a move, which I attribute to Mulhall, undermines the logically posterior character that comes with the resolute reading endorsed by Conant and Diamond. It is this change of feature which I shall now discuss.

Before that, let me first summarize my claims in this section. There are two senses in which we can understand how the highly generic feature of the original resolute reading does not apply to the resolute reading of Mulhall. First, Mulhall's resolute reading involves a detailed reading of the *Investigations* which leaves less looseness for interpretation compared to the

resolute reading of Conant and Diamond which focuses primarily on *TLP* 6.54. Second, the role of a resolute reading of *TLP* 6.54 is not an equivalent to the way a resolute reading of *PI* 374 and *PI* 500 is considered programmatic. Because the resolute reading of *PI* 374 and *PI* 500 is drawn as a kind of parallel to the resolute reading of *TLP* 6.54 and because the *Investigations* and *Tractatus* are in the end two works that have a different structure, there is a sense in which the idea of a resolute of the *Investigations* already becomes a logically prior concept.

2.1.1.2 Change in the logically a posterior character of the resolute reading

I believe that the more significant change in Mulhall's application of the term "resolute reading" to the *Investigations* is that it changes its feature from being a logically posterior concept to being a logically prior concept. This is brought about by the kind of abstraction required in transferring the Tractarian notion of austere nonsense to another work that has its own structure. To elaborate on this let me proceed with my discussion in three stages: 1) the standard reading of *TLP* 6.54, 2) the meaning of the "logically posterior" character of the resolute reading of the *Tractatus*, and 3) the difficulty of the ascribing the same idea of logically posteriority to Mulhall's "resolute later Wittgenstein".[53]

i. The standard reading of TLP 6.54

According to Conant and Bronzo (2017), the concept of a resolute reading has a logically posterior character because of how it is "parasitic" on standard readings of the *Tractatus,* specifically on the substantial reading of Tractarian nonsense mentioned in *TLP* 6.54. I have already discussed *TLP* 6.54 in the previous section, but I shall now go back to it with more detail.

Below is a quote of *TLP* 6.54:

> My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical, when he has used them—as steps—to climb up beyond them. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it.)
> He must transcend these propositions, and then he will see the world aright. (*TLP* 6.54, Pears/McGuinnes Translation)

As earlier mentioned, this passage is usually read as involving a paradox and a corresponding exegetical challenge. The paradox is that philosophical propositions of the

[53] Henceforth, I refer to Mulhall's "resolute later Wittgenstein" to be synonymous with the so-called resolute reading of the *Investigations* that he presented in *WPL*.

Tractatus are "nonsensical" and yet it seems that they are also propositions we understand. So one might ask: If we are to take seriously Wittgenstein's claim that the *Tractatus'* propositions are nonsensical, how is it possible to understand those nonsensical remarks without giving them some "sense"?

Conant's "The Method of the Tractatus" (TMTT, 2002) [54] describes two kinds of standard readers who have different responses to this question. There are logical positivists who simply disregard Wittgenstein's claims about the nonsensicality of Tractarian propositions and ascribe a meaningful theory of logic to the *Tractatus*. And there are ineffabilists who acknowledge the nonsensicality of Tractarian propositions and give that nonsense an ineffable content. I would like to orient my discussion on the side of ineffabilist readers because they take seriously the exegetical challenge posed by *TLP* 6.54 and because their position also alludes to the transcendental reading I discussed in my previous chapter. So from henceforth, I refer to ineffabilist readers of Wittgenstein when I use the term "standard readers".

Standard readers can be understood as responding to the exegetical challenge I raised above in the following manner: Tractarian propositions are indeed nonsensical, and we do give Tractarian propositions some "sense" or "content". Wittgenstein described his propositions as "nonsensical" because they involve an ineffable content about the limits of thought and language. So Tractarian nonsense are not really devoid of content, except that this "content" is ineffable. Because of this ineffability, standard readers highlight the significance of the distinction between "saying" and "showing" found in certain passages of the *Tractatus*. [55] And they claim that Tractarian nonsense is a kind of showing. Let me explain this point in a way that relates to my discussion of the transcendental reading of the *Tractatus* in Part 1.[56]

Given that the limits of thought are incapable of being expressed without having to go outside the limits of thought themselves, anything we say about those limits will be nonsensical. Philosophical propositions essentially involve saying something about the limits of thought. Hence, the propositions of the *Tractatus,* being philosophical propositions*,* are indeed nonsensical. Yet for standard readers, the nonsensicality of Tractarian propositions have the character of depth similar to how Wittgenstein in *TLP* 5.62 says that propositions about solipsism are "correct" in a way that such "correctness" cannot be said. Despite their failure to say anything meaningful, these philosophical propositions can be recognized as attempts to

[54] See in particular section I, p. 375-377.
[55] See, for example, *TLP* 3.262, 4.1212, 4.122, 5.62, 6.36, 6.522**.** It seems to me that the most direct among these passages is *TLP* 4.1212: "What can be shown cannot be said".
[56] See in particular my previous discussion in Section 1.1 on how Stenius portrayed the nonsense in the *Tractatus* to be having a Kantian significance that leads to a kind of inexpressible content.

convey the inexpressible limits of thought. This "depth" or "importance" is something absent from the nonsensicality of gibberish. To recognize this "depth", attention must be given to *Tractatus'* distinction between saying and showing.

For standard readers, philosophical nonsense is a kind of "deep nonsense" because though they fail to express the inexpressible they are somehow able to point towards "it". And it is due to how philosophical nonsense functions as a pointing gesture that the "inexpressible" is somehow conveyed and understood. Using the terminologies Diamond (1988) employs in describing the irresolute reading of the *Tractatus*, the position taken by the standard readers might be understood in this manner: the transcendental limits of thought are unsayable (*Unsagbare)* even though they are not unthinkable (*Undankbare*). These transcendental limits are capable of being thought even though they are incapable of being said, and we can think about "them" by means of the *showing* made possible by philosophical nonsense. So for standard readers, the supposed nonsensicality of Tractarian propositions described in *TLP* 6.54 does *not* imply that they are "nonsense" in a way that makes them empty. Tractarian propositions have an ineffable and deep content which we understand by looking into how they gesture at the inexpressible limits of thought. To have this kind of understanding is the aim of philosophical analysis.

Now let me go to the resolute reading of Conant and Diamond, which I would like to call "resolute reading in the original". I shall explain how that resolute reading in the original has the "logically posterior character" that Conant and Bronzo (2017) speaks of.

ii. The resolute reading of TLP 6.54 and its logically posterior character

Conant and Bronzo (2017:178-181) identify four negative commitments that make up what it means for the resolute reading to be a concept that is logically posterior to the standard reading. It *rejects* how the *Tractatus* is understood as: 1) putting forward a theory, 2) seeking to convey an ineffable theory or doctrine, 3) endorsing a substantial conception of nonsense, and 4) employing a *Tractatarian* notion of *Begriffsschrift* that is used to determine the nonsensicality of ordinary language sentences. Conant and Bronzo explain that these commitments rearticulate the same negative commitments earlier described by Conant and Diamond in their 2004 joint article. I shall focus mainly on the third commitment above to orient my discussion to a greater appreciation of Mulhall's claim of drawing from the Tractarian distinction between a substantial conception of nonsense and an austere conception of nonsense (Mulhall 2007:12). However, I shall remain open to the ways by which those commitments eventually become interconnected.

So, for Conant and Bronzo (2017), the logically posterior character of the resolute reading in the original can be understood in terms of how it comes *after* the standard reading as a kind of complementary contrast that undermines claims to a substantial content as illustrated, for example, by the substantial conception of nonsense I previously discussed. As I understand it, Conant and Diamond's seemingly enigmatic position that all instances of philosophical nonsense are the same as empty gibberish is meant to be understood in its essentially *critical* function of showing that the substantial reader has failed to take a "logical point of view" in philosophical clarification.

Because of its logically posterior character, the resolute reading has no content of its own apart from how it functions as a criticism of substantial readings of the *Tractatus*. This criticism proceeds by exposing an illusion in a way that does not itself presuppose a substantial theory, and it does so by responding in a way that becomes sensitive to the particular form that an illusion takes in the mind of the philosophically deluded. Conant (1991: 346) has earlier described this therapeutic process as a kind of "exploding [an illusion] from within" which can also be understood as highlighting the lack of independent conceptual resources from where this therapeutic method can draw and proceed in its work.[57] Taken separately from its criticism of the emptiness of the illusions of the substantial reading, the resolute reading becomes a case of having a view that comes from nowhere. Yet, when attention is given to logically posterior character of the resolute reading, one can realize that this "view from nowhere" is precisely what the resolute reading undermines.[58]

The logically posterior character of the resolute reading can also be understood as describing the manner by which it shows resoluteness in rejecting theory in favour of how philosophical elucidation is meant to be a critical activity. This resolute view is again essentially formed as a contrast to a certain lack of resoluteness of the standard reading. And this applies specifically on how the standard reading backs out on its claim that the *Tractatus* is a book that *aims* to reject theories (i.e., where the idea of rejecting a theory can be minimally understood as that of not going outside the limits thought). As Conant and Bronzo (2017) says, the standard readings of the *Tractatus* render only "lip-service" to the rejection of theory. This lip-service can be understood in terms of the kind of doublethink that standard readers commit themselves to when they understand Tractarian nonsense as a kind of deep nonsense. This doublethink

[57] See also his later discussion of this idea in Conant's TMTT (2002: 424).
[58] I take this "view from nowhere" as essentially synonymous to the "external perspective on language" which resolute readers of Wittgenstein consider as illusory. I shall discuss this idea of an "external perspective on language" in Part 4 where I present Crary's resolute reading to be also giving an emphasis on Wittgenstein's way of attending to the "use" of an expression.

consists in claiming that there is nothing intelligible outside the limits of thought and language while at the same time presuming that there is a space outside those limits from where we can understand an inexpressible "it" (e.g., the view from nowhere that enables us to understand a gesture to the inexpressible). It is in holding on to the latter view that standard readers become irresolute, and it is in insisting *only* on the former (that there is really nothing intelligible outside the limits of language) that readers like Conant and Diamond become resolute.

This insistence on the plainness of nonsense is meant to be understood in a negative manner as a kind of criticism that reveals the emptiness of an illusion rather than as a thesis on nonsense that one can affirm or deny. This negative character emphasizes the sense in which the resolute reading is a logically posterior concept. It becomes a concept only as a mode of criticism which exposes the ineffable "it" as another instance of illusion. This mode of criticism involves a description of the particular way by which the standard reader "hovers between two meanings" or of how he ends up with a kind of "intelligible nonsense".[59] The result of this description is a personal realization of the emptiness of one's words because of how one has *failed* to confer meaning to those words (and not because it has violated some ineffable or implicit rule that functions as a limit on how those words can be used in a meaningful manner).

Here, it now becomes important to emphasize how this critical activity of "elucidation" takes a logical point of view (as opposed to a psychological point of view). Without this emphasis, the resolute claim "all nonsense is gibberish" may end up being understood as having no significance at all. The illusion of content attributed to an ineffable nonsense comes only from a psychological point of view. But to someone who has become clear in the use of words, i.e., to someone who has turned inward and has seen his dithering in meaning, that "deep nonsense" becomes empty and unnecessary. So one can understand the psychological point of view, the view taken by the standard reader, as a view on the use of our expressions which is still characterized by confusion due to a certain kind of dithering in one's use of words. The logical point of view, on the other hand, which is the view taken by the resolute reader, involves someone who has seen that it is only his unresolved desires and expectations which has given philosophical nonsense the appearance of a content. The idea of a logical point of view seems to be described in *TLP* 6.54 as the perspective of someone who has already transcended the ladder of Tactarian propositions by "climb[ing] out through them, on them, over them" [60] And

[59] See Conant's "Why worry about the *Tractatus*" (2004: 175-76)

[60] Here I use the metaphor from Ogden's translation of *TLP*, which I find richer compared to the Pears McGuiness translation in terms of its description of philosophical analysis. The Pears-McGuiness translation merely describes a person with Tractarian understanding as "he [who] has used them [tractarian propositions]—as steps—to climb up beyond them." While this translation is clear on the instrumental value of Tractarian propositions as steps that

so, he is now in possession of a clarity and breadth of vision capable of seeing the illusion of sense that comes with Tractarian propositions. On the resolute reading, the logical point of view represents the perspective of someone who, upon performing logical analysis, has attained clarity in the use of a word as it occurs "in the nexus of a propositions" (*TLP* 3.3) and has *overcomed* the illusion that comes from holding on to an ineffable insight. From the logical point of view, one can see that this inexpressible content as empty and so one can now treat the words associated with his philosophical claim as similar to gibberish.

In this regard, another important point that the idea of a logically posterior character brings about is not only the resolute reading's critical relationship to the standard reading but also its *dependent* or *parasitic* relationship to it. The psychological point of view on the clarification of language, which the standard reader takes, is actually an important component step toward the logical point of view emphasized by the resolute reader. The psychological point of view where a hovering in meaning occurs is an opportunity to be honest about ones desires and expectations and let those honest desires give our illusions some kind of content. Without this "content" there would be nothing for the resolute reader to exorcise. It is only *after* this point when the standard reader has given his "content" to philosophical nonsense that the logical point of view can have its importance as the next step which completes logical analysis. The idea of logical point of view is important because it provides the kind of clarity in our expressions that makes it possible to portray Wittgenstein as someone who is also concerned with the distinction between a proposition's apparent logical form and its actual logical form. However, this idea of a logical point of view is to be taken as essentially logically posterior to the psychological point of view. The psychological point of view is a ladder that one must climb on first to be able to reach the logical point of view. It provides the experience of the "reality of our illusion" that gives the resolute reading its point or significance.

It is also in this kind of complementary relationship between the resolute reading and the standard reading, which the idea of having a logical posterior character brings about, that we can understand why Conant and Bronzo (2017) dissociates the resolute reading from the "no-insight thesis". The "no-insight thesis" attributes to the resolute reading the view that there are no insights at all which can be gained from reading the *Tractatus* and that the experience of reading it is nothing but a "wild goose-chase" (ibid.: 182-186). But, as Conant and Bronzo emphasizes, there are indeed insights that can be drawn from the resolute reading. These

one eventually has to throw away, the Ogden translation seems to me as more accurate in describing the thorough but roundabout process of clarification that one must go through to be able to throw away the ladder of Tractarian propositions.

"resolute insights" are not acknowledged as insights at all because of preconceptions on how insights should be, e.g., that they be expressed by means of propositions or quasi-propositions. Let me quote what Conant and Bronzo says on this:

> All that such a resolute reading deprives itself of is the right to make sense of that idea [insight] in the way someone like Hacker does – namely, by claiming that the *Tractatus* aims to convey a body of propositional or quasi-propositional contents…This does not show that such resolute readers cannot makes sense of the very idea that **in reading the book we make a form of genuine and valuable intellectual and existential progress.** Most resolute readers, after all, do emphasize throughout their writings that **the *Tractatus* is interested in the achievement of forms of *clarity***. Depending upon what one means in speaking of "insight" or "understanding," the claim that this is what we achieve may remain more or less consistent with something that resolute readers are happy to say about **what happens to us as we read the book and make progress with it…** (ibid. 2017: 183, emphasis added)

This remark is phrased as a response to Hacker's claim that the negative character of the resolute reading's understanding of Tractarian nonsense (that it is empty nonsense) undermines the very condition through which we can understand anything from the *Tractatus*, much less derive any insight from it. The problem with such a response, as noted by Conant and Bronzo, is that it transforms the resolute reading into a logically prior concept that can stand by itself. It is no longer a logically posterior concept that only emerges as a mode of criticism after the standard reading has presented its own substantial understanding of the *Tractatus*.

So, an appropriate "resolute response" to this kind of criticism is to simply bring attention back to the logically posterior character of the resolute reading. This move, for example, can be discerned in the way Conant and Bronzo turn Hacker's criticism back on itself. This seems to me as a subtle argument that can be quite a nuisance to positions such as that of Hacker. However, such a resolute response only means to highlight the parasitic nature of the resolute reading. The resolute reading is parasitic on the standard reading and it takes on life from the particular claims to substance or content that a standard reader ends up presupposing. In the case of the passage above, Conant and Bronzo's response points to how Hacker presupposes a substantial conception of what it means to have an "insight" from the *Tractatus.* This substantial conception prevents Hacker from recognizing insights that can also come from the resolute reading.

As I understand the resolute reading, it seems that it has *some* agreement with the approach of the standard reading of *TLP* 6.54, Tractarian propositions must indeed be given some content in the process of how we attempt to understand their nonsensicality. This content, however, is merely of instrumental value relative to the self-understanding that comes from the

difficulty of letting go of the content that comes from the psychological point of view of the reader. Thus, the attribution of a "no-insight thesis" to the resolute reading can be seen as coming from an understanding of "insight" that does not pay attention to the complementary and logically posterior relationship of the resolute reading to standard reading. Insights that come from the resolute reading cannot be separated from the particular experience of Socratic midwifery that allows one to move from the psychological point of view to the logical point of view of clarification. It is in this sense that we can understand Conant and Bronzo's (ibid.) claim that insights from the *Tractatus* are not insights which can be affirmed or denied by propositions or even by quasi-propositions that show the inexpressible (like the one endorsed by Hacker). It is also in this essential connection of Tractarian insights with Tractarian Socratic midwifery that we can understand Conant and Bronzo's seemingly vague description of "resolute insights".

In the above passage, for example, Conant and Bronzo claim that the resolute reading in fact involves "valuable intellectual and existential progress". This progress has something to do with "forms of clarity" that can be understood in terms of "what happens to us as we read the book [*Tractatus*] and make progress with it". So, "What happens to us as we read the *Tractatus* and make progress with it" seems to be a deeply a personal experience in a way that it involves an "insight" that makes no separation between intellectual and existential progress. Yet that "insight" is also not so subjective to the extent that we treat it as something ineffable. Conant (1989), for example, rejects that kind of appeal to subjectivity which prevents a person from engaging in a dialectic that clarifies and puts into some language that which is considered subjective or ineffable. There is indeed the subjective but that subjectivity does not imply that they are things that cannot be clarified *in* language. In this sense, the resolute reading can be understood as also emphasizing the Tractarian idea that the limits of thought are the limits of language. Any ineffable or subjective content that we understand must be understood and expressed in language. Otherwise, it is nothing but gibberish.

This persistent refusal of the resolute reading to say anything substantive while at the same time eschewing any claim to the ineffable may seem enigmatic, but this enigma goes away once we bring our attention back to the logically posterior character of the resolute reading. The resolute reading and its claims about the emptiness of philosophical nonsense are not meant to be stand-alone concepts or judgments. They are modes of criticism that take their form as a

particular or "piecemeal" response to the substantial claims of a standard reader.[61] Accordingly, the "insights" that come with a resolute reading are not insights that can be affirmed or denied by means of propositions. Those propositions turn the resolute reading into a logical prior concept and ends up failing to acknowledge the particular hovering that the philosophically deluded experiences. The resolute reading considers as important that kind of hovering in meaning which occurs from the psychological point of view of the substantial reader. Any genuine understanding of these insights must therefore be connected with the particular way by which the philosophically deluded has found clarity and liberation from his illusion.[62]

So, the austere conception of nonsense associated with the resolute reading does not really imply vacuity in the way it has been suggested by standard readers. The idea of austere nonsense is essentially in a parasitic relationship to the standard reading, but it can still be associated with a "resolute insight" that is different from the "no-insight thesis". This "resolute insight" has a piecemeal nature in so far as it is inseparable from the particular form of Socratic midwifery that can make the standard reader realize the emptiness of his substantial claims. As I see it, Conant and Bronzo's point in distancing the resolute reading from the "no-insight thesis" is in line with resolute readings' view of the highly particular nature of "insights" that come from a resolute reading of the *Tractatus,* and this particularity essentially involves connection with a Socratic dialectic. The Socratic and therapeutic nature of these insights also relate to how the idea of a resolute reading is inappropriately conceived as a logically prior concept. In relation to this, let me now discuss the sense in which Mulhall turns the resolute reading into a logically prior concept.

iii. On ascribing a logically posterior character to Mulhall's resolute reading.

To retain the logically posteriori character of the resolute reading for the *Investigations* in a way similar to what Conant and Bronzo has described, it seems that Mulhall has to establish substantial readings of the *Investigations* and demonstrate the specific manner by which those substantial readings become illusory.[63] Mulhall has done this in some way by identifying substantial readings of the private language argument, say, for example, in the dogmatic tone

[61] It is in this sense that I treat the idea of a "standard reader" and the idea of "substantial reader" of Wittgenstein synonymously. The standard reader of Wittgenstein essentially takes Wittgenstein's use of nonsensical remarks to be his way of endorsing a substantial philosophical theory; say, for example, on the inexpressible limits of sense.
[62] See also Sørli's dissertation " Wittgenstein and the ambitions of philosophy" (2008) for an instructive discussion of what this liberation from illusion consists in.
[63] I have found the idea of "substantial reading" as opposed to a "standard reading" more applicable to the work of Mulhall given that his idea of a resolute reading in *WPL* is drawn more from an inner polemic. Instead of criticizing some standard reader of Wittgenstein, it simply focuses on how the forms of nonsense found in the *Investigations* embody the illusions it seeks to overcome.

which directly says that the idea of a private language is impossible. And then in introducing a voice which gives attention not to the impossibility of a private language but to the difficulty of being able to imagine what "it" is (Mulhall 2007: 104-6). This uninsistent resolute voice comes to form a dialectic with the substantial voice on the nonsensicality of the private language which eventually ends up with the way criteria come to have a role in understanding what it means for a private language to be nonsensical. Here, criteria are an internal part of the (imaginative) dialogue which in turn gives way to what seems to be a more holistic resolute view that *includes* both the voice of the substantial reading and the resolute reading on the idea of a private language.

However, an aspect of Mulhall's *WPL* (e.g. as specified in his introduction), has turned the idea of a resolute reading into a logically prior concept by drawing from the conception of austere nonsense that was developed from the debate between resolute and standard readers of the *Tractatus*. This idea of austere nonsense then becomes a logically prior concept from which Mulhall conducts an exegesis of Wittgenstein's remarks on private language.

Though Mulhall only claims to draw inspiration from the debate between resolute and standard readers of the *Tractatus*, this drawing of inspiration can be viewed as an abstraction that changes the character of the original resolute reading of Conant and Diamond. It associates the resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein with the Tractarian idea of austere nonsense and turns that idea of a resolute reading into a logically prior concept. Mulhall writes:

> I share Conant's general conviction that the ways in which one reads this particular stretch of the *Investigations* can provide a particularly clear and helpful illustration of the strength of the temptation to misread **the philosophical method manifest in the book** as a whole in this manner, and of the importance of diagnosing and overcoming that temptation. Accordingly, the primary preoccupation of this essay is that of critically evaluating the philosophical illumination that might be gained by attempting to transfer this **originally Tractarian distinction between resolute and substantial readings** to the context of Wittgenstein's later philosophy. (Mulhall 2007: 11-12, emphasis added)

In understanding the above passage, it may help to start focusing on what Mulhall refers to as the "originally Tractarian distinction between resolute and substantial readings". This remark comes in the context of Mulhall's discussion of the difference between the substantial reader's diagnosis of nonsense and that of the resolute reader. The substantial reader proceeds with an analysis that ends up presuming a determinate nonsense in the form of an ineffable or substantial nonsense. The austere reader, on the other hand, shows that this substantial insight is another illusion that Wittgenstein's philosophical elucidation aims to overcome. So in this

passage, the idea of an austere nonsense may now be understood as a conception of a philosophical method that aims to show that a case of "determinate nonsense" is in fact an illusion. This turns the resolute reading into a stand-alone concept of philosophical clarification with certain procedures that one can use for contexts other than the illusions encountered in reading the *Tractatus*. In a way, this is possible and maybe even justified. But we can also say that Conant and Bronzo's (2017) conservative restricting of the idea of resolute reading to the *Tractatus* may be understood in light of their emphasis on how the resolute reading involves an essential sensitivity to contours of illusion that any logically prior philosophical procedure might fail embody. That conception of logical posteriority might in fact be construed as a kind of warning to consider the nature of deconstruction that Wittgenstein's conception of philosophy asks us to engage in while at the same time reflecting on the undue limit we might end up ascribing to it.

And so, I believe that another way of having a practical understanding of Conant and Bronzo's insistence on the connection between the resolute reading and *Tractatus* is to acknowledge how the so-called insights of the resolute reading cannot be separated from the structure of the *Tractatus*. This idea on how the content of one's philosophizing cannot be distinguished from the medium or style of one's philosophizing seems to be a consistent theme that is associated with Wittgenstein's *Bemerkungen* (or phrasic) style of writing. This idea is already found in the *Tractatus* and it is found in more prominent way in the *Investigations*. Hence, I believe that the most cogent way of clarifying Mulhall's idea of a resolute later Wittgenstein comes from how he has given attention to the style of Wittgenstein's writing and how he has welded it into his particular interpretation of Wittgenstein's remarks. I shall discuss this in my next chapter in terms of how Mulhall gives attention to the dialectical and uninsistent tone that characterize Wittgenstein's mode of writing and how this reflects that the so-called perfectionist aspect of his philosophy.

2.1.2 A logically posterior concept of a resolute later Wittgenstein?

For now, let me state how I understand Conant and Bronzo (2017) as having a position that is not fundamentally opposed to the idea of a resolute later Wittgenstein and that they are in fact sympathetic to such a project. Just as Conant and Diamond's resolute reading is a logically posterior concept relative to substantial readings of the *Tractatus*, I believe that there can also be a resolute later Wittgenstein that has the status of a logically posterior concept relative to the substantial readings of the *Investigations*.

Consider, for example, the following passage where Conant and Bronzo explains the bogus dispute between Mulhall and Schönbaumsfeld:

> Schönbaumsfeld objects to Mulhall that there is no prima facie rationale or a "resolute reading" of the *Investigations*, because "the *Investigations* does not declare itself, like the *Tractatus* to be nonsensical" (2008, p. 1109). But it is hard to believe that Mulhall wishes to disagree with Schönbaumsfeld on this point. How could he have failed to notice that in the *Investigations* there is nothing strictly analogous to 6.54? Much more plausibly, the attempt to read 6.54 resolutely is not among those features of the original concept of a resolute reading that Mulhall wishes to retain as part of his newly introduced concept of a resolute reading of the *Investigations*. Similarly, according to Schönbaumsfeld, Mulhall regards as non-resolute "any reading … that regards Wittgenstein as advancing a non-empty view, or some form of argument" (2008, p. 1110). The concept of a resolute reading that Schönbaumsfeld here attributes to Mulhall is analoguous to the logically prior concept of a resolute reading (of the *Tractatus*) …, in so far as it is essentially characterized by a commitment to something analogous to the no-insight thesis: a reading of the *Investigations* is resolute, according to Schönbaumsfeld, if it maintains that the book does not aim to put forth any argument or any nonempty view, on any possible construal of these notions [e.g. austere nonsense, resolute reading]. But Mulhall might in fact be working with a different concept of a resolute reading of later Wittgenstein – for example, one which denies, more limitedly, that the book aims to establish the truth of such theses (e.g., arguments aiming to establish the truth of putative philosophical claim that " a private language is logically impossible") (ibid.: 189-90)

This passage specifies details by which Conant and Bronzo take Mulhall and Schönbaumsfeld to be talking past each other, but it seems that the passage can also be taken as indicative of a kind of partiality to Mulhall. While it can be read in the context of Conant and Bronzo's view that Mulhall has become unclear about what his resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein consists in, it also describes Schönbaumsfeld's misunderstandings of Mulhall and suggests a possible interpretation of Mulhall that is not prone to Schönbaumsfeld's criticism.

For Conant and Bronzo, these are the views that Schönbaumsfeld ascribes to Mulhall even as they are views that Mulhall's resolute reading does *not* really take: 1) an understanding of an austere conception of nonsense that can only be drawn from a reading of *TLP* 6.54, and 2) an ascription that Mulhall's resolute later Wittgenstein essentially involves a version of a "no-insight thesis".

Also in the same passage I have quoted above, Conant and Bronzo offer a speculative clarification on what Mulhall's resolute reading might be. They say that Mulhall might actually be depicting a concept of a resolute later Wittgenstein "which denies, more limitedly, that the book aims to establish the truth of such theses (e.g., arguments aiming to establish the truth of putative philosophical claim that 'a private language is logically impossible')". In making this

qualification, I take it that Conant and Bronzo do not merely aim to eliminate a misconstrual of Mulhall's resolute reading of the *Investigations*. They are actually putting forward a more definite description of what Mulhall's resolute later Wittgenstein attempts to illustrate.

Indeed, Conant and Bronzo repeatedly emphasize that Mulhall could have exercised more clarity so that such misconstruals will not be necessary. Yet their remark also seems to show that part of being able to understand Mulhall's resolute later Wittgenstein also means being able to speculate, maybe in a charitable way, what a resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein might be from within Mulhall's *WPL*. In my view, Conant and Bronzo's positive clarification is instructive because it can also be taken to suggest the possibility of a resolute reading of the *Investigations* that has a "certain" logically posterior character.

The cue for the possibility of this kind of logical posterior reading can be taken from Conant and Bronzo's remark that Mulhall's resolute reading might actually consist in denying the claim "a private language is logically impossible" in a certain "limited manner". Here, the claim "a private language is logically impossible" can be understood as a claim by a standard reader of the *Investigations.* The "limited manner" of denying that claim which does not itself consist in a thesis is a resolute reading of that part of the *Investigations*. Hence, it seems that we can say that the "limited manner" of denying a substantial claim about private language might also present a concept of a resolute reading that has a "logically posterior" character; it is a concept that essentially functions as a criticism of a substantial claim about private language. This critical function does not involve having to deny a nonsensical claim and then presuming the intelligibility of that bit of nonsense by means of a thesis on the "inherent nonsensicality" of the idea of a private language. As Wittgenstein might describe it, this critical activity merely shows the particular way by which a standard reader "hover[s] between regarding it [the idea of private language] as sense and regarding it as nonsense".[64]

In the next chapter (Part 2, Chapter 2), I shall say more about this critical activity in terms of Conant's (2004) and Mulhall's (2007) shared move of "throwing away" the idea of a substantial conception of nonsense, specifically in relation to how the idea of a private language in the *Investigations* might be understood as involving only an austere conception of nonsense. For now, it bears noting how the meaning of a "logically posterior reading of the *Investigations"* is now different from what counts as a "logically posterior reading of the *Tractatus"*. Mulhall's "logically posterior reading of the *Investigations"* involves a certain kind of synthesis. It is now logically posterior relative to how it becomes a criticism of what can be considered as a

[64] The quoted phrase comes from Wittgenstein's 1935 remark as quoted in Conant (2004: 186)

substantial reading of the *Investigations*, and this logically posterior character is significantly defined by the unique structure of the *Investigations*. That latter structure allows for a more extensive use of imaginative activity that is not readily found in the *Tractatus*.

So rather than rejecting what can be considered as Mulhall's move of abstracting the idea of a resolute reading from its original application as an exegetical program for *Tractatus,* I believe that it is more productive to read Mulhall as proceeding in this synthetic sense of "logically posterior". And it seems that Conant and Bronzo (and Conant in particular) can be understood as sharing this sentiment. Let me point this out as I proceed to discuss the "justification" for Mulhall's idea of a resolute later Wittgenstein.

2.1.3 Justifying Mulhall's resolute later Wittgenstein: Conant and Cavell

So despite the change in the "highly generic" and "logically posterior" features of Conant and Diamond's resolute reading, how can Mulhall's idea of a resolute later Wittgenstein be justified? In the context of Conant and Bronzo's article, this means asking the question on how Mulhall's "resolute later Wittgenstein" might advance a genuine progress and debate on issues related to the resolute reading.

My reply would be this: on the condition that one becomes clear with this change in meaning, Mulhall's resolute reading of Wittgenstein's private language will: 1) help in clarifying the continuity between Wittgenstein's early and later thought, and 2) highlight a critical use of Cavell on the importance of paying attention to Wittgenstein's style of writing. These two claims are in fact embedded in Mulhall's introduction. Taken together, I believe they show the significance of Mulhall's *WPL* in terms of how it brings together the ideas of two philosophers, Conant and Cavell, whose works have radically influenced a renewed debate in understanding Wittgenstein's philosophy. Let me explain these two points below.

2.1.3.1 On a resolute continuity in Wittgenstein's thought

Despite Conant and Bronzo's claim about the unclarity of Mulhall's use of the term "resolute reading", there seems to be a sense in which they are supportive of his project of a resolute later Wittgenstein. Let me quote them again on this:

> there may be some justification for calling certain readings of the later Wittgenstein "resolute" – for instance, in order to highlight significant forms of continuity between the views that those readings attribute to the later Wittgenstein and those that resolute readers (in the original sense of the term) attribute to the *Tractatus*.(Conant and Bronzo 2017: 189)

So the passage suggests that a justification for Mulhall's project is to highlight and clarify important forms of continuity between the early and later Wittgenstein, where Wittgenstein's remarks on private language are those that represent the later Wittgenstein and a certain conception of the resolute reading's Tractarian view of nonsense represents the early Wittgenstein. Here again notice how the resolute reading in the original becomes not a logically posterior concept but a logically prior concept that can bring light to another concept. There is a resolute reading of the nonsense found in the *Tractatus*, and the insights from that resolute reading can be used as a guide to clarify what counts as a resolute reading of the nonsense found in Wittgenstein's remarks on private language.

Let me now refer to Mulhall's explicit justification for his project:

> I share Conant's general conviction that the ways in which one reads this particular stretch of the *Investigations* [*Wittgenstein's remarks on Private Language, PI 243-315*] can provide a particularly clear and helpful illustration of the strength of the temptation to misread the philosophical method manifest in the book as a whole in this manner, and of the importance of diagnosing and overcoming that temptation. Accordingly, the primary preoccupation of this essay is that of critically evaluating the philosophical illumination that might be gained by attempting to transfer this originally Tractarian distinction between resolute and substantial readings to the context of Wittgenstein's later philosophy. (Mulhall 2007:11-12)

This passage is interesting because it makes explicit two things: 1) It acknowledges the "logically prior" nature of his resolute later Wittgenstein, and 2) It draws inspiration from the works of Conant himself who is one of the main proponents of the resolute reading.

I believe that I have sufficiently discussed the logically posterior nature of the resolute reading in the original and how Mulhall's resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein undermines this logically posterior character. This is now explicitly supported by the passage above as Mulhall says that he "transfer[s] this originally Tractarian distinction between resolute and substantial readings to the context of Wittgenstein's later philosophy". Note, however, how my discussion shows that Mulhall's use of the term "resolute reading" is "logically prior" and not "logically *a priori*". It is logically prior relative to how it draws from the conceptions of nonsense that come from the debate between the substantial and resolute readings of the *Tractatus*, but it is not logically *a priori* relative to how Mulhall makes a "critical evaluation of the philosophical illumination" that comes from that debate. And as I mentioned earlier, this critical evaluation occurs in the context of the different structure that characterizes Wittgenstein's writing style in the *Investigations*. So I would now like consider further the second point above on how Mulhall also draws from Conant.

2.1.3.2 On drawing from Conant

The work that Mulhall mainly refers to is "Why Worry about the *Tractatus*" (WWAT, 2004) where Mulhall ascribes to Conant the view that Wittgenstein's remarks on the idea of a private language is an "illuminating test-case" for the resolute reader (Mulhall 2007:11). As mentioned in the above passage, Mulhall understands Conant as saying that Wittgenstein's remarks on private language offers a strong temptation to attribute a substantial conception of nonsense to the *Investigations*. Accordingly, it also offers an equally good opportunity for the resolute reader to show that this substantial conception is in fact empty and illusory.

If we consider Conant's WWAT itself, one may describe this temptation towards a substantial reading in this manner: the claim "there is no private language" is nonsensical because of the logical impossibility that comes with the violation of grammar. Hence, the idea of a grammatical nonsense in the remark "there is a private language" is better understood as a way of *showing* the limits of language given our inability to express truths about those limits by means of propositions. Grammatical nonsense is not really gibberish because they convey "grammatical truths" which we understand by means of the *showing* made possible by philosophical nonsense.

From the perspective of Conant's resolute reading, this way of reasoning turns in on itself because it gives intelligibility to what it presumes as nonsensical. Let me quote Conant on this:

> The argument seeks to show that the very idea of a private language is inherently nonsensical and thus not a possible topic of discourse; but, insofar as talk of 'a private language' is employed with the aim of advancing an argument against the possibility of such a language, the argument would appear to presuppose the possibility of a language in which it is possible to speak of and frame thoughts about a private language – thoughts such as the thought 'a private language is impossible'. Is the 'thought' that 'a private language is impossible' a thought or not? Is it something thinkable? **The very structure of such an argument** – one that aims to show that the very idea of a private language is one that cannot make sense – **seems to presuppose the intelligibility of that which it seeks to show is unintelligible**." (Conant 2004:174, emphasis added)

Here, I believe that Conant is pointing to the error that comes from thinking that one can negate a piece of nonsense meaningfully and from that negation derive an intelligible insight. If the claim "there is a private language" is understood as nonsensical because the rules of grammar determine the impossibility of its negation then one makes the idea of a private language *inherently* nonsensical. This *inherent* nonsensicality turns the claim "there is no private language" into a necessary truth, i.e. a grammatical truth, which one simply takes for

granted as part of the conditions of the meaningful use of language. But nonsense cannot be negated meaningfully, and so whatever we seem to understand from its negation must also be meaningless and unintelligible. So Conant also explicitly says that "talk of a private language is nonsense, and a claim to the effect that what a bit of nonsense asserts as impossible is itself just a further bit of nonsense" (ibid.: 175). This means that the claim "there is no private language" is meaningless in the same way that the claim "there is a private language" is meaningless even if standard readers hold that the former is only *shown* not said. This leads to the clarification of the sense in which Mulhall can be taken to highlight a significant form of continuity in Wittgenstein's thought.

Mulhall can be understood as agreeing with Conant's claim in WWAT that the significant continuity in Wittgenstein's thought lies in the austere conception of nonsense. This austere conception does *not* employ a conception of philosophical nonsense that *shows* an inexpressible truth about grammar even if this "inexpressible truth" were construed in an implicit rather than ineffable manner. Indeed, Conant claims that this idea of *showing* is a mischaracterization of the continuity in Wittgenstein's thought. Because regardless of whether the idea of showing is conceived as an ineffable or implicit condition of language-use, the idea of showing still ends up "smuggling" a substantial content into our thinking. This substantial content in turn becomes an *a priori* limit for understanding the meaning of words as they are actually used in language. Conant can be taken to say that this idea of showing in the later Wittgenstein constitutes the same doublethink that resolute reader's attribute to the standard reading of the *Tractatus*. Whereas in the *Tractatus* philosophical nonsense *shows* inexpressible "truths about logical form", the philosophical nonsense in the *Investigations* is now understood as *showing* implicit "truths about grammar". Even if standard readers were to qualify their claim that they are not really making any claim about any truth and that is precisely the reason why they are forms of showing rather than saying, Conant (and Diamond) would likely rebut by saying that those "truths" are understood nonetheless. In fact, they are understood as something necessary (as in the case of the claim "there is no such thing as a private language"). This conception of necessity ends up becoming a "theory" or preconception that prevents us from understanding the natural permissiveness that comes with the use of our words in language. So for Conant, standard readings of the *Investigations*, like the standard readings of the *Tractatus*, employ a conception of philosophical nonsense and *showing* that *fixes* the limits of sense.

Accordingly, Conant often cites Baker and Hacker's conception of rule-following as an exemple of how the continuity in Wittgenstein conception of philosophy ends up being misrepresented even in his later work. Let me also quote it below:

> Wittgenstein had, in the *Tractatus,* seen that philosophical or conceptual investigation moves in the domain of rules. An important point of continuity was the insight that philosophy is not concerned with what is true and what is false, but rather with what makes sense and what traverses the bounds of sense.... [W]hat he called 'rules of grammar' ... are the direct descendants of the 'rules of logical syntax' of the *Tractatus.* **Like rules of logical syntax, rules of grammar determine the bounds of sense.** They distinguish sense from nonsense.... **Grammar**, as Wittgenstein understood the term, is the account book of language. **Its rules determine the limits of sense**, and by carefully scrutinizing them the philosopher may determine at what point he has drawn an overdraft on Reason, *violated the rules for the use of an expression*, and so, in subtle and not readily identifiable ways, traversed the bounds of sense (Baker and Hacker 1985: 39-40,55 as cited in Conant 2004, p.169, emphasis added)

I find this passage significant because it is cited not just in WWAT but also in Conant's other works on the later Wittgenstein. [65] In those works, the passage is used to depict an object of criticism as Conant argues against an understanding of grammatical nonsense as if it were a kind of "wrong meaning" as opposed to being a mere case of "absence in meaning". This idea of "wrong meaning" involves a substantial conception of nonsense that comes from how grammar is understood as originating from the *Tractatus*' notion of logical syntax and how it functions in a similar way. Like the Tractarian logical syntax, grammar consists of rules that determine the limits or bounds of sense, and philosophical nonsense is understood as a result of the violation of these rules or limits. For the standard reading found in Baker and Hacker (1985), this feature (on how philosophizing involves rules that determine the limits of sense) constitutes a continuity in Wittgenstein's thought. Conant rejects this depiction of continuity as he argues that the continuity in Wittgenstein's thinking is better understood as an eschewal of this view. This eschewal of the idea of limits which the conception of showing smuggles into our thinking makes up the austere conception of nonsense found in the later Wittgenstein (Conant ibid.: 189).

In this regard, it seems that Mulhall shares this view of Conant on how the later Wittgenstein can be understood as adopting an austere conception of nonsense which undermines the idea of limits and the substantial conception of showing. There are many textual evidence for this. But a more telling indication is Mulhall's use of *PI* 500 which Conant also

[65] See "Wittgenstein on Meaning and Use" (1998: 249 footnote 26) and "Stanley Cavell's Wittgenstein"(2005: 65 footnote 33).

discusses in his article WWAT.[66] I shall conduct an exegesis of Mulhall's use of *PI* 500 in the next chapter. But for now let me simply point out how Mulhall interprets *PI* 500 in a way that it becomes critical to Baker and Hacker's view that grammar fixes the limits of sense. Like Conant, Mulhall claims that *PI* 500 indicates how the idea of grammar is not meant to be understood as a kind of limit which prohibits the use of words in language.

For Mulhall (ibid.: 9), *PI* 500 is meant to be construed as a warning to avoid presenting philosophical analysis as if it were a matter of "conjoin[ing] intelligible words in unintelligible ways". It is also meant to be a counsel not to associate the idea of grammar with an "implicit philosophical theory of the… conditions of sense" or even of an "anthropology of the human form of life". Mulhall can be taken to say that all these substantial conceptions end up presenting grammar as if it were fixing a limit to the meaningful use of language. This limit to meaningful use becomes a kind of *a priori* which blurs our ability to describe how our expressions come to have and loose meaning in the everyday use of language. Properly construed, philosophical nonsense is not brought about by a violation of the rules of grammar but by failure to give meaning to our expression as brought about by how they fail to figure in our practices. This makes the idea of grammar more permissive rather than prohibitive. This permissiveness in turn implies openness to a more responsive analysis of how an expression is used in language.[67]

So it seems that Mulhall's *WPL* can be understood as an extension of Conant's later Wittgenstein, specifically on Conant's (2004) preliminary views on the idea of an austere conception found in Wittgenstein's remarks on private language. In fact, Mulhall (2007: 11) acknowledges this discussion of Conant with a certain remark of inadequacy saying that it is a "brief and highly general" discussion which is unlikely to "convince a general audience of its accuracy". Hence, Mulhall's more detailed treatment Wittgenstein's remarks of private language might in fact be understood as a kind of continuation, if not a supplement, to Conant's WWAT in the attempt to clarify the austere conception of nonsense found in Wittgenstein's remarks on private language.

[66] See this passage in Conant (ibid.: 186-7) and in Mulhall (ibid.:9)

[67] See TMTT (Conant 2002) for a more detailed exposition of how the substantial conception of nonsense will imply a different method of analysis compared with an austere conception. In that article, Conant analyses the claim "Caesar is a prime number" which in the end is taken to be nonsensical as a consequence not of the meaning of its words as intelligible logical units but as a consequence of their use in the "nexus of propositions". In the next chapter, I shall take Mulhall to imply that a similar kind of analysis applies to "There is no private language".

2.1.3.3 On a critical use of Cavell

Another interesting justification for Mulhall's project of a resolute later Wittgenstein is on how it brings back the idea of resolute reading to the ideas of Stanley Cavell. The extent of this influence has led some to describe their resolute reading as a kind of Cavellian treatment of the *Tractatus* specifically in relation to the kind of philosophical therapy that can be found in the *Investigations* (see Bronzo 2012: 48-49). Bronzo for example writes, "Perhaps it would not be an exaggeration to say that Diamond and Conant have tried to do with the *Tractatus* what Stanley Cavell had done with the *Philosophical Investigations*.". This remark by Bronzo comes with a note on how both Conant and Diamond explicitly acknowledges their indebtedness to Cavell.[68] Conant (2001: 89, 102), in particular, claims that what eventually came to be called as the resolute reading of the *Tractatus* can be viewed as part of his quest to find his own "philosophical voice" amidst what, at that time, appears to be an already saturated work on the *Investigations* by his adviser Cavell. Given this indebtedness to Cavell, we might expect that the resolute reading of Conant and Diamond merely brings out aspects that are latent in Cavell's work or aspects that have been neglected by readers of Cavell. But Mulhall (2007: 100-101) explicitly claims that Cavell's insights about Wittgenstein's notion of privacy and language are "orthogonal" to the dispute between the resolute reading and the substantial reading of the *Tractatus*. He says that there is a sense in which Cavell's attention to the internal relation between the form and content of Wittgenstein's writing in the *Investigations* "both aligns itself with and distances itself from the Tractarian paradigm of austere nonsense" (ibid.: 14-15). My next chapter will involve a discussion of this claim, but let me at least mention here how Mulhall locates the "orthogonal" nature of his resolute reading in the kind of imaginative exercises that the *Investigations* makes possible and how such imaginative activities are a matter of "everyday banality" (ibid.: 15, 102).

To be fair, I believe it should be mentioned that both Conant and Diamond acknowledged how they found Cavell as telling them to "trust in Wittgenstein's writing"(Conant 2001a: 102; Diamond 2001: 113-4). This "trust[ing] in Wittgenstein's writing" means that they have considered Wittgenstein's writing style as itself part of the method of his philosophizing. Cavell seems to point out how Wittgenstein's manner of writing itself becomes an invitation for a certain kind of reflexivity and self-understanding, and both Conant and Diamond (2001) seems to have also brought this insight into the kind of therapy they ascribe to Wittgenstein's philosophical method in the *Tractatus*. Yet because Conant's and Diamond's

[68] See also Conant (2001a); Diamond (2001).

resolute reading applies to the *Tractatus* and because the *Tractatus* is characterized by a writing style that is comparatively different from that of the *Investigations*, we might also infer that there will also be some variation on the austere conception of nonsense found in a resolute reading of the *Investigations*.

In the course of Mulhall's exegesis on the *Investigations*, it seems that the influence of Cavell in developing the idea of a resolute later Wittgenstein lies on the greater role given to the imaginative exercise between the reader and the interlocutor. This imaginative exercise have become accentuated by the later Wittgenstein's unique mode of writing. Mulhall's resolute reading of Wittgenstein's remarks on private language seems to offer the prospect of rearticulating the significance of Cavell's emphasis on Wittgenstein's writing style by clarifying the idea of an austere conception of nonsense in the *Investigations* (ibid.: 14-15). It may be absurd to say that a re-examination of Cavell clarifies the idea of an austere nonsense in the later Wittgenstein since Cavell's views on the therapeutic conception of philosophy found in the *Investigations* is often considered as the origin of the idea of a resolute Wittgenstein itself. However, it seems that there is a to and fro process of clarification that can happen when ideas that have been developed from Conant's and Diamond's resolute reading becomes juxtaposed with the ideas of Cavell. In light of this juxtaposition, Mulhall's *WPL* can be understood as offering this kind of clarification that also enriches the concept of a resolute reading of Wittgenstein.

In addition, I believe it also worth mentioning that Mulhall does not take Cavell's words at face value. Mulhall notes how Cavell has already made explicit remarks on how the fame of Wittgenstein's remarks on private language (WRPL) has been miscast because of its pointless redundancy; the insights it raises are the very same insights raised more clearly in the other parts of the *Investigations*. Let me quote Mulhall's citation of Cavell on this:

> I find little said within these inventions, especially about privacy and about language, that is not said, generally more clearly, elsewhere in the *Investigations*, so that the very fame of this argument suggests to me that it has been miscast (Cavell 1979: 342, as cited in Mulhall 2007:12)

Mulhall deliberately neglects Cavell's warning above on the supposed miscasting of the fame of Wittgenstein's insights about private language. Mulhall (ibid.) claims that such miscasting is meant to be investigated rather than simply accepted, and that regardless of Cavell's opinion such an investigation has the promise of offering worthwhile insights in the course of an actual exegesis of Wittgenstein's work. In employing this kind exegetical attitude, it seems that Mulhall ends up in a kind of irony of both following Cavell and disobeying his

words: Mulhall disobeys Cavell's words in not heeding the warning he explicitly stated about how the fame of WRPL has been miscast. Yet, at the same time, Mulhall also puts in practice the spirit of what Cavell says on what it means to take seriously the "distinctively perfectionist, and hence therapeutic, relation [of Wittgenstein as the author of the *Investigations*] with his readers." (ibid.) This "perfectionist" and "therapeutic" relation provides the context for understanding the so-called internal relation between the form and content of Wittgenstein's later philosophy. And it seems that Mulhall's resolute exegesis of Wittgenstein's remarks on private language also adopts a reflexive exegetical approach that attempts to be faithful to this internal relation.

2.1.4 On the significance of Mulhall's resolute reading

My discussion in this chapter shows that there is indeed some unclarity in Mulhall's idea of a resolute later Wittgenstein. This unclarity has something to do with the change in the logically posterior character of the idea of a resolute reading especially with regards to how a resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein presupposes a certain sensitivity to a particular structure or mode writing that is not found in the *Tractatus*. Mulhall's resolute reading involves a shift: it shifts from the original understanding of the idea of a resolute reading as a kind exegetical program set by a shared understanding of *TLP* 6.54. Then it proceeds to apply insights from the debate about that exegetical program onto the project of clarifying an austere conception of nonsense found in Wittgenstein's remarks on the idea of private language. This austere conception leads to a clarification of the unique character of the "resolute philosophical method" found in the *Investigations*.

Despite this change, I have argued that Mulhall's idea of a resolute later Wittgenstein offers a synthetic aspect of Conant's and Cavell's ideas on what counts as a therapeutic conception of Wittgenstein's philosophy. This interplay of Conant and Cavell along with Mulhall's own critical use of their ideas provides an interesting case for how we might better understand Wittgenstein's later philosophy in light of the recent debates on the *Tractatus*.

Part 2, Chapter 2 - Mulhall's Resolute Later Wittgenstein

In this chapter, I shall conduct a more detailed exposition of Stephen Mulhall's resolute later Wittgenstein and continue my discussion of his work *Wittgenstein's Private Language* (*WPL,* 2007). Though *WPL* may be credited with a resolute reading that is original in its own right, I follow through on my claim that there can a greater appreciation of his work in terms of how it integrates aspects of Conant's and Cavell's reading of the later Wittgenstein.

My previous chapter has discussed how Conant and Bronzo (2017) find Mulhall's *WPL* unclear in its use of the term "resolute reading". This unclarity, they say, can be addressed more fruitfully by understanding Mulhall's resolute reading as articulating a continuity in Wittgenstein's thought. My discussion in this chapter shall pursue this interpretative proposal. I do so by giving details on how Mulhall shares with Conant a "resolute philosophical method" which dissolves the idea of a limit often associated with substantial readings of the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations.* I take this resolute method to be clarifying how the critical aspect of Wittgenstein's grammatical investigations essentially involves a "literary approach". Wittgenstein engages his reader to enter into an imaginative activity that brings a philosophical claim like the idea of a private language back to its "context of significant use" in ordinary language. And that imaginative activity (along with the examination of various examples it involves) aims to make the reader realize that their philosophical claims are empty in relation to their failure to give those claims a context of significant use.

In this context, this chapter is an attempt to understand Mulhall's "resolute later Wittgenstein" in terms of how it presents Conant's austere conception of nonsense to be involving an imaginative activity whose therapeutic function is inseparable from Wittgenstein's mode of writing. I construe Conant's austere conception of nonsense as involving a context principle which makes a philosopher more responsive to the uses of words in ordinary language, and where the idea of ordinary language includes the uses of language in both formal contexts and informal contexts (say, for example, in both mathematics and in poetry). These uses of language are difficult to describe because they often relate to a whole and function as a kind of "logical primitive".[69] Hence, philosophers clarify them by resorting to a literary approach that

[69] I shall later explain this idea of a logical primitive in terms of my understanding of how Conant portrays Wittgenstein as also inheriting Frege's concept of philosophical elucidation. See Conant's discussion of Frege in "The method of the *Tractatus"* (2002: 386-387).

employs the figurative dimension of language. This literary approach now relates to how philosophy uses words that have an elucidatory function. As opposed to using definitions that set the meaning for every possible use of a word, philosophers use words as "hints" that rely on the "cooperative understanding of others" (Conant 2002: 387.). This "pragmatic" and "socially cooperative" (ibid.) approach enables the philosopher to engage his interlocutor in a dialogue that leads to a shared understanding on whether a use of a sign indicates a concept is logically basic in a particular domain of language use or whether it is in fact nothing but an illusion.

I take Mulhall's resolute reading to share this same emphasis on the "elucidatory", and hence figurative, dimension of language use in philosophy. This can be found in how Mulhall (2007:14) portrays his exegesis of Wittgenstein's remarks on private language (WRPL) to be putting a "high premium on the exploitation of … the more literary dimensions of language". Like Conant, Mulhall's resolute reading is characterized by a philosophical therapy that lets the interlocutor engage in an imaginative activity. That imaginative activity makes the interlocutor reflect on the possible uses of words in ordinary language and aids him in discovering for himself how the idea of a private language might become empty. This literary approach becomes an indirect means for undermining the idea of a limit associated with the idea of a private language. Mulhall, however, can be understood as also re-contextualizing the literary approach found in the resolute reading of Conant. For Mulhall, this literary approach comes to have a unique form in the *Investigations*. That later work, in contrast with the *Tractatus,* involves a peculiarly uninsistent tone that amplifies the imaginative activity involved in the investigation of an expression's contexts of use. In addition, Mulhall further clarifies this literary approach by integrating these insights about Wittgenstein's uninsistent tone of writing into the kind of non-elitist model of perfectionism that comes with his philosophical therapy.

A central aspect of Mulhall's resolute reading is an appeal to ordinary language. I take that appeal to adhere to what Cavell (1962) has described as a dialogical approach to philosophizing that does really not deny "the voice of temptation" (ibid.: 92) toward ideal language and whose concern for criteria is "reminiscent of procedures of … analytical philosophizing" (ibid.: 77). Cavell (1962) has previously distinguished this conception of ordinary language from that of David Pole who misleadingly criticizes the later Wittgenstein's appeal to ordinary language as somewhat like a "status quo" conception that "forbid[s] philosophers to tamper with our ordinary language expressions" (1962: 78). As I understand Mulhall's resolute reading, he follows Cavell in adopting a view that is critical of this status quo conception. He reads the appeal to ordinary language in Wittgenstein as indeed taking seriously that which is mentioned in *PI* 124 as philosophy's non-interference with the actual

use of language. It seems that for both Mulhall and Cavell, the "actual use" of language that is referred to by that remark also includes being able to question and criticize the use of certain concepts, whether they are concepts found in the more concrete concepts of everyday life or in the more specialized concepts of mathematics. As such, the appeal to ordinary language has the effect of articulating and responding to doubts about our uses of words. This appeal to ordinary language applies not just when we are dealing with words like "floor", "door", "lamp" (*PI* 109) but also when we deal with words like "number series" or "algebraic formulae" (*PI* 151). In this sense, Mulhall's Cavellian manner of bringing back words to their everyday use in ordinary language relates to what Wittgenstein has described in *PI* 133 as the "real discovery" of being able to stop philosophy in a way "that gives it peace". It involves a discovery of stopping points that liberate philosophy from the torment that comes from its compulsive approach to criticism (i.e., from "questions that bring itself in question").[70] From the perspective of the resolute reading of Mulhall, the metaphor for peace in philosophy in *PI* 133 can be taken as a Wittgenstein's way of alluding to a conception of philosophical nonsense that is austere. That nonsense is empty because the philosopher and his interlocutor are now able to recognize that there is nothing further to explain. By means of the exhaustive process of philosophical elucidation, they have been able to say clearly what needed to be said.

To clarify these claims above, I shall proceed with my discussion in this manner: First, in section 2.2.1, I give details of how *PI* 374 and *PI* 500 can be understood as a remark analogous to *TLP* 6.54 in providing a guide on what counts as a resolute reading of WRPL. Then in section 2.2.2, I discuss the influence of Conant on Mulhall. I discuss how Mulhall's reading of *PI* 374 and *PI* 500 shares the same features that come with Conant's austere conception of nonsense, and I point out how that austere conception involves a context principle "refashioned" from Frege (Conant 2002: 282). Then in section 2.2.3, I discuss how both Conant and Cavell apply a "literary approach" to dissolving the idea of a private language. Then in section 2.2.4, I clarify the influence of Cavell on Mulhall by means of his attention to the non-elitist model of perfectionism found in Wittgenstein's later philosophy. Lastly, in section 2.2.5, I conclude by clarifying Mulhall's remarks (2007: 15) about how his resolute reading involve alignments and failures of alignment with the "Tractarian paradigm of austere nonsense".

[70] These quotes are from *PI* 133 as cited in Cavell (1962:79)

2.2.1 Mulhall's use of *PI* 374 and *PI* 500

Let me begin by quoting *PI* 374 and *PI* 500 as they are found in Mulhall (2007:9):

> The great difficulty here is not to represent the matter as if there were something one *couldn't* do. (*PI* §374)
> When a sentence is called nonsense, it is not as it were its sense that is nonsense. But a combination of words is being excluded from the language, withdrawn from circulation. (*PI* §500)

Mulhall's use of *PI* 374 and *PI* 500 may be understood as confirming Conant and Bronzo's (2017) speculative clarification against Schönbaumsfeld. According to Schönbaumsfeld (2010), Mulhall's idea of a resolute later Wittgenstein is mistaken because the *Investigations* contains no passage like *TLP* 6.54 which can be interpreted to say that its propositions are nonsensical. However, Mulhall's resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein is *not* based on an austere conception of nonsense drawn from *TLP* 6.54. It is *not* an exegesis illustrating a way of dealing with the nonsensicality of the idea of a private language as if our grammatical investigations of that idea showed it to be a "meaning" that is impossible. On the contrary, one can take Mulhall to say that it is in that understanding of philosophical nonsense as totally empty that Wittgenstein's later philosophy becomes continuous with the *Tractatus*. In this view, the idea of a private language is related not so much with the realization of a meaning or philosophical truth that we cannot express. Instead, it is connected with a conception of grammar where the recognition of nonsense simply indicates that we have failed to give our words any determinate meaning. I believe that it is on the background of this interpretative claim that we can understand Mulhall's remark on how *PI* 374 and *PI* 500 function as guides to a "properly resolute reading of the *Investigations"* (Mulhall ibid.: 10). Mulhall says that we can understand those passages to be indicating the continuity between the "intended task" of the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations* (ibid.: 9). His use of *PI* 374 and *PI* 500 shows how the *Investigations* shares the *Tractatus*' aim of endorsing only an austere conception of nonsense. It is a conception of nonsense where the result of philosophical analysis is not an ineffable truth but clarity about the use of our expressions.

As I have mentioned in my previous chapter, despite the fact that Mulhall's resolute reading is no longer concerned with an exegetical program for the *Tractatus,* we can take Mulhall to employ an analogous kind of exegetical program which clarifies the "resolute philosophical method" that Wittgenstein endorses in the *Investigations*. Whereas Conant's and Diamond's exegesis draws from the austere conception of nonsense found in *TLP* 6.54, Mulhall's exegesis can be understood as drawing from the austere conception of nonsense

found in *PI* 374 and *PI* 500. Conant's and Diamond's resolute reading uses *TLP* 6.54 to depict the early Wittgenstein to be dealing with a conception of nonsense that is meant to be distinguished from a violation of logical syntax.[71] In a similar manner, Mulhall's resolute reading uses *PI* 374 and *PI* 500 to depict the later Wittgenstein as dealing with a conception of philosophical nonsense that is meant to be distinguished from a violation of grammatical rules. This continuity and transition from criticizing the idea of violating logical syntax to criticizing the idea of violating grammar is mentioned in one of Mulhall's remarks (ibid.: 9) on how to read *PI* 374 and *PI* 500. I shall quote and discuss the whole passage which contains that remark in the next section. For now, suffice it to say that both conceptions of nonsense involve a notion of philosophical clarification that is critical of the idea of limits of language.

So it is in this critical sense that Mulhall's resolute reading can be understood as having a "logically posterior character": whereas Conant and Diamond adopt an austere reading of the "nonsense" mentioned in *TLP* 6.54, Mulhall adopts an austere reading of the "nonsense" connected with *PI* 500 and *PI* 374. Both conceptions of philosophical nonsense are austere in that they are essentially formed and developed as a critical contrast to a substantial conception of nonsense that is also articulated within Wittgenstein's work. They are not self-standing conceptions that have a content of their own. At best, they have a "transitional content" which is subsequently shown to be empty upon clarification of their relevant use in ordinary language.

I advance these interpretative claims despite my previous chapter's insights on how the idea of a "framing remark" in the *Tractatus* becomes different from what might be considered as a "framing remark" in the *Investigations* (a difference which I have attributed to their difference in structure). My reason for doing so is because I take Mulhall as drawing from how *PI* 374 and *PI* 500 have a significant similarity with *TLP* 6.54: they are all passages that have a reflexive function in describing philosophical activity itself. This similarity in reflexive function can be explained in this manner: while there can be a debate on whether Wittgenstein really intended to criticize the idea of meta-philosophy in both his early and later work, there is quite an agreement on the reflexive nature of his philosophy in terms of how it provides insights about the kind of method appropriate for philosophical activity. Similar to how orthography deals with the word "orthography" without going outside orthography,[72] it seems that

[71] I am making this claim with reference to my previous discussion in 2.1.1 on the significance of *TLP* 6.54 in Conant and Diamond's joint article "On reading the Tractatus Resolutely" (2004). I have so far focused on *TLP* 6.54, but this is not to exclude how Conant and Diamond also draw their resolute reading from Wittgenstein's other "framing remarks". See my discussion of these framing remarks in 2.1.1.1 which includes mention of Wittgenstein's *TLP* preface and his letter to von Ficker.

[72] See, for example. the "second order" orthography mentioned in *PI* 121.

Wittgenstein is consistently trying to philosophize about philosophy without going outside, and hence theorizing about, philosophy.[73] In this light, Mulhall's emphasis on *PI* 374 and *PI* 500 is important. Like *TLP* 6.54, they are passages that describe features through which Wittgenstein depicts philosophical activity from within his own philosophizing through his written work. So in what follows, I shall conduct an exegesis of *PI* 374 and *PI* 500 with the aim of clarifying the features that characterize the "resolute philosophical method" [74] which Mulhall shares with Conant.

2.2.2 Conant's influence: *PI* 500 and the "resolute philosophical method"

Mulhall treats PI 500 in conjunction with PI 374. I believe they are indeed connected, but I shall postpone my discussion of *PI* 374 for later and focus only on *PI* 500 which I have found more useful in highlighting the influence of Conant. Considered by itself, *PI* 500 talks about how the nonsense we encounter in grammatical investigation does not involve having to identify "a sense that is nonsense". I take this eschewal of "intelligible nonsense" to be the "resolute philosophical method" that Mulhall claims to share with Conant. Again, while I take Conant and Diamond as sharing the same views on what counts as resolute reading, I focus on Conant's resolute reading because Mulhall draws more explicitly from Conant's work for his own exegesis of WRPL. I take this to be indicated by how Mulhall says in his introduction that he shares Conant's position in "Why Worry about the *Tractatus"* (WWAT, 2004) that WRPL is useful in clarifying the "resolute philosophical method" found in the *Investigations.* While Mulhall expresses his partiality to Conant's position, he also says that he finds Conant's discussion as too "brief and highly general" for "general readers" (ibid.). So it seems that one way of interpreting Mulhall's "resolute reading" is that it attempts to give more details, and hence more "accuracy", to insights about the "resolute philosophical method" which Conant supposedly advanced in WWAT. So in what follows, I shall discuss what these insights are as found in Mulhall's and Conant's reading of *PI* 500. [75]

[73] I draw this insight from *PI* 121 and from Kuusela's discussion of Wittgenstein's rejection of philosophical hierarchies in his book *The struggle against dogmatism* (2008). See in particular p. 221-2.
[74] Mulhall (2007:11) does not specifically call this method a "resolute philosophical method". But I coin the term with reference to how it is a philosophical method that Conant's resolute reading of the *Tractatus* considers to be continuous with the "philosophical method" found in the *Investigations*.
[75] Henceforth, I draw not just from WWAT (2004) but also from "The Method of the *Tractatus"* (2002), which are the two articles that Mulhall cites and acknowledges in *WPL*. I also draw from Conant's other "Wittgenstein on Meaning and Use" (WMU, 1998) and "Two Conceptions of *Die Überwindung der Metaphysik"* (TCD, 2001).

2.2.2.1 On eschewing a substantial conception of nonsense

Let me now give more details on how Mulhall's reading of *PI* 500 can be understood as sharing the same view as Conant in his various works on the resolute reading. Like Conant, Mulhall interprets *PI* 500 (along with *PI* 374) as indicating a continuity in Wittgenstein's *aim* of criticizing a substantial conception of nonsense. Mulhall describes this continuity in terms of how *PI* 500 serves as Wittgenstein's "words of warning" for readers not to fall into the illusion of some kind of "determinate unintelligibility" as they invoke the idea of grammar in identifying certain expressions as nonsensical. Let me quote Mulhall on this. He says:

> If we regard the notion of 'grammar' invoked in the later work as Wittgenstein's way of recalling us to the distinction between sense and nonsense, and we disregard the **words of warning** I have just cited, then invoking grammar in order to identify and reject certain philosophical utterances as nonsense might be thought to involve treating such nonsense as substantial—that is, as **determinately unintelligible**, as if its nonsensicality is a result of the speaker attempting to **conjoin intelligible words in unintelligible ways** (conjunctions which violate their grammar, as opposed to violating their logical syntax). After all, one might think, how can we know that the philosopher cannot say or think what he wants to say or think, without knowing what exactly it is that he wants to say or think? But if so, then we are on the **verge of presenting grammar as prohibiting the philosopher from saying or thinking something in particular**. (ibid.: 9, emphases added)

The passage above comes immediately after Mulhall's citation of *PI* 500 and PI 374, and so it is intuitive to understand it as Mulhall's interpretation of those remarks. In this passage, I would like to focus on how Mulhall describes *PI* 500 as giving a warning on when a reader of the *Investigations* is "on the verge" of treating philosophical nonsense as "substantial". Here, Mulhall describes a conception of philosophical nonsense as substantial in terms of how it involves some kind of "determinate unintelligibility". This "determinate unintelligibility" is the result of how a reader thinks that he is "attempting to conjoin intelligible words in unintelligible ways" or of how he thinks of grammar as something that "prohibits" the philosopher from saying something he cannot say. As I see it, these claims involve three important and interrelated ideas that are also found in Conant's reading of the later Wittgenstein: 1) the idea of eschewing" determinate unintelligibility", 2) the idea of eschewing a philosophical analysis that involves "conjoin(ing) intelligible words in unintelligible ways", and 3) the idea of being critical of a prohibition or a limit on meaning. I discuss only the first and second idea in this section and discuss the third idea in the next section because of how that idea becomes an explicit link that shows the influence of Conant and Cavell in the resolute reading of Mulhall. Let me now proceed to discuss the first idea.

2.2.2.2 On avoiding determinate unintelligibility

Mulhall's idea of "determinate unintelligibility" can be likened to the idea of "intelligible nonsense" that Conant discussed in WWAT (2004). Both philosophers seem to infer this idea from the incoherence Wittgenstein wanted to avoid as expressed in the first sentence of *PI* 500: "When a sentence is called nonsense, it is not as it were its sense that is nonsense." In this remark, Wittgenstein seems to refer to when a philosopher engages in grammatical investigation and when that investigation involves having to identify some expression as nonsense. Wittgenstein can be taken to say that when we identify an expression as a case of philosophical nonsense, we are not meant to treat that expression as having a "sense that is nonsense".

From this interpretation, it seems that what is described in *PI* 500 as a "sense that is nonsense" is now described by Mulhall as "determinate unintelligibility". Conant, on the other hand, describes it as "intelligible nonsense". Despite the difference in terminology, I shall now show that Mulhall and Conant share the same reading of *PI* 500. They view the later Wittgenstein, as similar to the early Wittgenstein, in emphasizing coherence in philosophical reasoning through the rejection of "intelligible nonsense". In my previous chapter, I have already given an implicit discussion of the idea of "intelligible nonsense" through how standard readers of Wittgenstein take him to endorse a substantial conception of nonsense. This substantial conception of nonsense takes the psychological rather than the logical perspective of philosophical clarification, and it ends up turning the idea of a resolute reading into a logically prior concept. In what follows, I shall discuss this substantial conception again in terms of how it involves a form of inconsistency in reasoning whose eschewal leads to the austere conception of nonsense endorsed by both Conant and Mulhall.

According to Conant (2004:174), the substantial conception of nonsense which Wittgenstein criticized involves the use of a "flawed argument structure": it is a reasoning which "presupposes the intelligibility of that which it seeks to show is unintelligible" (ibid.). This reasoning is self-defeating because it ends up giving intelligibility to what Wittgenstein seeks to show as devoid of sense. One may clarify Conant's point by recalling how Wittgenstein describes the results of philosophy as "bumps that the understanding has got by running its head against the limits of language" (*PI* 119). Transcendental readers of Wittgenstein will associate these "bumps" with a conception of nonsense which conveys the limits of thought. The resolute reading of Conant, on the other hand, will point to how Wittgenstein describes these bumps to be associated with "pieces of plain nonsense". Thus, implicitly pointing out that those pieces of

nonsense are in fact empty and that it is the transcendental readers themselves who give those nonsensical expressions the illusion of content (e.g., about the limits of thought). This incoherent reasoning which Conant also attributes to standard readers of Wittgenstein may be called "intelligible nonsense".[76] And this "intelligible nonsense" is associated with the substantial conception of nonsense that Conant takes Wittgenstein to criticize in both the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations.* To further clarify the link between Conant and Mulhall, let me here focus on the *Investigations.*

With reference to a substantial reading of the *Investigations*, Conant (2004) explains that the use of "intelligible nonsense" can be found in terms of how the idea of a private language becomes connected with a kind of inherent nonsensicality that comes with the violation of grammar. This inherent nonsensicality is equated with an impossibility which ends up turning that "impossibility" into a piece of nonsense that we can understand in some way. Conant (ibid.) can be taken to say that what the substantial reader of the *Investigations* fails to notice is that it is he, through his own "hovering", who gives "content" to a philosophical nonsense. This "content" appears to come about when he proceeds as if philosophical nonsense involves a kind of negation of an inexpressible truth about the limits of language. I have talked about this kind of negation in my previous chapter in terms of Conant's discussion of how substantial readers end up presupposing an intelligible "content" to the idea of a private language by asserting that "it" is an impossible idea. But let me discuss this point again by taking cue from Mulhall's words.

Mulhall (ibid.: 9) says of the substantial reader of the *Investigations*:

> After all, one might think, how can we know that the philosopher cannot say or think what he wants to say or think, without knowing what exactly it is that he wants to say or think?

In this remark, we can understand Mulhall to be employing a polemic similar to that of Conant: he criticizes the very idea of an illusory content which a reader is tempted to associate with philosophical nonsense (for example, the claim "there is a private language"), and then he shows how such a content becomes a kind of denial of a supposed philosophical truth (for example the claim "there is no private language"). In using that kind of denial which I have earlier called transcendental negation, the reader, so tempted, ends up using a metaphysical denial which appears to give content to what Wittgenstein considered as "plain nonsense". The claim "there is a private language" is considered to be both nonsensical and yet at the same time

[76] In TMTT (2002), Conant explicitly uses the label "intelligible nonsense" to refer to the substantial conception of nonsense. But in the discussion the follows, I shall be referring primarily to Conant's discussion in WWAT.

having a "content" that is coherent enough for us to understand and deny. But as Conant (2004:175) explains, a denial of a "bit of nonsense" is as much of a nonsense as what it denies. Here, the emptiness of the nonsense that characterizes the claims articulated in the polemic might be further illustrated by how the examples I have just given can be interchanged. The illusory content that can be articulated might be the claim "there is no private language" (construed, for example, as a pseudo empirical truth) which is then "denied" by the contrary claim "there is a private language" (construed, for example, as a kind of language for our sensations). In the context of this reversal, the kind of polemic that Mulhall seems to employ becomes an indirect means to make the interlocutor reflect on his incoherence for endorsing any of those claims. That incoherence is meant to undermine the philosophical view that the idea of a private language implied knowledge of a kind of necessity. The point is that no assertions can be meaningfully advanced with regards to such an idea, whether it is the claim "there is a private language" or the contrary claim "there is no private language". Upon the therapeutic analysis prodded by Mulhall's remark above, both claims break down as uses of words that involve an incoherent desire for some kind of necessity or maybe grammatical truth. In the context of this indirect polemic, *PI* 500 is significant because it portrays Wittgenstein as talking more clearly against this kind of transcendental reasoning which makes us think that philosophical propositions can be legitimately characterized by "a sense that is nonsense". This transcendental reasoning, despite its use of denial, makes it appear as if the idea of a private language has a content.

I presume that Mulhall also agrees with Conant that this use of "intelligible nonsense" is something that substantial readers of Wittgenstein are often unaware of. According to Conant, the reason why substantial readers of Wittgenstein do not become aware of this is because of their own "hovering" in the attribution of meaning. It is this "hovering" which creates the illusion of meaning. In giving textual support for this view, there is a remark by Wittgenstein which Conant often cites along with *PI* 500. Let me also cite that remark below:

> *Different kinds of nonsense.* Though it is nonsense to say **'I feel his pain'**, this is different from inserting into an English sentence a meaningless word, say 'abracadabra' (compare Moore last year on 'Scott kept a runcible at Abbotsford') and from saying a string of nonsense words. Every word in this sentence is English, and we shall be inclined to say that the sentence has a meaning. The sentence with the nonsense word or the string of nonsense words can be discarded from our language, but if we discard from our language **'I feel Smith's toothache'** that is quite different. The second seems nonsense, we are tempted to say, because of some truth about the nature of things or the nature of the world. We have discovered in some way that pains and personality do not fit together in such a way that I can feel his pain. – The task will be to show that there is in

> fact no difference between these two cases of nonsense, though there is a psychological distinction, in that we are inclined to say the one and be puzzled by it and not the other. **We constantly hover between regarding it as sense and regarding it as nonsense**, and hence the trouble arises. (Ludwig Wittgenstein, 'Lectures on Personal Experience', ed. C. Diamond, unpublished, 1935, emphases added)

The above remark, which I now call "Wittgenstein's 1935 remark" is cited from WWAT (2004:186).[77] This remark is significant not only because it relates the idea of "intelligible nonsense" to Wittgenstein's consistent stance against psychologism. It is also important in relation to Mulhall's project because it gives an example of an expression that relates to WRPL. In the remark above, the idea of intelligible nonsense can be found in the hovering in the attribution of meaning that occurs in the expression "I feel his pain" or "I feel Smith's toothache" (see my emphases in the passage). As if repeating his description of an "intelligible nonsense" in *PI* 500, Wittgenstein says in his 1935 remark that the "trouble [or confusion] arises" because "we constantly hover between regarding [that expression] as sense and regarding it as nonsense".

Based on Wittgenstein's 1935 remark, it seems that the reason why we regard the expression "I feel his pain" as having a kind of sense as opposed to being plain nonsense is because of the view that it is made up of words whose individual meaning gives meaning to the whole sentence. Thus, Wittgenstein writes, "Every word in this sentence is English, and we shall be inclined to say that the sentence has meaning." This "meaning" of the sentence which comes from its component words is then associated with "some truth about the nature of world", say, for example, on how we have discovered that "personality and pains do not fit together in a way that we can feel others pain". Here, it seems that the idea of "feeling others' pain" is compared with the paradigm of a "feeling one's pain". That latter paradigm, i.e., the immediate experience of one's private sensation, is then considered as a "philosophical truth" which makes the claim "I feel his pain" a necessary falsehood. Because of this, we now have the hovering mentioned by Wittgenstein's 1935 remark: from simply treating the whole expression "I feel his pain" as an expression we do not understand, we conceive of that expression as implying a necessary falsehood because of how it fails to fit with the "philosophical truth" of how pain can only be felt from a first person perspective.

This "necessary falsehood" brings us to the "psychological distinction" between philosophical nonsense and gibberish which Conant's Wittgenstein aims to throw away.

[77] See also how Conant cites this remark in TMTT (2002:455) and "A prolegomenon to the reading of later Wittgenstein" (2012: 63).

Wittgenstein's 1935 remark says that we cannot simply "discard" the expression "I feel his pain" in our use of language in a way similar to how we can easily discard expressions such as "Scott kept a runcible at Abbotsford". The former seems to have a kind of meaning ("a wrong meaning") because of how they violate some "rule" or "truth" about how things are, while the latter has no meaning for us at all. One might say that the former expression (i.e., "I feel his pain") is nonsensical in an important way because it shows a "truth" about the limits of thought which cannot be expressed in language like that of the "immediate experience of one's pain". But Conant (2001: 34) would deem this response as creating a "psychological distinction" that prevents us from recognizing the logical emptiness of philosophical nonsense. While such a distinction is indeed also natural for people to believe in, Conant portrays Wittgenstein as intending his readers to overcome such a distinction.

Mulhall can be taken to share Conant's view that the later Wittgenstein is consistent with his early Tractarian view of rejecting psychologism in philosophy. As it applies to Wittgenstein, Conant (2001b: 34) uses the term "psychological" to include everything that does not belong to how we are able to understand a word's actual use in language, where "use in language" is taken to imply the logical point of view Wittgenstein is concerned with. The "psychological" includes the theoretical, the mystical, and even the personal associations we associate with an expression which makes us think that an expression has some inherent meaning. [78] This means that the idea of "intelligible nonsense" I have earlier pointed out also falls within the domain of the "psychological". Conant and Mulhall's eschewal of "intelligible nonsense" translates to Wittgenstein's rejection of the "psychological" because it is the psychological which gives philosophical nonsense the illusion of a content.

Conant's Wittgenstein seems to say that it is unclear whether our linguistic expressions have this kind of inherent meaning. And so, the nonsense that characterizes the words in a philosophical nonsense "I feel your pain" is also the nonsense which characterize the words in "Scott kept a runcible at Abbotsford". The words in those expressions take on a meaning that they have (or fail to do so) only in their context of use. There might indeed be an illusion of a distinction which makes us think that one is somehow meaningful in a way that the other is not. But both of them can be understood as cases of empty nonsense when we clarify those expressions from a logical point of view (which is the expression's use in an actual context).

[78] See ibid. See also "Wittgenstein on Meaning and Use" (1998:231) where Conant describes the psychological in terms of the domain we find ourselves in when we ask for the meaning of a word in isolation and we violate the 2nd of Frege's "three principles". I shall discuss this criticism of the "psychological" by means of the context principle in the next section.

This seems to be one of the main insights that is repeatedly emphasized in Conant's resolute reading as he asserts that philosophical nonsense is no different from gibberish. Mulhall can also be taken to share this insight. This is indicated, for example, by Mulhall's (ibid.: 9) concern with avoiding an understanding of grammar which makes it appear that the nonsensical sentences in philosophy results from a "conjoin(ing) of intelligible words in unintelligible ways". In what follows, I now proceed to discuss details of this point.

2.2.2.3 On overcoming an "atomistic" conception of philosophical analysis

Mulhall (ibid.) takes Wittgenstein to be eschewing a conception of philosophical nonsense that results from "conjoin[ing] intelligible words in unintelligible ways". This interpretation may be understood as coming from how he also presents Wittgenstein as aiming to overcome an atomistic conception of philosophical analysis through his endorsement of an analysis that reflects an expression's context of use in ordinary language. Mulhall's reading of *PI* 500 can thus be understood as a parallel to the more permissive conception of philosophical analysis that Conant (2002) has associated with an austere conception of nonsense in the *Tractatus*. Here, I am now returning to my claim in the previous chapter that Mulhall shares Conant's views on how an austere conception of nonsense involves a conception of philosophical analysis that is more responsive to "use".[79] I take it to mean that it is this attention to context of use in ordinary language that dissolves what was discussed in the previous section as the "hovering" of the philosophically deluded person in his conception of the idea of a private language.

Conant has earlier argued that Wittgenstein's conception of philosophical clarification can be characterized by an emphasis on use in ordinary language as early as the *Tractatus,* and that the early Wittgenstein is best understood as "refashioning" the context principle that is found in Frege's work.[80] This is a technical and sophisticated point advanced by Conant as he explains Frege's "three principles" and identifies passages in the *Tractatus* that correspond to those principles. This can be found, for example, in how Conant presents Frege's 2nd principle, "Never to ask for the meaning of a word in isolation, but only in the context of a proposition", as a parallel to what Wittgenstein writes in *TLP §*3.3, "Only the proposition has sense: only in

[79] See 2.1.3.2

[80] See in particular Conant (2002:382) and how the context principle connects with the "non-constantive uses or "elucidative uses" of language that is already found in Frege. From hence, I emphasize that I shall be talking not so much about Frege but of Conant's use of Frege in relation to his understanding of Wittgenstein's conception of philosophical clarification.

the context of a proposition has a name meaning".[81] Conant's reading of the *Tractatus* presents Wittgenstein's philosophy as developing Frege's context principle in the sense that Wittgenstein conceived of ordinary language as already a kind of *Begriffsschrift* where the aim of philosophical elucidation is to make us see the order or structure that is already found in our ordinary use of language (ibid.: 417). Hence, Conant (ibid.) says that the clarity that we see in philosophical analysis does not come from a transformation of our words, but a transformation of *our view* of what it means to understand our words in their everyday use. It is in this context that we can understand Conant's position on how the "nonsense" mentioned in *TLP* 6.54 becomes an empty nonsense: The nonsensical expressions used in philosophy are not uses of signs that we understand because of how they come to violate of some ineffable truth about the limits of thought. Rather, they are cases where we are simply unable to give those signs a coherent use. I shall explain this idea more later in terms of how Conant portrays Wittgenstein as endorsing an austere conception of philosophical nonsense that is brought about by our inability to "recognize the symbol in the sign" (*TLP* 3.326). For now, let me point to Mulhall's own discussion of the context principle.

Mulhall (ibid.: 3-4) does not touch on the issue of how Wittgenstein inherited from Frege's context principle except indirectly through his criticism of Dummett's conception of philosophical nonsense which involves an analysis drawn from Frege. But in so far as Mulhall also draws from Conant's Wittgenstein, we can infer that Mulhall also adopts this refashioned context principle in his analysis of WRPL. As if bearing in mind Conant's criticism of Dummett in "The Method of the *Tractatus*" (TMTT, 2002), Mulhall (2007: 9) warns of the danger of understanding philosophical nonsense as if it results from "conjoin[ing] intelligible words in unintelligible ways". As I understand it, this remark can be understood as a criticism of the substantial conception of philosophical nonsense in general, whether it is a substantial conception that is found in the *Tractatus* or in the *Investigations*. With reference to the *Tractatus*, he follows Conant in citing as an example Dummett's analysis of the expression "Chairman Mao is rare." (ibid.:3).

Mulhall's main point of contention with Dummett's analysis is that it depicts philosophical nonsense as if it were a "clash of symbols", as opposed to being a string of "signs" where no "symbol", and hence no violation of logical syntax, can be recognized. Here, Mulhall (ibid.: 3) adopts the Tractarian distinction between the "sign" and "symbol" that was earlier discussed by Conant in TMTT (2002:400): the "sign" is the perceptible medium or

[81] The passages just quoted are cited from Conant (ibid.: 384, 401).

"orthographic unit" through which the "symbol" is expressed, while the "symbol" is the logical unit which is expressed by the "sign" in a meaningful proposition. Referring to Dummett's analysis of the expression "Chairman Mao is rare", Mulhall describes how Dummett depicts each word or "sign" in the said expression as having logical properties ("symbols") that limit their meaningful combination in a sentence. The words "Chairman Mao" are taken to be a sign symbolizing a proper name that can be combined *only* with signs that symbolize second-level functions (like, for example, the word "intelligent" in the proposition "Chairman Mao is intelligent"). The word "rare", on the other hand, is taken to be a sign symbolizing a second-level function that can be combined only with signs that symbolize first-level functions. It is somewhat like an adverb that can only be used to describe an object as a member of class, like, for example, "honest politician" in the sentence "Honest politicians are rare". In this mode of analysis, which Mulhall attributes to Dummett, philosophical nonsense is taken to be a result of a clash of symbols rather than signs. Thus, the nonsense in the expression "Chairman Mao is rare" is not really empty; it is an example of a violation of grammar which illuminates a "deep truth" about the logical structure of language. Through a deliberate violation of the logical structure of language, philosophical nonsense becomes an indirect way of articulating "deep truths" about the limits of our thought and language.

Mulhall is against this view, and he depicts it as one view that Wittgenstein criticizes for its inconsistency. This inconsistency can be recognized by taking into consideration the context principle which Mulhall associates with the "logical point of view". Mulhall writes:

> From the point of view of logic however, no such species of potentially illuminating nonsense is identifiable. **To determine the meaning of any sub-propositional expression, we must determine the contribution it makes to the sense of the proposition in which it figures**; but if a putative proposition is in fact nonsense, it has no sense or meaning; hence, we have no way of identifying its logically significant parts—from the point of view of logic, it has none, and could have none. But **the notion of substantial nonsense simultaneously requires that a 'proposition' have no meaning** (otherwise it wouldn't be a species of nonsense)**, and yet that it be composed of individually meaningful components** (otherwise it would not violate logical syntax in its way of combining those components, and so would not be distinguishable from mere gibberish). (Mulhall ibid: 3, emphases mine)

From this passage, it now becomes clearer how the inherent nonsensicality attributed to Dummett's expression "Chairman Mao is rare" involves a certain kind of "hovering": it "simultaneously requires that a 'proposition' have no meaning…, and … that it be composed of individually meaningful components". This remark again sounds similar to what Wittgenstein rejects in *PI* 500 as a conception of philosophical nonsense that makes it appear

that it involves a "sense that is nonsense". The passage above indicates that Mulhall expresses his support for the austere conception of nonsense, which is essentially a kind of insistence on being consistent with the context principle. From the perspective of the context principle, which is also the logical point of view, it is not possible to identify the "logically significant parts" of a proposition independent of its context of use in the whole proposition. Hence, the component signs in the expression "Chairman Mao is rare" also do not have "significant use" at all. This emphasis on understanding even the component parts of a proposition only by means of the context principle is mentioned above as the resolute readings emphasis on "the point of view of logic". That "point of view of logic" is the perspective of understanding based on the context principle. As Mulhall says above, it requires that we "determine the contribution … [which a sub-propositional expression] makes to the sense of the proposition in which it figures".

Let me give more details about Mulhall's remark on the context principle as at applies to Dummett's example of a nonsensical expression. We can say that it is misleading to claim that the term "Chairman Mao" is a symbol for a "proper name" or that "rare" is a symbol for a "second-level function" prior to our analysis of how those expressions occur in the propositions of our ordinary language. From the "point of view of logic", the issue of whether a particular sign in fact "symbolizes" a proper name or a first level function is dependent on how it "figures" in the sense of the whole proposition. First, we have to consider how it occurs in the proposition as a whole and how that whole connects with our everyday uses of language. From a "logical point of view", then and only then does it become possible to determine the meaning of those individual signs. But as Mulhall points out, since on Dummett's own reasoning the whole proposition is considered nonsensical, it follows that the meaning of all those "signs" has yet to be determined. Hence, it will be more consistent to say that those component signs are as devoid of meaning as the whole proposition in which they occur. As I understand it, this is what Mulhall (ibid.: 3) means when he says that philosophical nonsense is better conceived as "a string of signs that fail to symbolize" rather than a string of signs whose symbols clash. The individual signs that make up a philosophical nonsense have yet to be conferred a use or a "method of symbolizing" (*TLP* §3.321), and so it makes no sense to talk about the "symbol" at all. It is also in this sense that we can find Mulhall explicitly defining a "symbol" as "signs in use".[82] This idea of a symbol as a "sign in use" comes from Mulhall, but it can actually be drawn from Conant's discussion of the "sign" vs. "symbol" distinction in TMTT (2002:400-4). So as I see it, Mulhall's conception of philosophical nonsense is the same as that of Conant

[82] This occurs in a parenthethical remark in Mulhall (ibid.: 3)

(2002:382): it is an "austere conception" with reference to a "refashioning" of Frege's context principle.

To clarify this link between Mulhall and Conant, let me now proceed to how Conant presents the austere conception of philosophical nonsense in relation to Wittgenstein's way of developing Frege's context principle. According to Conant (1998: 239), Wittgenstein "generalizes" Frege's context principle to apply "not only to words… but also to sentences". So when Wittgenstein says in *TLP §3.326* that, "In order to recognize the symbol in the sign we must consider the context of significant use", he was actually referring to the context of use not just of our words but of our whole sentences as they occur in ordinary language. Conant draws this insight from Frege's doctrine of the primacy of judgment. In that doctrine, Frege proposes that the parts of the thought be understood via analysis of analysis of the "thought" or judgment as a whole, not by beginning with "parts" of the thought and putting them together to make a judgement. Conant portrays Frege as if the thought itself is already a whole and its constituent parts become intelligible as parts only in so far as they are part of this whole. Conant quotes Frege's words on this. Let me also cite some of those remarks by Frege:

> I do not begin with concepts and put them together to form a thought or judgment; I come by the parts of a thought by analyzing the thought. (*Posthumous Writings*, 1979, p.253 as cited in Conant 1998:232)

> [W]e ought always to keep before our eyes a complete proposition. Only in a proposition have the words really a meaning. It may be that mental pictures float before us all the while, but these need not correspond to the logical elements in the judgment. It is enough if the propositions taken as a whole has a sense; it is this that confers on the parts also their content. (*The Foundations of Arithmetic,* 1980 p. 71, as cited in Conant 1998: 233)

From these passages, we can clarify what Conant meant when he said that Wittgenstein "generalizes" Frege's context principle to also apply to sentences (Conant ibid.: 239). We can understand Conant to point out how Wittgenstein adopts and develops the context principle to consider a "greater holism" that characterizes our judgments *in* ordinary language. For example, in the last sentence from the 2nd passage above, we can find Conant's quotation of Frege describing how the sense of the proposition "as a whole" confers "content" to its parts. To clarify Conant's connection with Mulhall, let me simply illustrate how this holism works through Conant's own rejoinder to Dummett. Conant (2002) analyzed the same expression Mulhall discussed in his introduction, "Chairman Mao is rare."

According to Conant (2002:404), the sentences of our ordinary language have an established use that can also render the said expression intelligible. The sign "Chairman Mao"

may be understood not as a proper name but as kind of first level function (a predicate for a proper name). Just as the sign "Vienna" in Frege's expression "Trieste is no Vienna" might be understood *not* as a proper name but as description for a "metropolis" (hence, a first level function), we can understand "Chairman Mao" not as a proper name but as a description for an intelligent politician. This will make the expression "Chairman Mao is rare" intelligible by construing it as a way of saying that "Astute politicians are rare." Conant (ibid.) explains that such a way of understanding is also part of how we acknowledge "use" in natural language. Conant gives many examples and discussions about how the so-called "method of the *Tractatus*" deals with such nonsensical expressions in language.[83] But his point is the same as that of Mulhall: to understand the meaning of a "sign" we must consider the context of its significant use in whole propositions found in ordinary language. If the whole proposition is nonsensical and we cannot find any use for its constituent signs in the context of that whole, we might as well be consistent and say that those constituent signs also have "no meaning". Conversely, if we start our analysis by giving the whole proposition a particular context of use, then the combination of signs that were previously considered impermissible might now make sense. This is for instance the case in the example I have just given where the expression "Chairman Mao is rare" might be construed in the context of talk about the rarity of astute and successful politicians. Conant's more explicit claim about this latter point is that a given context of use provides the "inferential relations" that will make a particular combination of signs intelligible in a certain manner (see Conant 2002:445-6, note 86). He says, for example, that the expression "Chairman Mao is rare" might be construed as meaningful in a context where one is cooking meat in the oven and the term "Chairman Mao" functions as reference for a special piece of meat that one does not want to cook "well done" as opposed to "rare" (ibid.). These examples of "contexts of use" that might render the expression "Chairman Mao is rare" intelligible implies a certain kind of openness to a variety of possible meanings that can be given to an expression. In this context, the claim to "no meaning" seems to translate to a certain kind of philosophical analysis which becomes more responsive to the ways through which we might realize that it is we as users of a language who fail to give "use" to a "sign". From a resolute perspective, the failure of meaning in a nonsensical expression does not come from the nature of words themselves. When a philosopher analyses a nonsensical expression, what he or she eventually ends up with is not really an impossibility in meaning but a failure to connect and understand a sign in a context of significant use. I take it that pursuing this kind of analysis

[83] Among these are *TLP* 3.323 "Green is green" (ibid.: 402-403) and Carnap's example "Caesar is a prime number" (ibid.: 407).

is what it means to conceive of a philosophical nonsense to be "austere" in both Mulhall and Conant. To explain this point, let me give more details on how the austere conception of philosophical nonsense in Conant's Wittgenstein becomes a development of Frege.

The claim of how philosophical nonsense involves propositions whose signs have "no meaning" connects with this passage from the *Tractatus*:

> Frege says: Every legitimately constructed proposition must have a sense; and I say: Every possible proposition is legitimately constructed, and if it has no sense this can only be because we have given no *meaning* to some of its constituent parts. (*TLP §*5.4733 as cited in Conant 2004:184)

For Conant (2004: 2002), this passage indicates how Wittgenstein refashions Frege's context principle to consider how ordinary language is already a kind of *Begriffsschrift*. When Wittgenstein says that Frege's position is "Every legitimately constructed proposition must have a sense", Wittgenstein can be understood as taking Frege to be committed to some logical order outside the propositions of our ordinary language. It is through that logical order that Frege proceeds with philosophical clarification and says that one expression has a particular sense while another is nonsense. By contrast, when Wittgenstein says against Frege "Every possible proposition is [already] legitimately constructed" he can be understood to allude to what he says in *TLP* 5.5563: "All propositions of our everyday language are actually, just as they stand, logically completely in order." (as cited in Conant ibid.: 417). Here we can find Conant's Wittgenstein to be distinguishing his position from Frege in saying that there is already a logical order in the propositions of ordinary language by virtue of the fact that they already express thoughts or judgments. In this view, the propositions we make in everyday life in ordinary language are already wholes in some sense and already contain within themselves a form of brute coherence which we can clarify. As if emphasizing Frege's doctrine of the primacy of judgment, Conant takes Wittgenstein to say that our ordinary language propositions (if they are indeed ordinary language propositions) already contain some thought. So, they already contain a kind of logical order which makes them intelligible. Accordingly, there are no illogical propositions in ordinary language in as much as there are no illogical thoughts in whatever we can understand in them in a given context of use. Here, elucidation serves merely to re-orient our mode of understanding so that we might recognize the logical order that makes up the thought conveyed by the proposition sign, or we end up being clear that we meant nothing whatsoever (no logical order) at all with a propositional sign because of our failure to give that sign a context of use.

It is in this light that we can further appreciate how the austere conception of nonsense of Conant (and Mulhall) becomes more responsive to "use". In so far as a proposition is a "possible proposition" (*TLP §*5.4733) in ordinary language, it already has a logical structure and meaning. The aim of philosophical analysis is to clarify that meaning by paying attention to the use it already has. This responsiveness to "use" also relates to how Conant (ibid.) connects *TLP §*5.4733 with what Wittgenstein says in *TLP* 5.4372; "We cannot give a sign a wrong sense". If we are to construe a "sign" as referring to a "sign occurring in the propositions of ordinary language" then it implies that there is already a "meaning" or "logical structure" that we can discern in that sign, and this meaning is the "use" that philosophical analysis might be able to clarify. Otherwise, "if the [propositional sign] has no sense" the only alternative is what Wittgenstein says to Frege above, "we have given no *meaning* to some of its constituent parts."[84] This claim to "no meaning" also implies that we have failed to give our whole proposition an "ordinary use" in language. As I understand Conant, this is what it means for a conception of philosophical nonsense to be austere. It is not a case of "wrong meaning" but a case of "no meaning". The idea of "wrong meaning" implies that there is no way to make the combination of signs meaningful, whereas the idea of "no meaning" implies that we are open to considering how those combination of signs might become meaningful in relation to a particular context of use. Thus, the idea of no "meaning" implies a corresponding attention and openness to our "use" of a sign in ordinary language.

In this view, the austere conception of nonsense is a criticism of how Frege has failed to become consistent in acknowledging the holism found in the judgments we make in ordinary language and in letting that holism guide philosophical analysis.[85] Because of this failure, Conant (2002) portrays a tension in the implications of Frege's portrayal of the context principle: from the perspective of our inability to give our signs a context of use, philosophical propositions have "no meaning". At the same time, from the perspective of an external logical order, philosophical propositions express illogical thoughts or "wrong meaning". Like Mulhall, when Conant says that philosophical nonsense has "no sense" or "no meaning", he can be taken to emphasize a mode of philosophical analysis that insists only on the context principle, i.e., that there is meaning only in the context of the whole that characterize an expression's use in ordinary language. Without that "use", which is the same as "the point of view of logic"

[84] See also how Conant (2004:184) emphasizes the term "the only" in this passage.

[85] This claim clearly applies to Dummett's analysis of the nonsensical expression "Chairman Mao is rare" which I have just portrayed as involving a kind of logical atomism. As I understand Conant (2002), the point of such a kind of holistic analysis, is that Wittgenstein (in contrast with Frege) gave a greater role to the imaginative activity that comes with philosophical elucidation.

(Mulhall ibid.: 3), we are unable "to recognize the symbol in the sign" and our expressions become indistinguishable from gibberish.

Indeed, both Conant and Mulhall acknowledge that expressions appear to have meanings (that the "sign" appears to be a "symbol"), but they also say that such an appearance of meaning comes only from the psychological point of view. Here, the belief that "Chairman Mao" is a proper name is merely a belief that comes from psychological perspective. And it is that psychological perspective which creates the illusion of a "clash in symbols". When we consider philosophical expressions in terms of how they connect with our actual use words in ordinary language, we might realize that there is in fact no clash in symbols. And so we cannot even say that there is a clash of signs. If philosophical propositions do not have an actual use in language and it is this use which gives a sign its method of symbolizing, then there is simply nothing (no symbol) in the "sign" to create a conflict in the nonsensical expression. And so we end up acknowledging that the signs making up a piece of nonsense are no different from gibberish.[86] This austere conception of nonsense overcomes the atomic conception of philosophical analysis which treats philosophical nonsense as if it "conjoin[s] intelligible words in unintelligible ways".

From what has been discussed, it seems to me that there is something rather deep and challenging in the way the idea of an austere conception of nonsense both claims that philosophical nonsense is empty while claiming that we should pay attention to "use". It seems to imply that philosophical propositions are illusory for how we are not aware of when we conceive of them outside their context of significant use and the idea of elucidation in Wittgenstein simply attempts to become persistent in recovering what those propositions might mean in our everyday life. This seems to me as a commonality between Conant and Cavell as they both try "to bring our words back from their metaphysical use to their everyday use" (*PI* 116) and acknowledge the "great difficulty" (*PI* 374) that comes with this task. That difficulty involves being able to overcome our understanding of grammar as a kind of limit on our language. And so, I shall now explain the overlap between Conant and Cavell through how Mulhall's "literary" approach in his exegesis of WRPL dissolves the idea of limits.

[86] It is in this context that Conant claims that even the "positivist variant" of the substantial conception of nonsense (such as that of Dummett) eventually degenerates into an austere conception. See Conant (2002:400).

2.2.3 The "literary approach" as a link between Conant and Cavell

We might now ask how does Mulhall apply the refashioned context principle just discussed to his resolute exegesis of WRPL? How does Mulhall go about giving a resolute analysis of the expression "There is a private language" in a way that is similar to the deconstructive procedure Conant employed in analyzing "Chairman Mao is rare"? My general answer to these questions is that Mulhall employs a literary approach that dissolves the idea of a limit associated with the supposed impossibility of a private language. But the details to this answer come in the language and perspective of Cavell. And so, I will now make a transition from the influence of Conant to the influence of Cavell. I shall cite Conant's explicit suggestion for a resolute reading of WRPL and present Mulhall as drawing cues from that suggestion. I then explain that passage in terms of how it rehearses aspects of Cavell's reading of WRPL. The main idea I pursue for this section is that Conant shares Cavell's indirect approach to undermining the idea of a limit of language by means of imagination and that this indirect approach can be understood as the literary approach which Mulhall employs in his resolute reading of WRPL.

2.2.3.1 Conant's suggestion for reading WRPL resolutely

In WWAT (2004), one of the main articles Mulhall draws from, Conant gives an explicit suggestion on how to undertake a resolute reading of WRPL. This suggestion shows how Conant's influence on Mulhall also connects with Cavell' reading of WRPL. Conant writes:

> A resolute reader of this stretch of Wittgenstein's later work [WRPL] will want to begin by pointing out that **Wittgenstein does not say that there cannot be a private language**. The discussion of private language (like so many passages in Wittgenstein's later work) **begins with an invitation for us to try to imagine something**. The point of the exercise is not to get us to see that there is something determinate to imagine which we are then supposed to see as a sort of thing that cannot be. Rather, the point of the exercise is to get us to see that there is nothing for us to mean by the locution 'private language' that corresponds to what we, under the pressure of certain philosophical perplexities, want to mean by it. **There are, of course, various things we can mean by it, but they do not answer to our philosophical desires.** And as long as there hovers before us the seeming possibility of something further to mean that does promise to answer to our philosophical desires, the philosopher's treatment of the question of a 'private language' remains unfinished. The point of the exercise of trying to imagine 'a private language' is to work through 'the seeming possibility' here – to try to think it all the way through – **until we find it dissolves on us**. (Conant WWAT 2004:187, emphases mine)

It is worth pointing out how the footnote from the passage comes from Cavell's *The Claim of Reason* (*TCR,* 1979). In *TCR,* Cavell talks about how Wittgenstein, through his remarks on private language, aims "to illuminate something about the public nature of language" in an indirect manner. Cavell calls the idea of a private language a "fantasy", but there is a need to engage in an imaginative activity to release that "fantasy" and make us realize the "*depth* to which language is agreed in". Let me also quote that passage by Cavell which I take Conant to rehearse in his suggestion above. In relation to describing how the later Wittgenstein conducts philosophical therapy on the idea of private language, Cavell writes:

> Wittgenstein does not say that there can be no private language. He introduces his sequential discussion of the topic, at §243, by *asking:* "**Could we also imagine a language**… in which a person could write down or give vocal expression to his inner experiences — his feelings, moods, and the rest — for his private use", where "private" is to mean that "another person cannot understand". The upshot of this question turns out to be that **we cannot really imagine this**, or rather that there is nothing of the sort to imagine, or rather that **when we as it were try to imagine this we are imagining something other than we think**. (The upshot is not about the failure of imagination, and nor is it about the non-existence of a private language, for **there may yet well be something rightly to be called a private language**.)
>
> So what is the point of "trying" to "imagine" a "language" which "another person" "cannot" "understand"? Evidently, the effort is to illuminate something about the publicness of language, something about the ***depth* to which language is agreed in**. I would like to say: its point is to **release the fantasy** expressed in **the denial that language is something essentially shared**. The tone of the sections dealing explicitly with the idea of a private language are peculiarly colored by the tone of someone allowing a fantasy to be voiced." (Cavell *TCR,* 1999: 344, emphases mine)

A salient aspect common to Conant's and Cavell's suggestion in the passages above is how they both avoid a way of treating the idea of a private language as a kind of impossibility. They propose to do this by imagining possibilities where the idea of private language might be satisfied. Based from their remarks, it seems that this approach is not just a matter of letting the reader go about with his imagination in a completely arbitrary manner. What we can find in Conant's and Cavell's reading is an attention to how Wittgenstein guides the reader to use imagination in examining his or her "philosophical desires". By giving metaphors and examples, the philosopher engages the reader to examine cases where his or her own idea of a private language might be satisfied.

In Conant and Cavell's reading of WRPL, it seems that there is an important interrelation by which reflection on what the idea of a private language might mean "dissolves"

how the notion of a private language becomes conceived as a philosophical idea. When one attempts to clarify the idea of a private language by means of ordinary cases of a private language, or by means of comparisons to those ordinary cases, one also ends up throwing away the idea of a private language as a philosophical conception. At the same time, when one takes it that one has "dissolved" the philosophical idea of a private language, then one comes to clarify what the idea might mean in our ordinary language. Hence, the result of this resolute imaginative activity is that our idea of a private language becomes meaningful in the ordinary sense of term, or we come to realize that our so-called idea was actually empty. In terms of the latter, it is not that we are unable to say "something" that we cannot say, but that we realize we are not saying anything at all (by the idea of a private language). It seems to me that Conant's resolute reading has been associated mostly with this latter result, but there are indications that his position also involves the former, i.e., the recovery of ordinary uses of the idea of private language.

To illustrate this point, we can revisit Conant's suggestion for a resolute reading of WRPL (see Conant's full remark at the start of this section). In that suggestion, we find Conant saying:

> There are, of course, various things we can mean by it [the idea of a private language], but they do not answer to our philosophical desires. (Conant WWAT 2004:187)

Conant writes this remark as part of his description of the results of the imaginative activity that come with a resolute reading of WRPL. I take this description to be a parallel to that of Cavell who writes something similar about WRPL:

> [W]hen we as it were try to imagine this [the idea of a private language,] we are imagining something other than we think.(The upshot is not about the failure of imagination, and nor is it about the non-existence of a private language, for there may yet well be something rightly to be called a private language.) (Cavell *TCR* 1999:344).

From these remarks by Conant and Cavell, it seems to me that there is now a distinction between a philosophical idea of a private language which we are unable to imagine even when we try to, and an ordinary language conception of a private language which we are indeed able to imagine but "does not answer our philosophical desires". The former idea of a private language is what is dissolved by this resolute imaginative activity, while the latter idea is left intact. Conant can be taken to describe this ordinary language conception of a private language as something that can mean "various things" while Cavell seems to describe it as "something [that might] rightly … be called a private language". I find this distinction between a

philosophical conception of a private language and its corresponding ordinary therapeutic conception significant. I understand these two conceptions to be playing a role in Mulhall's presentation of Cavell's view on the complementary role of *PI* 243 and *PI* 258. I shall explain this idea in the concluding part of this chapter. For now, I would like bring attention to the literary dimension that is found in Conant.

2.2.3.2 The idea of a "literary approach" in Conant

The literary dimension in Conant's suggestion for a resolute reading of WRPL can be understood in terms of his emphasis on imaginative activity and how that imaginative activity involves "elucidations" which become an indirect means for helping the reader discover for himself the emptiness of his philosophical nonsense (e.g., his philosophical idea of a private language). It seems to me that the idea of this literary approach comes again as an expression of how Conant portrays Wittgenstein as continuing to emphasize Frege's context principle in a firmer manner.[87] Conant (ibid.: 435) claims that Wittgenstein ultimately "repudiates" Frege's notion of philosophical elucidation for its inadequacy, but he also says that he "inherits" and "reshapes" it. I take this "inheritance" to have something to do with how philosophical elucidation relies on the context principle to be able to clarify the "primitive" elements of a judgment. And I take this "reshaping" to have something to do with what philosophical elucidation is able to accomplish, say, for example in showing that a philosophical claim is a patent nonsense.

According to Conant (ibid.: 386-388), Frege conceives of philosophical elucidation as a pragmatic tool that enables us to understand what cannot be properly conveyed in a proper logical notation or *Beggriffschrift*, and whose meaning can only be understood in the context of a sign's actual use. These are "logical simples" or "primitive elements" that we can only "hint at". We can convey them by means of "figurative mode[s] of expressions" that depend on the "cooperative understanding" of others (ibid.). Conant cites many of Frege's remarks on the idea of logical simple and on how they can be clarified only in an indirect manner by means of "elucidations". Let me quote one of them:

> Since definitions are not possible for primitive elements, something else must enter. I call it elucidation…. Someone who pursued research only by himself would not need it. The purpose of elucidations is a pragmatic one; and once it is achieved, we must be satisfied with them. And here we must be able to count on a little goodwill and cooperative understanding, even guessing; for frequently we cannot do without a figurative mode of expression. But for all that, we can

[87] In what follows, all my references and portrayals of Frege are drawn from TMTT (2002).

> demand from the originator of an elucidation that he himself know for certain what he means; that he remain in agreement with himself; and that he be ready to complete and emend his elucidation whenever, given the best of intentions, the possibility of a misunderstanding arises. (Frege 1984: 300-301, as cited in Conant 2002: 387)

To illustrate what Frege means by a "logical primitive" and to clarify the indirect way in which they are grasped, Conant here refers to Geach's remark on the distinction between a concept and an object and how that distinction ("No concept is an object") can only be conveyed by the use of a dialectic:

> One thing I learned from Wittgenstein, in part from the *Tractatus* but still more from personal contact is that philosophical mistakes are often not refutable falsehoods but confusions; similarly the contrary insights cannot be conveyed in proper propositions with truth-value. I offer as (an) instance of (an) insight … Frege's distinction between concept and object ("No concept is an object" has no translation into a well-constructed symbolism) … Such insights cannot be demonstrated as theses, but only conveyed dialectically; the dialectic process largely consists in the art, whose practice I have perhaps learned in some measure from Wittgenstein, of reducing to patent nonsense the buried nonsense that is found in attempts to reject these insights. We cannot refute nonsense by a straightforward process; as Frege said, logic cannot deal with nonsense, but only characterize it as being nonsense. (Geach 1991: 13-14,16 as cited in Conant ibid.: 435-437)

Conant (ibid.: 434) cites this remark in the context of his discussion of how Wittgenstein, both early and late, inherited Frege's views on the transitional role of "elucidations" relative to being able to convey "primitive insights" (along with the nonsense one encounters when these insights are not acknowledged). Thus, Conant discusses how Frege conceived of philosophical elucidation as characterized by "(the artful employment of) nonsense" in conveying what is for the time being a logical primitive.[88] We may, for example, ask what it would be like to understand the expression "green is green" if there were no distinction between a concept expression and an object expression.[89] It seems to me that we would be unable to give the term "green" a particular "method of symbolization". We would not be able to say whether the expression is used, for example, as an assertion of identity or as an assertion relating an object to a particular color. And using Wittgenstein's terminology in the *Tractatus*, when we realize that those terms have no particular "method of symbolization", we shall not be able to "recognize the symbol in the sign" (*TLP* 3.326). So, we might as well

[88] See ibid.: 387.

[89] With some modification, I draw the explanation that follows from Conant's clarification of the ambiguity that characterize Wittgenstein's analysis of the expression "Green is green" in *TLP* 3.323.(Conant ibid.: 403)

also consider those terms as gibberish (at least for the time being when no use have been given to them).

Based on the preceding quotes and discussion, I understand Conant's resolute reading not really as portraying Wittgenstein to be giving up the idea of a logical primitive and of our indirect way of being able to describe them. He merely portrays Wittgenstein as locating the idea of a logical primitive in the context of our judgments in the propositions of ordinary language while bringing greater awareness to what Frege might describe as uses of language that "count[s] as a simple for the time being" (Frege 1984:182-83 as cited in Conant ibid.: 386-387). Given that the "symbol" in our "sign" can only be recognized in so far as we understand its connection to the judgments found in the propositions of ordinary language and given that these judgments are wholes that we cannot analyze into something else, we have no resort but to rely on "figurative mode[s] of expression" in clarifying the "logically discrete functioning parts of a judgment" (ibid.: 387, 388). This now implies a firmer emphasis on an expression's context of significant use, and hence, on a trial and error process for understanding what is meant. In this approach, one cannot simply assume that a reader does not mean anything with his uses of words. He may, in fact, be attempting to convey something analogous to Frege's "logical simple".[90] So, the philosopher becomes charitable by helping the reader clarify what he means. However, it is also possible, in the course of that dialogue, that the reader will realize that he does not mean anything at all.

It is with regard to this latter aspect where Conant's resolute reading, as I understand it, differs from the substantial reading or transcendental reading of Wittgenstein: that realization of nonsense is not meant to be understood as a negation of a "logical primitive" or a "use" of a sign in ordinary language (for there is no such thing). As I see it, Conant will agree with transcendental readers in their view that one encounters a genuine difficulty in being able to articulate a logical primitive. What he disagrees with is the importance of *not* treating this idea of a logical primitive as a kind of obstruction for understanding and in eventually clarifying what we can in fact express by means of a creative use of language. In so far as the philosopher is indeed able to "follow through" with elucidation and the shared imaginative activity it involves with his interlocutor, he will have expressed whatever possible use his reader is "thinking" of. And so the reader might now realize that his "use" of a word is incoherent and

[90] Here, I am using the idea of logical simple with reference to how the imaginative activity endorsed by the resolute reading of Conant (and Mulhall) has a special openness to the possibility of a new and creative insight which might serve as the relevant "symbol" in the "sign". This new and creative insight seems to be what Wittgenstein's philosophy ends up clarifying. I shall explain this later in terms of Mulhall's Cavellian exegesis of *PI* 258.

that there is nothing more that he wants to convey with his philosophical nonsense. This understanding of one's own confusion seems to be the sense in which Conant considers grammatical investigation as having a kind of Socratic flavor. What is important is to "clarify the logical structure that is in our [ordinary language] propositions all along" (Conant ibid.: 417), and then by means of that elucidation, indirectly realize the emptiness of our philosophical claims. Let me clarify this point by going back to Conant's suggestion for a resolute reading of WRPL in WWAT (2004).

In his remark in WWAT (2004: 187), one might notice that Conant also does not simply say that the idea of a private language is "incoherent" as opposed to "impossible". Instead, Conant belabors how such a conception of incoherence involves a long and uncertain route. In the imaginative activity of finding cases that might satisfy a reader's philosophical desires, the reader may fail to recognize the emptiness of his philosophical nonsense. The reader may continue to insist that there is something he means which was not adequately articulated by the philosopher. So Conant (ibid.) says:

> [A]s long as there hovers before us the seeming possibility of something further to mean that does promise to answer to our philosophical desires, the philosopher's treatment of the question of a 'private language' remains unfinished." Then he also goes on to emphasize the importance of "think[ing] it all the way through – until we find [that] it dissolves on us.

From these remarks, we can take Conant to be associating the position of Frege to be similar to the case of the transcendental philosopher who has failed to think all the way through in helping the reader articulate that "seeming possibility" of what he means by the idea of a private language. When the task of philosophical elucidation is *not* yet "finished", the idea of a grammatical rule which we encounter by investigating nonsense associated with the idea of a private language turns out to be a "something" whose violation is incapable of being expressed by language (as opposed to being completely empty).[91] Like Frege, Conant also emphasizes how Wittgenstein acknowledges the need to use an indirect approach in understanding logical primitives by means of philosophical elucidation. However, as I see it, Conant disagrees with Frege on what philosophical elucidation is able to accomplish. For Conant, if there is really nothing in what the reader says, then the only way to convince him is to "remind" him of what he can mean with his use of the expression by means of probing questions or by examples that might help articulate his desired "meaning". Then, because of that kind charity, the reader might come to accept that everything he might mean was indeed said and finally acknowledge that

[91] It is in this context we can also find Conant (ibid.: 388) explaining how Frege can also be understood as champion of the ineffability variant (not just the positivist variant) of the substantial reading of the *Tractatus*.

there is really nothing in what he was trying to say. Here, the emptiness of one's claims can only be proved indirectly through what can be said clearly along with the charity of the philosopher in giving examples that help the interlocutor to say what he intends to mean.

In this context, let me now again clarify the idea of a literary approach I associate with Conant. Conant's "literary approach" to dissolving a philosophical illusion requires a certain kind of imaginative skill on the part of the philosopher to be able to give "content" to a reader's philosophical desire for a private language. Then, through a shared examination of that imaginary content, the philosopher lets the reader see for himself that his conception of a private language is empty. [92] This imaginative activity is a kind of parallel to how Conant (2002 ibid.: 387, 388) describes Frege to be endorsing philosophical elucidations that rely on "figurative mode(s) of expression" to be able to hint at "the logically discrete functioning parts of a judgment". And then, upon such understanding, also to clarify those cases where no coherent judgment was made. An important aspect of this literary approach is that there is a kind of showing that is made possible by the *shared* practical competence acquired in that imaginative activity. Conant makes the important qualification that this idea of showing is not associated with an ineffable limit on language, but rather a "helpful shorthand" for what can be grasped by "working through Wittgenstein's investigations". Conant's remark can be taken to mean that "working through Wittgenstein's investigations" involves being able to develop a shared linguistic competence from engaging in the imaginative activity and dialectic found in Wittgenstein's work.[93] This position is similar to what Mulhall says, that there is indeed a conception of showing in the practical ability manifested by those who are able to say that an utterance is meaningful or nonsensical, and that such a conception of showing no longer involves an ineffable truth (Mulhall 2007: 7).

For both Conant and Mulhall, a "resolute" engagement in the dialectic of Wittgenstein's work involves acquiring an ability to judge which kinds of utterance are able to make sense, and it is important to conceive of such an ability as constituting rather than limiting our understanding. It is in this gesture towards engaging in the dialectic of Wittgenstein's work and the kind of competence learned within it that they both preserve a pointing gesture that is not associated with a limit on language. This seems to be the sense in which both the transcendental-

[92] See, for example. TMTT (2002: 443, endnote 79) as Conant explains the sense in which it is the reader himself who has to make a transition from perceiving "propositional symbols" to perceiving only "propositional signs".
[93] See the rather long passage about this in WWAT (2004:176). In that remark, I take Conant's clarification of the idea of showing to be his response to Hacker's claim that the austere conception of nonsense "throws away the baby with the bathwater". Here, Conant can be understood as saying that a resolute reading still makes room for the distinction between "saying and showing" but it is important to conceive of that distinction as also occurring within the context of meaningful uses of language. See also Conant (2002: 428, endnotes 23).

ineffabilist reading associated with the Frege [94] and the resolute reading associated with Conant emphasize how philosophy involves a certain kind of mastery and creativity in the use of language (a creativity similar to those of poets). Conant and Mulhall, however, seem to imply that this creativity means a certain kind of freedom in being able to say what we want to say (rather than as a kind of prohibition for expressing what has actually been expressed). Thus, we can say that the idea of literary approach in Conant comes with a certain optimistic view on how the elucidatory uses of words might help us finally say clearly what we would have otherwise been unable to say.

2.2.3.3 The "literary approach" in Mulhall

Mulhall discusses the idea of the literary in his introduction (ibid.: 14-15) as an idea that brings attention to "the internal relation between form and content in Witgenstein's investigations" and that highlights the significance of Cavell's views on "the therapeutic exchange between Wittgenstein and his reader". His discussion of this idea is scarce especially if we consider his own remarks on how it forms an crucial part of his underlying concern for conducting an exegesis on WRPL in *WPL*. Mulhall (ibid.) seems to describe that "therapeutic exchange" as an important frame through which we can understand the so-called alignment and failures of alignment between the resolute reading of the *Tractatus* and the "resolute reading of the *Investigations"*. Let me quote that section in Mulhall and then connect his conception of the literary to the conception of the literary that I have discussed in Conant and in Cavell.

> [T] hese sections [§243–315, WRPL] reveal a similarly **internal relation between the form and the content of Wittgenstein's investigations**—a relation that is **required** by his distinctively **perfectionist, and hence therapeutic, relation with his readers**. This places an unusually high premium on the exploitation of what one might call **the more literary dimensions of language** (especially the resources of figuration, imagery, and metaphor, often deployed in the telling of imaginative tales). (Mulhall ibid.: 14, emphasis mine)

This passage occurs in the context of Mulhall's claim about the continuity of *WPL* and his earlier book, *Inheritance and Originality* (2001). This continuity, he says, has something to do with the "internal relationship between form and content of Wittgenstein's investigations". Here, the term "Wittgenstein's investigations" refers to Wittgenstein's actual grammatical investigations in *PI*. These investigations involve an understanding of the link between the form and content of Wittgenstein's philosophy in so far as it emerges from the "distinctively

[94] See in particular how Conant (2002:387) described the ineffabilist variant of Frege's conception of the "logical order" found in a *Begriffsschrift*. This logical order, which function as the limits for the possible combination of "signs", is something that language can only show and not describe. See (ibid.: 395 and the whole of section VIII).

perfectionist, and hence therapeutic, relation" which, according to Mulhall, is required by Wittgenstein of his readers. In these remarks, we can interpret Mulhall to be articulating his views on how Wittgenstein has peculiar expectations for his readers. Wittgenstein expected his readers to 1) pay attention to the manner in which he writes his "philosophy" and then 2) let the process of understanding that kind of writing also become part of their understanding of the kind of philosophical therapy he offers. This kind of writing, Mulhall says, is one that employs "the more literary dimensions of language" and in the parenthetical remark above he describes that literary dimension as similar to how "the telling of imaginative tales" appeal to "figuration, imagery, and metaphor". This "literary approach", which I now associate with Mulhall's resolute reading, seems to be similar to what Conant (ibid.: 424) has earlier described in Wittgenstein as the heuristic role of philosophical elucidation in relation to "exploding [an illusion] from within". In the this approach, the philosopher employs "elucidations" that engage the reader in an imaginative activity so that he can clarify that use of language which the reader finds logically basic while indirectly making him realize that his philosophical claim is empty because of his failure to give it a "use". [95] This semblance of employing a literary approach becomes more explicit as Mulhall describes the specific inheritance he draws from Cavell:

> [T]he general tenor of my approach to the *Investigations* in *Inheritance and Originality* reflected lessons I have learnt from Cavell's work in the past, about Wittgenstein in particular and about philosophy in general. **Cavell's recovery of a non-elitist model of perfectionism,** in ethics and in philosophy, was perhaps the most important of these lessons; and it continues in the present reading. But more specifically, in pursuing the ways in which Cavell's writing, as well as that of Wittgenstein, both aligns itself with and distances itself from the Tractarian paradigm of austere nonsense, I found that those (failures of) alignment importantly involve an attunement to the figurative dimensions of grammatical investigations—in short, to the philosophical relevance **of exercises of the imagination in relation to our ways with words**. (Mulhall 2007:15)

In this passage, Mulhall seems to talk about the so-called internal relation between form and content in Wittgenstein in terms of "the figurative dimensions of grammatical investigations". Thus, the continuity that Mulhall pursues in *WPL* in relation to his earlier work *Inheritance and Originality* (*IO*, 2001) is also a continuity that shows the "the figurative dimensions of grammatical investigations". That dimension, Mulhall (ibid.) says, relates to "exercise of the imagination in relation to our ways with words". My discussion in this chapter is not concerned with details of the continuity between Mulhall's *IO* and *WPL*. Rather, it is

[95] See my earlier discussion of how Conant took Wittgenstein to be developing Frege's context principle by giving a greater emphasis on how philosophy uses words in an elucidatory manner (see Conant 2002: 387).

focused on clarifying the continuity of Conant's reading of Wittgenstein with that of Mulhall (and Cavell). But the remarks above shows that both cases of continuity involve the same idea: there is an internal relation between form and content of Wittgenstein philosophy and that internal relation is shown in the so-called "figurative dimension [of language]" that Wittgenstein employed in his grammatical investigations. Admittedly, Mulhall makes no reference to Frege's notion of elucidation and of how Conant understands Wittgenstein as adopting and refashioning that context principle in his own philosophical work. But in so far as Mulhall refers to the "Tractarian paradigm of austere nonsense" that is drawn from Conant's TMTT and WWAT and in so far as that austere conception involves a firmer application of the context principle, we can infer that Mulhall also endorses something similar to the conception of the literary that I have discussed. Mulhall can also be taken to adopt a literary approach which indirectly shows the emptiness of the idea of a private language by means of an imaginary activity that brings that "idea" back to its context of significant use in ordinary language. Interestingly, the remark I have quoted above also shows that Mulhall finds this literary and figurative dimension as having "alignments" and "(failures) of alignment" with the Tractarian paradigm of austere nonsense. With the aim of orienting my discussion to clarifying what these "alignments" and "(failures) of alignment" are, I now turn to Cavell's influence on Mulhall.

2.2.4 Cavell's influence: non-elitist model of perfectionism

Based on the remarks and discussions from the previous section, it seems that the idea of a literary approach presents itself as a significant aspect under which Mulhall's resolute reading can be clarified. Mulhall's reading of *PI* 374 and *PI* 500 is linked not just with the austere conception of nonsense, but also with how the context principle somehow led Wittgenstein to adopt a literary approach that links the content of his philosophy with his form of philosophizing. As mentioned in Mulhall's remark in the previous section, it seems that important insights must be drawn from how Wittgenstein's use of language in his writing becomes similar to the use of language in the telling of imaginative tales (in its uses imagery and metaphor). Among these insights, I presume, is what Mulhall considers as the most important of the lessons he has learned from Cavell, the "recovery of a non-elitist model of perfectionism in … philosophy" (ibid.). So, in this section I shall: 1) clarify what Mulhall means by a "non-elitist model of perfectionism" by drawing from *PI* 374, 2) clarify the non-elitist aspect of Wittgenstein's conception of philosophical therapy by connecting it to Mulhall's exegesis of *PI* 255, and 3) discuss the "perfectionist" aspect of that therapy in relation to how

Mulhall discusses the uninsistent tone of Wittgentsein's mode writing (with particular focus on his exegesis of *PI* 255, *PI* 243, and *PI* 258).

2.2.4.1 The idea of non-elitist model of perfectionism

The idea of a non-elitist model of perfectionism that Mulhall refers to in Cavell can be drawn from what Wittgenstein says in *PI* 374: the challenge of overcoming the idea of a limit on language is something so difficult (of "great difficulty") that the best one can do is to " yield to the temptation to use this picture [of a limit], but then investigate how the *application* of the picture goes." At the outset, I take the idea of a non-elitist model of perfectionism as characterized by the proposal in *PI* 374 to adopt a certain kind of yielding along with the kind of investigation that comes with that yielding. Neither Mulhall nor Conant quotes the passage in full, even as we can understand their respective resolute reading to be adopting a version of that proposal. So let me give the full quote below:

> The great difficulty here is not to represent the matter as if there were something one *couldn't* do. As if there really were an object, from which I derive its description, but I were unable to shew it to anyone.-- And the best that I can propose is that we should **yield to the temptation to use this picture, but then investigate how the *application* of the picture goes**. (*PI* 374, emphasis mine)

In the case of Mulhall, this idea of yielding to a temptation occurs in various ways: 1) in his depiction of the philosopher being "at the mercy of his opponent [or interlocutor]" say, for example in clarifying the idea of a private language (ibid.: 84) and 2) in his attention to the "uninsistent tone" that characterizes Wittgenstein's writing (ibid.: 21). The first one may be related to Cavell's idea of "non-elitism". Here, the philosopher gives up his status of being more "knowledgeable" than his interlocutor as he conducts philosophical therapy with a willingness to also subject his own philosophical procedure to questioning (see ibid.: 94). The second one may be linked with Cavell's idea of a "model for perfectionism". Here, the philosopher has authority only in so far as he is able to give (imaginative) examples that elicit the skeptic's trust because the skeptic's "deepest convictions" were in fact acknowledged and the philosopher is now perceived to be speaking from a position of understanding (ibid.: 84). Wittgenstein's mode of writing plays an important element in this idea of perfectionism in so far as it becomes an important tool for pursuing what is now a *shared* investigation of language-use brought about by his acknowledgment of the point of view taken by sceptic.

2.2.4.2 Philosophy as "non-elitist"

Let me further clarify the first aspect, the "non-elitist" aspect of this conception of philosophy by referring to Mulhall's exegesis of *PI* 255. Mulhall explains that paying attention to the semicolon found in the original German version of *PI* 255 will allow the reader to include within his reflection the possibility that Wittgenstein also subjects his own mode of philosophical therapy into question. Mulhall says that this semicolon is not found in Anscombe's translation in which "Der Philosoph behandelt eine Frage; wie eine Krankheit." is translated as "The philosopher's treatment of a question is like the treatment of an illness." So, Mulhall translates *PI* 255 into:

> The philosopher treats a question; like an illness. (*PI* 255).[96]

According to Mulhall, the retranslated version above allows for a "multivalence" that may now allow for the following interpretations:

i. The philosopher's treatment of a philosophical question is "like (the treatment of) an illness.
ii. The philosopher's *way* of treating a question is what is "like an illness".
iii. The very idea of treating a philosophical question is itself "like an illness."

The openness to this plurality of interpretation becomes possible when attention is given to the useful ambiguity and "pivot" in meaning made possible by Wittgenstein's use of semicolon. And, in Mulhall's view (ibid.: 94), "all (three interpretations) are in play, and … should be in play".

i. Philosophical treatment vis-à-vis physiological or psychoanalytic treatment.

Mulhall (ibid.: 87) claims that Anscombe's translation is not really wrong in as much as it is narrow; it "conflates" one possible interpretation of the remark with the original remark itself. Mulhall explains that the interpretation conveyed by Anscombe's translation can indeed be found in the original remark: the treatment of a "(philosophical) question" may indeed be compared with the treatment of an "illness". Within this interpretation, Mulhall discusses the shades of meaning that come about when philosophical treatment is compared to: 1) a physiological treatment like that of a "surgery" which conceives of a philosophical question as something essentially problematic and that has to be removed because it has no place in the "healthy" use ordinary of language (ibid.: 91), or 2) a psychoanalytic treatment that aims not

[96] Ibid.: 88. Mulhall's translation is the same English translation that can now be found in the Revised 4th edition of the *Philosophical Investigations* (2009) by P.M.S. Hacker and Joachim Schulte.

really at getting rid of the philosophical question but which "restor[es] mental health" so that the "smooth functioning" of ordinary language will not be impaired (ibid.).

So, Mulhall's main point of contention against Anscombe (with her lack of attention to Wittgenstein's use of semicolon) is that it takes away the possibility of interpreting the remark in ways that are equally significant for advancing philosophical criticism (like the other two interpretations above). It seems to me that it is in the acknowledgement of these two other interpretations that we can begin to understand how Mulhall portrays the non-elitist aspect of Wittgenstein's philosophical therapy. So let me now proceed to the 2nd interpretation of *PI* 255.

ii. On comparing the manner of philosophical treatment to an illness

On the second interpretation, the idea of a non-elitist approach to philosophizing seems to consist in being able to consider that what is "like an illness" is in fact the philosopher's method for "treating" a philosophical question (ibid.: 93). Here, Mulhall mentions Norman Malcolm's treatment of the idea of a private language as an example of a philosophical treatment that is also "like an illness", and hence, also in need of philosophical treatment.[97] According to Mulhall, Malcolm's philosophical treatment becomes flawed because it does not really "acknowledge" and respond to the sceptic's "plight of mind". Mulhall gives a lengthy discussion of what Cavell means by the idea of "acknowledgment" which seems to be portrayed as Wittgenstein's way of rendering the sceptic's question powerless by means of some concession (ibid.: 47-8). In the discussion that follows, I simplify Mulhall's depiction of what Cavell means by "acknowledgment" by linking it to Conant's understanding of Wittgenstein as someone who explodes an illusion from within by giving that illusion an imaginative content. In describing this failure of acknowledgment, Mulhall discusses Cavell's criticism of Malcolm:

> On Cavell's view, Malcolm's response to the sceptic makes no attempt to discover his plight of mind and circumstances. Malcolm writes as if the sceptic simply cannot be serious, can have discovered nothing which his words are trying, perhaps in more or less forced ways, to convey, but has simply (for no obvious reason) begun to misuse his words, whilst refusing … to see or do anything about that 'fact'. Malcolm fails to see the sceptic's words as ones that might seriously be meant by another human being, and thereby fails properly to acknowledge the sceptic as another, equally competent speaker, another speaking out of the common human condition. (Mulhall ibid.: 84)

The remark above describes what in Mulhall's view is the weakness in Malcolm, that is, his approach fails to take the sceptic seriously by not trying to internalize the sceptic's state

[97] Here, Mulhall (ibid.: 43) specifically refers to Malcolm's work "The Privacy of Experience" (1967). That article, according to Mulhall, is the target of criticism of Cavell's "penultimate essay" in *Must We Mean What We Say* (1976) and it served as the "foil" through which Cavell presented his insights about WRPL.

of mind in his so-called philosophical treatment of the idea of a private language (ibid.: 43,69). Mulhall (ibid.) explains that Malcolm ends up presenting the idea of a private language as a kind of impossibility, and this is because Malcolm simply focuses on what Wittgenstein says that there is the "truth" that "it cannot be said of me at all (except perhaps as joke) the I am know I am in pain" (*PI* 246). As a result of that narrow focus, the idea of a private language becomes "straightforwardly nonsensical" because it violates some grammatical "truth" about our way of talking about "pain" (ibid.:43). In a tone highly reminiscent of Conant, Mulhall presents Cavell as criticizing Malcolm for his failure to inhabit the illusions of the reader, and hence, also for failing to let the reader see for himself the inconsistency in his uses of words. Like Conant, Mulhall's discussion seems to imply that this failure can only be addressed indirectly, by means of an imaginative activity that enables the philosophically deluded to see through his own illusions. Mulhall writes:

> [O]n the resolute reading of Cavell, he is indicting Malcolm for failing to do as much as he could and should in imaginatively inhabiting the sceptical interlocutor's perspective, a diagnostic task which essentially involves a moment of willingness to take nonsense for sense—to articulate the interlocutor's fantasy from the inside, and thus to participate in what is latently nonsensical with a view to allowing its nonsensicality to become patent. (Mulhall 2007:81-82)

Thus, Mulhall depicts Cavell's response to Malcom in terms of an imaginative activity that gives examples of the relevant uses of the expression "I know". These examples might include: 1) the "I know" which means one has got a hang of something as in "I know New York", 2) the "I know" which admits or confesses as in "I know I am being childish", and 3) the "I know" which confirms what has been said.[98] Mulhall seems to link these examples as contexts that Cavell uses to deconstruct the dogma of inherent nonsensicality associated with the expression "I know I am in pain". With the background provided by these contexts, the "I know" in the expression "I know I am in pain" may mean something like "I have 'become acquainted with' and 'gotten the hang' of my pain. So, I can now deal with it." Or, it may be taken to mean a kind of confirmation of what has been said, similar to how we say "Yes, 'I know I am in pain'" in response to someone who said "You are in pain.". In contrast to Malcolm's position, these uses of the expression "I know I am in pain" are not cases where the speaker is joking and yet they make sense. Mulhall can be taken to say that these cases shows the dogmatism implicit in Malcolm's philosophical treatment; they undermine the view that the expression "I know I am in pain" is "straightforwardly nonsensical" or impossible. On the

[98] There are examples by Cavell in "Must We Mean What We Say", p. 255 as cited in Mulhall (ibid.: 44).

contrary, it seems that a more coherent way of understanding Mulhall's interpretation is that such a use of language can be used as an "object of comparison" for the possibility of understanding cases where the expression might be used differently. What then becomes a patent nonsense is the "idea of a private language" which has no meaning for us because of our current lack of ability to give it a context for use (not because they are inherently meaningless).

There is a sense, however, in which Malcolm's view is right, and Mulhall's reading acknowledges this. When a person goes to a dentist and he complains that he has a toothache, it will make no sense for the dentist to say "I doubt that you have a tooth-ache" except perhaps as a sarcastic joke. There is indeed a first person use of the expression "I know I am in pain" that cannot be doubted by a sceptic and which might be better expressed not as a knowledge claim but as a testimony (e.g. "I am in pain" or "I feel sick."). The acceptance of that testimony about a personal and immediate experience of pain is something we take for granted under "normal circumstances". However, it seems that from the perspective of Mulhall, Malcolm's mistake is that he considers that the first person expressive use as a paradigm case that makes all other cases inherently meaningless. This commitment to an ideal paradigm case unwittingly constitutes Malcolm's "failure of acknowledgement". And Mulhall seems to diagnose that "failure" as coming from a neglect of the imaginative activity in clarifying the possible uses of words that come with a resolute reading of Wittgenstein.

iii. On comparing the idea of philosophical treatment itself to an illness

There is still a third interpretation of *PI* 255 which seems to further clarify the non-elitist aspect of Wittgenstein's philosophy that Mulhall portrays. In this third interpretation, Mulhall subjects to criticism the very idea of "treating" a philosophical question. What is "like an illness" then is the very idea that a philosophical question is in need of a "treatment". In one sense, this interpretation makes it appear as if Mulhall makes a conservative concession: the skeptic's question no longer needs "dissolution" and the philosopher seems to be giving up the idea of the need for therapy altogether. And yet, in another sense, this interpretation is radical. It reveals the extent of Wittgenstein's non-elitism by subjecting to question even the philosopher's own motive for conducting philosophical treatment. Here, criticism of the very idea of philosophical therapy itself may be understood in light of Mulhall's emphasis on how Wittgenstein requires the philosopher to adopt a mode of acknowledgment that takes him to its extreme; he adopts the perspective of the supposed metaphysician in a way that puts him "in the [very] grips" of the philosophical question (Mulhall ibid.: 93). In this view, the philosopher

no longer has control over the philosophical question; he is in fact also "controlled" by the question. This may relate to one of Mulhall's misgivings on how Anscombe's translation fails to do justice to the meaning of the term *behandelt* as it occurs in the German version of *PI* 255 "Der Philosoph behandelt eine Frage; wie eine Krankheit." Mulhall says that among the meanings that term *behandelt* connotes in that passage is the idea of "trading with" and "handling something" (ibid.: 90). In the context of this third interpretation, it seems that Mulhall points to how a philosophical question is in fact the one that is in effect "handling" or "guiding", or the philosopher so that he can come up with appropriate strategies for clarifying language.

The rationale for this kind of concession can be understood in terms of how Mulhall also connects this third interpretation to the idea of counter-transference that can be found in the earlier comparison between a philosophical treatment and a psychoanalytic treatment (ibid:94). In this Freudian approach, there is a counter-transference between the analyst and the patient in the sense that "the drives and impulses at work in the patient… are as much at work in the analyst" (ibid:92). Cavell (1999:175-6) himself seems to have described the implications of this Freudian idea of counter-transference as he takes Wittgenstein to be developing "modes of criticism that are not moralistic": Wittgenstein's modes of philosophical therapy "do not leave the critic [philosopher] imagining himself free of the faults he sees around him" (ibid.:176). Cavell makes this remark in the context of how Wittgenstein is a philosopher who acknowledges that he is also a part of the culture he seeks to influence. Cavell portrays Wittgenstein's response to this non-moralism cryptically as he says that Wittgenstein resorts to "a full examination" that is more "methodical" and "less self-defeating" because of its adoption of a Freudian approach to self-knowledge (Ibid:176). Mulhall's discussion of this third interpretation seems to clarify Cavell's response by going back to the idea that the philosopher may be in as much need of a "treatment" as his interlocutor. The philosopher as a therapist must acknowledge that he is, in some way, also sick and prone to illusions, and he conducts philosophical therapy on himself as he conducts philosophical therapy on others. So, the philosopher in the Wittgensteinian sense of the term undergoes a similar kind of self-understanding and self-criticism along with his interlocutor in the course of their shared investigations on the possible meaning of a philosophical claim. One can understand this self-understanding as a kind of check so the philosopher will be less likely to impose his own concepts on his interlocutor. Thus, we can find Mulhall writing explicitly about the need for a philosopher to give up his own "active orienting sense" of the meaning of his interlocutor's claims. He writes:

> [I]t might be an essential part of his work as therapist to simply submit to the question, to allow himself to be handled or treated by it. This might mean allowing himself to acknowledge that some of his own inclinations or confusions find expression in that question; but it might also mean allowing the question to put his own initial ideas of how to respond to it—of what it signifies and, more specifically, his sense that it may well signify nothing whatever—in question.
>
> One might think of this as the philosophical equivalent of counter-transference—the philosopher's willingness to subject his own unavoidably active orienting sense of the meaning (or the obvious nonsensicality) of these questions to treatment. (Mulhall 2007:94)

Let me revisit a puzzling aspect of the third interpretation that is articulated by Mulhall's remark above. Notice that the giving up of "active orienting sense" refers not just to the "meaning" of his interlocutor's philosophical claim; it also refers to the philosopher's sense of when his interlocutors claim is "obviously nonsensical". Both the tendency to orient the analysis of an expression towards a particular meaning or to a case of obvious nonsense must be subjected to philosophical criticism. The latter reference becomes problematic in the sense that the resolute reading conducts an imaginary activity where the "content" or "meaning" given to the idea of a private language is purely rhetorical. As Mulhall (ibid.: 82) himself explains, both Malcolm and Cavell "treat" the idea of a private language as empty. Cavell's approach simply adopts a "longer route" because it considers as essential the imaginative activity of giving content to an illusion. Hence, the supposed meaning of a private language is purely imaginary and it only functions as a provisional tool for "exorcising an illusion". We can also find Cavell (1999: 344) himself saying that the idea of a private language is a "fantasy" and that the philosopher's activity of giving content to that "fantasy" is an imaginary content. Yet, in this third interpretation of *PI* 255, we find Mulhall suggesting something that may lead to a reading that seems contrary to Cavell's remark: the philosopher takes his interlocutor's perspective so seriously that he comes to "forget" his "orienting sense" that the idea of a private language is a fantasy. Here, the philosopher simply follows the resolute imaginative activity to wherever it leads, and this leads to a point where he also becomes ready to forego his view that the idea of a private language is empty. But how do we make sense of this "submissive" imaginative activity without making the philosopher another substantial reader or even a sceptic altogether?

I am presuming that the answer lies in Mulhall's claim that in Wittgenstein's conception of philosophical therapy all three interpretations of *PI* 255 "are in play" and that "they should be in play" (Ibid.: 94). If the therapy we attribute to the later Wittgenstein is to become truly self-critical and responsive to the uses of language, the philosopher must develop a means for acknowledging how these three aspects of philosophical therapy might inform his grammatical

investigation of a philosophical claim (ibid:94). Here, it seems that the idea of non-elitism comes about because the philosopher does not simply apply a predetermined philosophical method; he questions and develops a philosophical method in the course of the imaginative activity he shares with his interlocutor. The judgments a philosopher makes about the nonsensicality or banality of an expression are also made through this imaginative activity. This interplay between the three interpretations of *PI* 255, which acknowledges the deep extent to which the philosopher must flex and question his own philosophical procedure, connects well with Mulhall's attention to Wittgenstein's uninsistent mode of writing. I believe it is that uninsistent mode of writing which allows the three interpretations of *PI* 255 to be at play in WRPL. I now discuss that idea to clarify the perfectionist aspect of Wittgenstein's later philosophy.

2.2.4.3 Perfectionism: the example of Wittgenstein's writing

While the idea of philosophical therapy as non-elitist brings down the elevated status of the philosopher and his conceptions of philosophical treatment, the idea of perfectionism seems to come about as a way of establishing authority in a situation where the philosopher is under the threat of being as delusional as his interlocutor. This authority comes not just from being able to acknowledge what Cavell calls the sceptic's unique "plight of mind". Rather, it comes from being able to give examples that might be construed as practical guides for clarifying a philosophical claim and recovering its use in everyday language, or in letting go of that philosophical claim as a complete illusion. Thus, the idea of perfectionism in both Mulhall and Cavell links up with the kind of authority that comes with the ability to use relevant examples and with how Wittgenstein presented his mode of writing as an important part of the philosophical therapy he seeks to endorse.

In this context, I shall focus specifically on Mulhall's attention to Wittgenstein's writing style. I take Mulhall's attention to Wittgenstein's uninsistent tone of writing as his literary tool for amplifying the imaginative activity that might bring the idea of a private language back to its context of significant use in ordinary language while indirectly showing its emptiness as a philosophical claim. This uninsistent mode of writing is already found in Wittgenstein's use of semicolon in *PI* 255. Mulhall gave attention to how that punctuation mark might be understood as presenting a useful ambiguity that allows for the possibility of criticizing the philosopher's very method for conducting "therapy" on a philosophical question. However, I believe that another way of understanding this uninsistent tone is by connecting Mulhall's exegesis of *PI* 243 with his exegesis of *PI* 258. Mulhall gives an explicit discussion of the larger uninsistent

tone that characterize Wittgenstein's writing in his exegesis of *PI* 243, but he also later says that *PI* 243 and *PI* 258 work as a kind of pair to clarify a particular outcome of Cavell's application of Wittgenstein's therapy. So, I would now discuss the uninsistent tone in Wittgenstein's writing in Mulhall's exegesis of *PI* 243. Then, I shall connect Mulhall's exegesis of *PI* 243 with his exegesis of *PI* 258.

i. The uninsistent tone of Wittgenstein's writing in *PI* 243

Mulhall (ibid.: 18,20) talks about the distinctively uninsistent tone that characterizes Wittgenstein's mode of writing in *PI* 243 as he explains how it allows for *both* a substantial reading and a resolute reading. *PI* 243 is read in a substantial manner when the idea of a private language is conceived as a violation of grammar which then becomes a limit to imagination. On the other hand, *PI* 243 is read in a resolute manner when the idea of a private language is allowed as a "possibility" which then engages our imagination in finding cases in ordinary language that might satisfy that idea.

Mulhall (ibid.: 20) explains that both readings are in one way the same because they both claim that the idea of a private language is incoherent and say that this incoherence comes from "resisting the ordinary meanings of words". However, the resolute reading is more roundabout; it employs the idea of ordinary language as something that is "essentially responsive to possibilities invoked by his interlocutor" who may not readily accept the emptiness of his philosophical claims (ibid.: 20).

Let me go into details of how Mulhall draws both the substantial reading and resolute reading from *PI* 243 by starting with a description of how PI 243 is structured:

1. The speaker asks his reader to imagine a monologuist. (case 1):

   > A human being can encourage himself, give himself orders, obey, blame and punish himself; he can ask himself a question and answer it.

2. The speaker amplifies the first case into a "tribe of monologuist". (case 2):

   > We could even imagine human beings who spoke only in monologue; who accompanied their activities by talking to themselves.

3. The speaker depicts anthropological features (e.g., translatability and predictability) of the monologues as part of ordinary language:

   > — An explorer who watched them and listened to their talk might succeed in translating their language into ours. (This would enable him to predict these people's actions correctly, for he also hears them making resolutions and decisions.)

4. The interlocutor introduces the idea of private language as distinct from the ordinary use of language described in lines 1,2 and 3 (absence of translatability and predictability):

> But could we also imagine a language in which a person could write down or give vocal expression to his inner experiences —his feelings, moods, and the rest—for his private use?

5. The speaker taking the voice of remark 1, 2, and 3 above brings back idea of a private language to ordinary language (e.g. case 1, case 2):

> — —Well, can't we do so in our ordinary language?

6. Interlocutor resists and further qualifies his idea as distinct from what has been said

> But that is not what I mean. The individual words of this language are to refer to what can only be known to the person speaking; to his immediate private sensations. So another person cannot understand the language.

In Mulhall's exegesis, the so-called substantial reading of *PI* 243 can be understood by attention to no. 5 above. When the speaker brings back the idea of a private language to activities in ordinary language and says *"*— —Well, can't we do so in our ordinary language?", he is taken to appeal to a conception of ordinary language that functions as limit on what we can think and say. Here, the appeal to ordinary language becomes somewhat like a dogma because of how it lays down a "law" or "truth" about the grammatical conditions of sense (ibid.: 19). Because the norms of language function as grammatical "truths", the resistance of the interlocutor to the "norms" of ordinary language (see no. 6 in response to no. 5) becomes trivial. In this substantial reading, the idea of a private language voiced out by the interlocutor in no. 6 becomes a matter of impossibility because "it" is something that we cannot imagine. The belief that there is nothing beyond ordinary language becomes somewhat like an *a priori truth* that undercuts our imaginative activity on what the idea of a private language might mean. This turns the idea of private language as something that is straightforwardly nonsensical because of how it does not heed "grammatical truths" about the limits of our language.

By contrast, the so-called resolute reading of *PI* 243 takes the resistance of the speaker in no. 5 above seriously. When the interlocutor in no. 6 says "But that is not what I mean", there is still an appeal to ordinary language in the sense that he also acknowledges the so-called natural norms that come with the everyday use of language. But in this resolute reading, the appeal to those norms do not become a truth or limit that makes the idea a private language

"straightforwardly nonsensical". In this resolute reading, the "truth" about limits is viewed merely as a possibility and the appeal to ordinary language functions as the philosopher's invitation for the reader to enter into an imaginative activity and examine the various contexts in which we might be able to makes sense of the term "private language". Here, Mulhall also pays attention to Wittgenstein's use of double-dash (in a way that is somehow similar to his attention to the semicolon in *PI* 255). This double-dash occurs just *before* the speaker asks his interlocutor if his idea of a private language might be found in ordinary language (see no.5 above). Mulhall seems to read that double-dash in a way similar to Cavell; it indicates a long reflective pause that gives space for imagining what the idea of a private language might mean in ordinary language (not as if ordinary language already determined the "meaning" of that idea). This space for imagination and how that imagination is evoked by Wittgenstein's use of the double-dash is absent in the substantial reading of *PI* 243 (see Mulhall ibid.: 17).

According to Mulhall (ibid.: 19), this dialectic between the substantial voice and the resolute voice in *PI* 243 can be understood to extend to passages that follow it. For example, there is the substantial voice which "lays down a law" and limits the imagination associated with the concluding remark in *PI* 244. That remark in *PI* 244 says that "the verbal expression of pain" does not simply "describe" crying but "replaces" it. This reading seems to lead in the similarly substantial interpretation of *PI* 246 as endorsing the view that "my doubt" about the meaning of "my pain" is not just meaningless but impossible. This doubt is impossible because there is the "truth" on how "it makes sense to say of other people that they doubt whether I am in pain; but not to say it about myself."

At the same time, Mulhall (ibid.) also explains that those very same passages can be given a resolute reading. This resolute reading becomes possible when attention is given not just to what Wittgenstein says in the conclusion of those remarks but to how individual remarks connect to the dialectic of responses in the whole passage. This allows the reader to see the tentative or merely suggestive tone under which Wittgenstein introduces those supposed "grammatical truths". In this resolute and more dialectical view, the supposedly definitive conclusion in *PI* 244 which says that the verbal expression of pain is a replacement rather than mere description of pain seems to be nothing but "one possibility". Hence, it is merely a rejoinder to Wittgenstein's suggestion in the middle of *PI* 244 about the presence of a primitive connection between our "pain words" and "pain". The same thing can be said about the so-called "truth" in *PI* 246 on how we cannot meaningfully utter to ourselves the remark "I doubt that I am in pain". That "truth" may be considered merely as a response that models a certain possibility of thinking about things. It is not a response that presents a "law" which prohibits us

from imagining the possibility of cases where that remark might in fact make sense. (Perhaps if one has taken a hallucinogenic drug and one says, "I doubt that I am in pain.")

What Mulhall says about this loose or "accommodating" character of Wittgenstein's writing is somewhat similar to Cavell's claim in AWLP (1962): the "conflicting voices" in the *Investigations* are meant to be aids rather than obstructions that help the reader develop a more responsive and self-critical form of philosophical therapy.

Mulhall writes:

> Is it perhaps essential to Wittgenstein's conception of philosophical prose as unassertive that it avoid declaring this fact about itself—**that it not insist on its uninsistence**? If so, it cannot simply assert that an assertive [substantial] reading of itself is wrong. Or perhaps that conception cannot eliminate an assertive moment in its imaginative engagements with emptiness, any more than grammatical reminders can eschew normativity. If so, what we really need is a reading that does not assume or present those aspects of the text upon which substantial and resolute readers respectively fasten as occluding each other, or as ones between which we must choose. (Mulhall 2007:20-21, emphasis added)

In this passage, Mulhall talks about the "unassertive" or uninsistent tone of Wittgenstein's writing as something that is able to include within itself both the resolute and substantial voice on the idea of a private language. Mulhall responds to his question above by pointing to the connection between the form and content in Wittgenstein's philosophy and how Wittgenstein wanted to be critical about his very method of philosophical therapy:

> However we answer this question, it is one concerning the relation between form and content in Wittgenstein's writing; hence it forces us to investigate not only his treatment of the idea of a private language, but also his idea of how one should treat any philosophical problem, and the one in relation to the other — each as if called for by the other. (Mulhall ibid.:21)

So, it seems that Mulhall's discussion of *PI* 243 anticipates his discussion of *PI* 255. Mulhall's exegesis of *PI* 243, in its claim that there can both be a substantial and resolute reading of that passage, parallels how there can both be a substantial and resolute conception of philosophical treatment in *PI* 255. What is mentioned in *PI* 243 as the accommodating character of Wittgenstein's writing also finds a parallel in Mulhall's claim on the importance of letting all three interpretations of *PI* 255 to be in play. In both his exegesis of *PI* 243 and *PI* 255, it seems that Mulhall makes a connection between Wittgenstein's uninsistent mode of writing and his uninsistent mode of philosophical therapy. The more particular view on how a resolute reading (of the idea of a private language) involves being responsive to possibilities invoked by an interlocutor translates to how Wittgenstein's mode of writing itself becomes responsive to possibilities that may be invoked by a substantial reader. And this is where I take

Mulhall to give attention to the perfectionist aspect of Wittgenstein's philosophy. Mulhall's depiction of the accommodating character of Wittgenstein's later writing seems to be a case where Wittgenstein practices what he preaches, i.e., where "the author (Wittgenstein) is shown through his style".[99] Through Wittgenstein's uninsistent tone of writing, he is now able to amplify and demonstrate the imaginative activity and self-criticism that his "yielding" or "submissive" mode of philosophical therapy seeks to endorse.

This "perfectionism" seems to be the context under which Mulhall's exegesis of *PI* 258 becomes instructive. *PI* 258 connects well with *PI* 243 in so far as it seems to offer a case of how we can understand the idea of a private language as meaningful (rather than empty) because of its connection with a context of significant use. It also seems to relate with what is mentioned in the third interpretation of *PI* 255 as questioning the very idea that a "question" needs philosophical treatment. In this view, if a reader of Wittgenstein like Cavell is able to give the idea of private language a context of significant use in ordinary language and he is able to explain that context, then there is no need to consider that idea as empty. Thus, at least for that case, the philosopher may have to forego his view that the idea of private language is illusory just as the interlocutor ends up having to forego his conception of a private language as something impossible or incapable of being expressed in ordinary language. In the course of his shared imaginative activity with the philosopher, the interlocutor may eventually come to accept and transform the philosophical idea of a private language into an ordinary language conception that applies to a significant context of use. This transformation also has the subtle effect of "dissolving" his philosophical idea of a private language, and I take this to be the case for Mulhall's Cavellian reading of *PI* 258.

ii. The everyday banality of private language in *PI* 258

Mulhall (ibid:102) explains that Cavell's reading of *PI* 258 is an instance where the idea of private language occurs as an "everyday banality" and not an empty nonsense. Mulhall's exegesis of *PI* 258 alludes to *PI* 243 in the sense that the idea of a person making a diary of his private sensations becomes somewhat like the case of a philosopher who makes a diary of his personal thoughts through his writing. The reader of a philosopher's work then acts like an anthropologist in translating the philosopher's private thoughts into his own language. And

[99] See the concluding section of Cavell's discussion of what it means for Wittgenstein to be a perfectionist writer in "The *Investigations*' Everyday Aesthetics of itself" (2004). That article is also cited in *WPL*. It provides an interesting discussion of how the idea of perfectionism also relates to a conception of "rigor" in the practice of ordinary language philosophy.

Mulhall claims that Wittgenstein (and Cavell) wrote in such a way that they become somewhat like the private sensation diarist whose written works become so personal and opaque that they require the reader to perform a kind of anthropological translation. Thus, the anthropological activity previously described in the first paragraph of *PI* 243 is presented in *PI* 258 as an ordinary language activity that is at work when a reader attempts to understand the work of an unconventional writer. [100]

In Mulhall's exegesis of *PI* 258, the idea of a private language becomes a case of "everyday banality" when understood from that context of an unconventional and eccentric form of writing. Here the term "everyday banality" can be taken to refer to how Mulhall takes Wittgenstein's "resolute philosophical method" to be capable of acknowledging a new and creative insight as part of the appeal to the idea of ordinary use of language. It also seems to show how Mulhall's resolute reading takes Wittgenstein's appeal to ordinary language philosophy as something that does not interfere with the actual use of language (*PI* 124). A support for this interpretation is how Mulhall ends his exegesis of *PI* 258 with the claim that a reader of the *Investigations* (and Cavell's *TCR*) may have to perform "acts of reading so personal as to form the possibility of communication without the support of convention, but with the hope of their becoming the source of new conventions" (ibid.:107). Here, what Mulhall refers to as "form[ing] the possibility of communication without the support of convention" does not refer to a mystical way of expressing ideas. In light of my previous discussion of Conant's resolute understanding of philosophical elucidation, it seems that it is best understood as referring to the trial and error process of finding the right words that might be able to articulate a "new and creative use of language" which an interlocutor may in fact, with great difficulty, be trying to express. It seems that for Mulhall and Cavell, such new and creative uses of language is what substantial readers of Wittgenstein are bound to miss. This is because of how they appeal to the idea of a limit on language that preempts the imaginative activity where new and creative uses of language might become clarified and described in ordinary language. This new and creative uses of language might then become a "complementary alternative" for throwing away a philosophical claim that does not belong to any existing language-game or convention.

Furthermore, it seems to me that the case for Mulhall's reading of *PI* 258 also illustrates what is described in the third interpretation of *PI* 255 as Wittgenstein's way of making room for the idea that the philosopher's very tendency to treat a philosophical question is the one that

[100] See my previous discussion of *PI* 243, specifically no.1-3

is like an "illness". If there is a case where the idea of a private language is given a context of significance use, then there is simply no need for philosophical treatment. A cure is needed only when there is sickness. Likewise, one might say that when ordinary language is not on holiday and it is doing its work (see *PI* 38, 132), then there is no need for philosophical treatment and philosophers can stop and be silent. This view seems to harmonize well with Conant's emphasis on how Wittgenstein's silence in the *Tractatus* is similar to the silence of the *Investigations*. At least for a particular instance, when the elucidatory work of the philosopher is completed and the interlocutor is aided in being able to express what he wanted to express, then the silence that is left is not pregnant silence but one of simply having nothing more to say. To achieve this kind of silence, it is important for the philosopher to engage and follow through on the imaginative activity of his interlocutor. And it seems that the uninsistent mode of writing found in the *Investigations* has the advantage of encouraging this imaginative activity more than that of the *Tractatus*.

So, let me now conclude with what I take to be the so-called alignment and failure of alignment of Mulhall's resolute reading with the resolute reading of *Tractatus.*

2.2.5 Mulhall's resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein

I think that the most salient aspect of Mulhall's resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein is how he is able to draw insights from Wittgenstein's mode of writing and relates them to insights about the kind of philosophical therapy that Wittgenstein sought to endorse. This becomes evident in terms of his attention to Wittgenstein's use of punctuation marks such as the semi-colon and double-dash which allow not just for a substantial reading but also for a resolute reading of the idea of a private language. Similar to how Conant depicted Wittgenstein's writing in the *Tractatus* as capable of embodying the very illusions it seeks to criticize, Mulhall depicts Wittgenstein's writing in the *Investigations* as having a "multivalence" that allows for the articulation of the illusions it wishes to undermine. What we then have is not really a substantive philosophical procedure but a criticism of a substantive philosophical procedure. This is what I take to be the alignment of the resolute reading of the *Investigations* with the *Tractatus*. In both cases, Wittgenstein is considered to have written in such a way that gives an illusion an imaginative content so we might then "overcome" that illusion from within.

In the context of this imaginative and literary approach, an interesting aspect that Mulhall's exegesis was able to clarify is how *PI* 255 (with the inclusion of Wittgenstein's semi-

colon) was written in a somewhat similar way to *TLP* 6.54: both passages allow for a substantial reading and a resolute reading. In the case of *TLP* 6.54*,* the substantial reading of Wittgenstein's use of "nonsense" is that it is a nonsense that conveys an ineffable truth. The resolute reading of that same passage criticizes that substantial reading by showing how that "ineffable truth" becomes an empty illusion. One other hand, in the case of *PI* 255, the substantial reading of that remark relates to Malcolm's "unimaginative" approach to treating the idea of a private language. Malcolm takes the non-epistemic first person use as the paradigm case for understanding the idea of a private language. The resolute reading of that same passage, on the other hand, refers to Cavell's more imaginative approach of yielding to the sceptic and showing that Malcolm's manner of philosophical treatment is narrow-minded and ends up as another illusion. This self-critical mode of writing is referred by Mulhall as a kind of non-elitism.

Lastly, what I take to be the "failure of alignment" (ibid.:15) of Mulhall's resolute reading of the *Investigations* is in its perfectionism; that is, in the extent to which the later Wittgenstein yields to his interlocutor through a more literary form of writing than the one found in the *Tractatus*. In Mulhall's *WPL*, this so-called failure of alignment seems to become a matter of degree. Conant's resolute reading has already emphasized the importance of giving an illusion an imaginative content. Wittgenstein's mode of writing in the *Tractatus (*e.g., *TLP* 6.54*)* becomes a way of inducing that imaginative content. However, Mulhall's resolute reading seems to have shown that Wittgenstein's mode of writing in the *Investigations* is more multifaceted and more accommodating. It uses a mode of writing and language-use that allows for more imagery and reflection by means of examples (e.g., the scenarios made possible by Wittgenstein's use of semicolon in *PI* 255, the contrasting examples between the diarist in *PI* 243 and the diarist in *PI* 258). I take this mode of writing to be the later Wittgenstein's "literary use of language". They translate to having more tools and resources for helping an interlocutor clarify his uses of language in a way that get "its light" (*PI* 109) from the particular philosophical problems he is entangled with. This also gives the interlocutor more freedom and guidance in deciding for himself whether his use of language is empty or meaningful

Part 3 - Between Lear and Mulhall: On the possibility of resolute transcendentalism

In this part of my dissertation, I now present my stand on the debate between the resolute reading and transcendental reading through a synthesis that might be called "resolute transcendentalism". Here, I shall speak of the "transcendental reading" primarily with reference to the reading of the later Wittgenstein I have associated with Johnathan Lear in Part 1, and I shall speak of the "resolute reading" primarily with reference to the reading of the later Wittgenstein I have associated with Stephen Mulhall in Part 2. My discussion in this chapter attempts to heed Roger White's (2011) warning on the presence of a variety of approaches that may be called "resolute readings" and "orthodox readings" of the *Tractatus*. This variety, White says, makes it difficult to assess the comparative strengths and weaknesses of those type of readings independent of the work of individual writers.[101] I have taken White's claim to imply that there might also be a similar variety of approaches falling within the idea of a resolute reading and a transcendental reading of the later Wittgenstein. Thus, the issues and insights I shall now raise in my discussion can be understood as having direct significance only to the readings of Lear and Mulhall that I have described in Part 1 and Part 2. Yet, in so far as other writers have a similar approach to understanding Wittgenstein, I also offer these insights to be having significance on their work. This applies, for example, to the transcendental readings of Stenius and Williams and the resolute readings of Conant, Diamond, and Cavell which I have, to some extent, also discussed in Parts 1 and 2.

My assessment of Lear and Mulhall shall focus mainly on their treatment of the idea of limits and the idea of style in Wittgenstein's later work, especially in relation to the *Investigations*. This focus comes about because the content of what I have so far written in this dissertation has shown those aspects to have a recurrent link to the debate on whether Wittgenstein endorsed a substantial or an austere conception of nonsense; i.e., whether the so-called substance of "nonsense" in Wittgenstein refers in some way to the limits of sense which he tried to convey by means of his writing style or whether his writing style and use of nonsensical expressions become austere in the sense that it articulates an *illusion* of substance

[101] See White (2011:59, endnote 6) as he distinguishes, for example, the difference between the orthodox reading of Hacker who considers Wittgenstein's idea of the "ineffable" indefensible from the equally "orthodox" reading of Anscombe who defends that idea. And like Conant and Bronzo (2017), White also gives attention to the variety of readings that fall under the resolute reading (which he calls the "New Wittgensteinian" reading).

(say, for example, about the limits of language) which we are then meant to overcome by clarifying the context that comes with the "use" of their attendant expressions.

My discussion shall proceed as follows: in the first section, section 3.1, I give a short preliminary discussion on how the idea of limits becomes an important point of contention between the resolute reading and the transcendental reading and how that concern for limits affects their different stance on the significance of Wittgenstein's use of nonsense in his later philosophy. In the second section, section 3.2, I rehearse the ideas of Lear in relation to the significance of "nonsense" in conveying the idea of limits. I go back to my earlier claim in Part 1 on how Lear, in both his early and later works on the transcendental reading, attributes to Wittgenstein an employment of nonsense that also becomes his method of transcendental negation. As a point of contrast to my previous claim in Part 1 on how Lear leaves behind the idea of the inexpressible in Wittgenstein, I now argue that such an approach still makes Lear fall under what Conant calls an "ineffabilist reading". Then in the third section, section 3.3, I reconstruct Mulhall's resolute reading in light of how it can be understood as a would-be criticism of Lear. In this section, I focus on my earlier claim in Part 2, Chapter 2 on how Mulhall adopts what Conant (2002) has described as a philosophical method of "exploding an illusion from within". I discuss this resolute philosophical method in the context of how the notions of "limits" and "showing" in Lear become a form of psychologism. In the fourth section, section 3.4, I introduce the idea of resolute transcendentalism which I draw from the impasse that comes with Wittgenstein's mode of writing. I argue that it is important not to lose sight of this impasse in addressing the question of whether Wittgenstein's later philosophy is more accurately described by the transcendental reading of Lear or by the resolute reading of Mulhall. This impasse, I suggest, can make room for the possibility of a "resolute transcendentalism" where Lear's concern for insights about a Wittgensteinian "thinking subject" might be given a context of significant use. And I relate this idea of resolute transcendentalism in the context of how a philosopher's struggle for expression can be overcome by the employment of new and creative uses of language. Finally, in section 3.5, I conclude the chapter by criticizing how Lear has undervalued the therapeutic aspect of Wittgenstein's later philosophy. I present this criticism by contrasting Lear's reading of Wittgenstein's use of the term form of life with what I consider as a resolute transcendentalist reading of that idea as voiced out by John McDowell.

3.1 On the idea of limits and the "significance" of nonsense

The idea of limits is one of the main points of contention between the transcendental and the resolute reading of Wittgenstein. For the transcendental reading, the continuity in Wittgenstein's philosophy comes from the acquisition of some insight about the limits of thought. For the resolute reading, on the other hand, this continuity can be found in Wittgenstein's critical stance about the idea of limits. The transcendental reading presents the idea of limits as philosophy's stopping point (*PI* 133). The resolute reading, on the other hand, treats it as the "raw material" (*PI* 254) or starting point that philosophy aims to overcome. This diverging stance on the idea of limits leads to a corresponding difference in their portrayal of Wittgenstein's use of "nonsense." [102] Here, I take it that both the transcendental and the resolute reading treats Wittgenstein's use of nonsense as significant. Mulhall himself acknowledges this shared view in the introduction to *WPL* (2007:7) where he says that both the substantial and the resolute reading find Wittgenstein's use of nonsensical expressions "illuminating". The difference between them is that they have a different conception of how nonsense becomes significant: Whereas the transcendental reading views nonsense as significant because of its supposed ability to convey some kind of content about the inexpressible limits of thought, the resolute reading conceives of nonsense as important because of how it implies a kind of success in showing a philosophical claim to be empty *after* having clarified its relevant context of use in ordinary language. Thus, to borrow the labels used by Conant and Mulhall, the conception of nonsense that the transcendental reading endorses is "substantial" in so far as it involves some kind of inexpressible content about the limits of thought. On the other hand, the conception of nonsense that the resolute reading endorses is "austere" in so far as it eschews such "content". Let me give details to this contrasting position by recalling features of the readings I have associated with Lear and Mulhall.

3.2 Lear's "transcendental negation"

In Lear's works, we can find a Wittgenstein whose concern about the idea of limits also makes him adopt a philosophical procedure that investigates a deep kind of nonsense. In this approach, philosophy uses a special negation that gestures at a kind of understanding which language cannot directly express. I have previously called this negation "transcendental

[102] Henceforth, I shall use the term "nonsense" in a broad manner to refer not just to Wittgenstein's use of term "nonsense" but also to his use of nonsensical or vague expressions, say, for example, in relation to Wittgenstein's remarks on what it means to follow a rule or to understand a form of life.

negation".[103] This is because of how philosophy involves a way of denying a claim that aims to make the reader experience an absurdity which enables the philosopher and his interlocutor to have some form of self-conscious awareness of the limits of their language. In this view, philosophy is essentially concerned with propositions about the metaphysical subject which are transcendental concepts we only come to grasp *via negativa*, i.e., through an understanding of what we are unable to say about "it". This transcendental negation can be found in the *Tractatus* in Wittgenstein's denial of the empirical or scientific "existence" of the metaphysical subject (*TLP* 5.631, 5.641). And it can be found in the *Investigations*, through the vagueness that characterizes Wittgenstein's claims about the idea of a form of life.[104] In both the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations,* these forms of nonsense are transcendental negations that function as gestures in the attempt to clarify the inexpressible limits of thought.

Lear's use of transcendental negation can be traced back to Erik Stenius (1960) and Bernard Williams (1974), both of whom portray Wittgenstein as seeking to acquire and convey insights about a "thinking subject " (*TLP* 5.631) which is "not part of the world" but functions as its limit. For these transcendental readers, Wittgenstein denies the "existence" of the "thinking subject" in a way that something important might be understood or shown through such denial. This applies, for example, in the case of when Wittgenstein wrote the remark "in an important sense there is no subject" *TLP* 5.631. In remarks such as this, transcendental readers portray Wittgenstein to be using "no" as a "denial" that conveys the nature of the "thinking subject" as a *limit concept*. In this context, the development of Lear's work may be compared with Stenius and Williams, with the latter writer (Williams) treating the idea of the transcendental as essentially inexpressible while the former writer (Stenius) treating it as a transitional tool for dealing with thoughts that are difficult to express because of how they involve shifts in the "moods of our language". The early Lear, with his LWA and TDW,[105] adopts a position similar to that of Williams in connecting Wittgenstein's philosophy with a notion of the transcendental that is essentially inexpressible. While the later Lear, with his TA and OR,[106] can be understood as attempting to move towards the position taken by Stenius through a phenomenological description of the transcendental. I take the later Lear to be having a "phenomenological" view because of how he takes the "important absence" found in the idea

[103] See Part 1, Section 1.3.3 and Part 2, Section 2.2.2.2.
[104] I have taken Lear to be drawing from what Williams (1974: 86) has earlier described as the "degree of preposterousness" philosophers end up with when they talk about the idea of form of life.
[105] I follow the abbreviations in Part 1 for "Leaving the World Alone" (LWA, 1982) and "The Disappearing 'We'"(TDW, 1984).
[106] I follow the abbreviations in Part 1 for "Transcendental Anthropology" (TA,1986) and "On Reflection: The Legacy of Wittgenstein's Later Philosophy" (OR, 1989)

of form of life to involve a special kind of reference, i.e., it refers to the self-conscious use of language acquired in understanding the dialectic relationship between the anthropological and non-empirical aspects of Wittgenstein's philosophy. Yet, in both the early Lear and later Lear we can find a portrayal of Wittgenstein as someone concerned with a conception of philosophy that seeks insights about the inexpressible limits of thought and whose concern with "nonsense" comes from its usefulness in "gesturing" at those limits. I shall now clarify this interpretation by giving details of the difference and connection between early Lear and later Lear.

In his early works, Lear takes a position similar to Williams in portraying Wittgenstein to be using nonsense as a means to evoke in his reader the inexpressible limits of thought. The process of knowing these *limits* involves being acquainted with a conception of language that is so pervasive and immediately connected to our thinking that it becomes a kind of language of our thought or a "native language" through which we are able to understand everything. Because philosophy involves attempts to go beyond this native language, it ends up trafficking in a kind of nonsense which becomes our indirect means for understanding ourselves as a "thinking subject". Williams calls this thinking subject the "transcendental 'I'" of the *Tractatus* which then becomes the "transcendental 'We'" of the *Investigations* because of how that later work presupposes a shared native language. Lear's early works can be understood as essentially similar to the transcendental reading found in Bernard Williams. This can be seen in terms of how Lear emphasizes a "We" that seems to disappear upon our attempt to describe it by means of propositions, but which Wittgenstein's philosophy nonetheless seems to be able to gesture at through the use of nonsensical remarks. Here is a passage where early Lear writes about the significance of this kind of ostension in the philosophical procedure practiced by Wittgenstein's early and later work:

> In both the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations* we are supposed to glean some insight into the way we think about the limits of thought by moving around self-consciously and determining what makes more and less sense… If the truths of philosophy cannot be said, then one cannot say that they cannot be said, for one cannot say what it is that cannot be said. This is the self-conscious incoherence of the *Tractatus*. In the *Investigations*, Wittgenstein does not discuss how philosophy can, after all, be said: he passes over that subject in silence. The *Investigations* should, I think, be seen as an act of pointing [to these "truths that cannot be said"]. (Lear LWA 1982: 385)

In this passage, what Lear describes as "moving around self-consciously and determining what makes more and less sense" refers to how the later Wittgenstein's philosophical investigations often involve an examination or contrast of practices that make

"explanations peter out".[107] In this claim, Lear can be understood as drawing from Williams' earlier discussion of how Wittgenstein used examples of people with different practices (in relation to their "rule following" activities) not as a matter of empirical investigation but as an imaginative activity that might evoke in the reader an understanding of the limits of thought which he cannot leave.[108] This imaginative activity is important given that knowledge of these limits involves an important kind of immediacy (which Lear calls "first-person access") that makes it extremely difficult to express: the propositions used to describe the limits of thought inescapably end up describing something else in so far as it does not have that kind of immediacy. This may be the reason, for example, why even the appeal to the idea of intuition in *PI* 213 does *not* save reason from "petering out". In that passage, Wittgenstein explains that the idea of "intuitions" themselves may be expressed as a justification that can be understood as right or wrong. But Lear seems to portray Wittgenstein to be concerned with the idea of following a rule where we are "not in doubt". That absence of doubt places us in a non-epistemic situation where our particular applications of a rule do not have a need for justification. So in *PI* 213, we can find how Wittgenstein describes an application of a rule that does not allow for another interpretation while not necessarily making that application indubitable. In response to the skeptical voice who claims that a particular continuation of a series is nothing but another interpretation that one can still doubt, Wittgenstein writes: "Not at all! A doubt was possible in certain circumstances. But that is not to say that I did doubt, or even could doubt." This response seems to imply that such an "application" of a rule cannot be expressed or described even by our "intuitions" in so far as those intuitions are also things that we are in doubt about (as shown, for instance, by how we can still think of them as something separate from our brute act of following a rule). This then points to the need for an indirect approach which induces the reader to engage in a form of self-inquiry where he can reorient his awareness to a *direct* acquaintance of the inexpressible limits of thought, and these are limits he already has access to as the speaker of his "native language". The passage from Lear above says that this indirect approach is done by means of ostension. The *Tractatus* performs this ostension through a "self-conscious incoherence" (say, for example, the claim in *TLP* 6.54 that its philosophical

[107] Lear (1982) associates this "petering out" of reason to the transcendental insight that Wittgenstein gestures at in *PI* 1, 109, 126, 211, 213, 217, 261, 325/6,467/8,471-474,477, 480-485, 496/7,516,599. Lear describes the recurrence of similar "transcendental" remarks in *Zettel*, *Philosophical Grammar*, *On Certainty*, and *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics* (See Lear ibid.: 387, footnote 6). In what is to follow, I limit my discussion to the few remarks that Lear cites in the *Investigations,* specifically *PI* 1, *PI* 211, and *PI* 217.

[108] See, for example, how Lear (1982: 389) explicitly cites Williams' (1974) discussion of the unique feature that characterize the differences in understanding that Wittgenstein makes his reader face: they are not really differences that can be understood, much less explained in language.

propositions are nonsensical). The *Investigations*, on the other hand, performs this ostension through its "silence" in the way it does not talk about the limits of thought, or rather in the way it does not talk about how those limits become inexpressible. This silence, however, is pregnant: it is not really devoid of a "transcendental content". For at that point where we are at a loss for reasons on why we apply a rule in the way we actually do, we encounter a limit to our thinking which is also our sense of self as a "thinking subject". So in Lear's early works, the *Investigations* is taken to be consistent with the *Tractatus* in using forms of nonsense to "gesture" at inexpressible truths about the limits of thought. In the later Wittgenstein, these forms of nonsense can be found in how Wittgenstein dealt with "differences" in practices that cannot be understood and explained. Like Williams (1974), early Lear considers how Wittgenstein does not really take those "alternative practices" to be a "socially actual alternative" that we understand by being able to go outside the limits of our thinking and being "other minded". For Lear as for Williams, we are never able to go outside our mindedness and there is no such thing as other mindedness. As such, those "alternative practices" that Wittgenstein wants us to "understand" are in fact cases where explanations peter out because we have "pass[ed] beyond the outer bounds of our mindedness [and have gone] into incoherence". [109]

To further clarify the ostensive function that transcendental negations play in Lear's reading of the *Investigations,* let me discuss some of the passages which, according to Lear, involve a "petering out" of reason and explanation (ibid.: 387, footnote 6). One among these passages is Wittgenstein's opening remark, *PI* 1. In the latter part of that remark, a voice responds to the question of how a shopkeeper gets to understand the words "five" and "red" (in the expression "five red apples"): "But how does he know where and how he is to look up the word 'red' and what he is to do with the word 'five'." Here, the question comes about because the terms "five" and "red" (in contrast with the term "apple") do not have any object to which they correspond to even as they are terms that occur in an expression that we understand. To this question, Lear is likely to bring attention to how Wittgenstein seems to be sympathizing with the voice which responds with a tone that becomes explicit on how explanations peter out. That voice says: "Well, I assume that he [the shopkeeper, my note] *acts* as I have described.

[109] This parallelism can be seen specifically in the discussions of the kind of imaginative activity that comes with Wittgenstein's appeal to alternative practices as found in Williams (1974:89-91) and as found in Lear (1982:389). This point is worth emphasizing because it is mistaken to say that the transcendental reading does not really endorse imaginative activity. As I shall show later, both Lear and Mulhall emphasize how Wittgenstein endorsed a certain kind of imaginative activity in his use of forms of nonsense. What they differ on is their view of what this imaginative activity is able to accomplish.

Explanations come to an end somewhere." In that part of the passage, it seems that Wittgenstein describes how the *use* of words function as actions that puts a terminus on our very ability to give reason and explanation. After having illustrated a case where the "red" apple is identified with reference to a colour sample and how the term "five" is identified with reference to the practice of counting numbers, our questions about the meaning of those terms become trivial. Thus, Wittgenstein ends *PI* 1 not by answering the question but by undermining the point of asking the question and by gesturing at "something" which is more important (i.e., the use of the expression). Wittgenstein says: "No such thing [query about the meaning of the word "five"] was in question here, only how the word 'five' is used."

Aside from the opening remark of *PI*, I think that among the most noteworthy passages where this tone of "petering out" can be found is in *PI* 211 and *PI* 217. These are passages where Wittgenstein seems to describe how philosophical clarification ends up with a *use* of language (*PI* 211, *PI* 1) which becomes like a "bedrock" (*PI* 217) of reason and language presupposed by our very means for giving further explanation. When this "bedrock" or limit of language is questioned, we can only retort with some kind of action or with a redundant sounding response like "This is simply what I do." (*PI* 217). These passages, which Lear cites as among the cases where reason "peters out", seem to draw from Williams' earlier discussion of how the later Wittgenstein's remark becomes pervasively vague when it attempts to describe the limits of our language as "thinking subjects". In those cases, Williams portays Wittgenstein to be simply saying, "This is how I go on." (see Williams 1974: 85). This time, in the case of Lear, more emphasis is given on how Wittgenstein *intended* those vague remarks to function as a gesture towards an understanding of the limits of our own thought, and hence, of ourselves as "thinking subjects".

In his later works, Lear's position, I believe, deserves some charity with regards to his more sophisticated treatment of the transcendental insights Wittgenstein was supposedly aiming for.[110] In these works (TA and OR), there seem to be an *attempt* to move away from conceiving the transcendental as a kind of inexpressible: it now treats our self-conscious claims about our form of life to be all that can be expressed. Propositions about our form of life are no longer conceived as essentially "wrong", but as essentially incomplete. This is in recognition of how Lear takes Wittgenstein to adopt the view that "meaning is essentially an unfinished business" and that the object of a philosopher's reflection is something that is also constituted by a philosopher's reflective activity. However, even for these later works, the idea of the

[110] See also my discussion of this view in Part 1 section 1.3 where I focus specifically on Lear's TA.

inexpressible remains. This can be seen in terms of how Lear depicts Wittgenstein to be aiming to communicate a dynamic whole that is somewhat similar to Kant's pure apperception. In later Lear, Wittgenstein uses the anthropological stance in investigating different practices to gain non-empirical insights about "our mindedness" or our "form of life". Here, the idea of a form of life itself involves conflicting aspects which is meant to convey an understanding of that which we are unable to directly think about or represent. The realization that a form of life is "not an object of reflection" or "not one over many" is supposed to give us some kind of insight that it is a living whole within which the philosopher is also immersed, and hence, also something which he cannot take an observational stance from (Lear OR:40-1). Thus, Lear says that the anthropological stance which Wittgenstein takes accomplishes its purpose when his readers "kicks it away". This "kicking away" of the anthropological stance now indicates the reader's understanding of how the propositions we associate with our form of life fail to express how our "form of life" really is. Below is a passage from OR (1989) that illustrates this tone of inexpressibility:

> [T]he deepest use of the expression "form of life" is in a philosophical reflection in which we realize that it could not possibly be predicated of an object. A philosopher has not fully acquired its use until he realizes that it could not possibly be predicated of anything. Thus, it turns out to be *essential* to the concept of *form of life* that, in philosophical reflection, **the form of life emerges as an absent object**. For this is part of the transformation of the concept *form of life* into something which is not, strictly speaking, a concept. And that is how we break away from the bondage of the meta-model's regress: we cease repeating the act of applying a concept of an object. We realize that concerning form of life 'concept' and 'object' are of a piece: the thinking that constitutes the conceptualization is itself part of the 'object' – it is the 'object's' self-understanding. So in its deepest use the expression "form of life" is not 'one over many', it is rather something like what Hegel called a *Begriff,* a living conceptualization. (Lear 1989: 41, my emphasis)

In this passage, Lear depicts the idea of form of life as containing subjective and objective aspects that are in creative tension with each other similar to his earlier view in TA about the dialectical relationship between the transcendental and the anthropological. Here, Lear is not explicit about this dialectic in the way he openly describes and names this dialectical relationship in TA. But this dialectical relationship between the transcendental and the anthropological can also be seen in OR. This is indicated: 1) in the way Lear talks about how the subjective and objective aspects of our form of life need not be in a dichotomous relationship with each other, and 2) in how such aspects (taken individually) become a kind of "transcendental denial" of each other so that the important absence of a form of life might clarify its nature as a "living conceptualization". So in the quoted passage above, we can pay

attention to how Lear describes the "deepest use" of the term "form of life" to be something that is discerned at that point of the dialectic (between the transcendental and the anthropological) where that idea is transformed into something that is *not a concept*. As I understand Lear, it is this "non-conceptual" understanding which transforms the idea of form of life into a "living conceptualization". This transformation can be seen in terms of how a reader of Wittgenstein turns the conflicting descriptions of "form of life" into an understanding of a dynamic whole which we also constitute by our judgments. This dynamic and holistic understanding, as explained in the above remark, involves a conception of a form of life that is both "subjective" and objective"; it is *both* an "object" we understand and a "concept" we use to understand an object. Being an "object" we understand, it is something that is somehow independent of us. And being a concept we use to understand, it is something that is also dependent on us. The point of the dialectic between the anthropological and the transcendental is to enable us to transform this dichotomous way of looking at the subjectivity and objectivity of our form of life and see them instead as a kind of mutual constraint that helps us understand the dynamic whole that characterize practical competence in language. When we have acquired this kind of non-dichotomous and holistic view then it is also when we can "kick away" the expression "form of life" and simply manifest that idea in our competent use of language.

It seems to me that this so-called dialectic between the subjective and objective aspect of a form of life relates to the creative tension between the subjective and objective aspects of following a rule which was also described earlier by Lear in TA. So let me rehearse this dialectic similar to my discussion of Lear's TA in Part 1 because of how it might clarify what Lear describes in OR as a non-dichotomous understanding of the term "form of life". As I understand Lear's Wittgenstein, there is a subjective-transcendental aspect of following a rule as expressed, for example, by cases where we follow a rule "blindly" (*PI* 219). That is, as a rule "strikes us" (ibid.) without having a reason or justification (*PI* 217). But there is also an objective-anthropological aspect of following a rule where we are not really "on tenterhooks" on what it will tell us (*PI* 223). The rule always tells us what it means to apply it in the "same way". We are not surprised by what those applications come to because we were taught and trained "by means of *examples* and by *practice*" (*PI* 208). Here, we might infer that initiation and engagement in relevant *examples* give us a shared criteria for what it means to apply a rule. Thus, we can find Wittgenstein saying in *PI* 237 that there is a kind of "regularity" that we are able to observe when a person is indeed following a rule. This "regularity" makes our inner mental processes alone inadequate in establishing the kind of logical connection that exists between our understanding of a rule and its particular applications. This dialectic between the

subjective and objective aspects of our practices of following a rule *seems* to end with Wittgenstein's appeal to the idea of a form of life. *PI* 240-242 seem to imply that the idea of following a rule is part of our form of life, and it is our form of life which somehow determines what it means to apply a rule in the same way. When a particular instance of following a rule is understood as part of our form of life, it can be taken to involve an agreement "not just in [our] definitions but also in [our] judgments". These concluding remarks on Wittgenstein's "rule-following considerations" seem to be characterized by a dogmatic tone where the idea of form of life becomes inescapably linked with a "regularity" and "constancy" that is so primitive and basic that it undermines the subjective aspect of following a rule (*PI* 240). However, as I understand how Lear would read these passages (*PI* 240-2), he would say along with Williams that there is still an important sense in which Wittgenstein intended those remarks to appear "indefinite and *vague"*.[111] For example, the reader may ask what it means for us to also "agree in judgments" instead of merely "agreeing in our definitions". If this means simply agreeing on what counts as the "same" application of a rule, does it refute Wittgenstein's earlier claims on how the idea of following a rule correctly can only be drawn as a "matter of course"? (*PI* 238).

Likewise, we might also ask if the idea of following a rule as part of our form of life gives justice to what Wittgenstein says in *PI* 232 on how following a rule involves the acquisition of a "technique" that cannot be taught independent of a "*receptivity"* that enables him to apply a rule in our "own way". This receptivity seems to be what is alluded to by Wittgenstein's remark in *PI* 228 on how it is a "*fact"* of our rule-following that "we look to the rule for instruction, and *do something* without appealing to anything for guidance" (*PI* 228). These questions lead us back to Lear's claim in TA on how the unfinished nature of the *Investigations* seems to also *hint* at the essentially unfinished nature of the thoughts that Wittgenstein seeks to communicate. Here, the vagueness and indefiniteness that characterize Wittgenstein's remarks on rule-following in relation to the idea of form of life seem to also function as a way of "pointing to" transcendental insights about the metaphysical subject. For Lear, knowledge about this "subject" involves a kind of inward turn to a kind of "pure apperception" which Wittgenstein attempts to show through the dialectical form of his writing, and this "apperception" is something that language essentially fails to express.[112] As I understand Lear, this dialectical writing is how Wittgenstein attempts to evoke in the reader a

[111] Here, I reminded of what William's refers to as the "pervasive vagueness" found in the later Wittgenstein's use of the term "we" and how it becomes linked with the so-called "preposterousness" that Wittgensteinians ends up with when trying to explain the idea of form of life (1974:79,86)

[112] See Part 1 section 1.3 and my discussion of Lear's (1986) views on how the "I think" in Kant parallels the plural form of the metaphysical subject in the later Wittgenstein's use of the term "We".

phenomenological account of a Kantian metaphysical subject. That dialectical writing is how "knowledge" of our form of life becomes manifested as a "living conceptualization" that is both subjective and objective, i.e., both an object we understand and a concept we use to understand. Yet, regardless of such a phenomenological description, we can understand Lear's later views in OR and TA to also fall within the domain of the inexpressible: it is in terms of our failed attempts to describe what exactly a form of life is that we end up being able to clarify the "deepest use" of the term "form of life". It is through understanding this kind of failure that we are able to have some grasp of the inexpressible philosophical self-consciousness that Wittgenstein is supposedly concerned with. Lear's own exegesis of the "ambiguity" of Wittgenstein's use of the term "form of life" focuses on whether Wittgenstein intended to use that term to convey something that is merely given or something that also allows for some form of legitimation as expressed in Wittgenstein's remark, "What has to be accepted, the *given* is – so one could say – forms of life." (*PI* II xi, p.226 as cited in Lear 1989: 37). Here, Lear's point is the same as that which I have made on the idea of following a rule. Wittgenstein employs an important dialectic which aims to lead the reader to some form of philosophical consciousness that is ultimately incapable of being described by means of language. This indescribability of "form of life" in OR is not so far off from Lear's earlier description of the inexpressibility of "We-mindedness" in "The Disappearing 'We'" (TDW,1984):

> To show how the 'We are so minded:' does not disappear would be to describe a form of reflective consciousness that does not consist in looking down upon our representations. **It seems impossible to describe such a consciousness**, yet it also seems to be the consciousness we have. Perhaps it is impossible to describe, perhaps it can only make itself manifest: perhaps the *Philosophical Investigations* is just such a consciousness making itself manifest. (ibid.: 241-242, emphasis added)

In the context of these remarks, it seems that the resolute reading I have associated with Mulhall can indeed be understood as a would-be criticism of Lear. From the point of view of Mulhall's resolute reading, Lear has interpreted Wittgenstein's use of nonsense as a transcendental negation which portrays the results of grammatical investigation as consisting of some kind of knowledge about the *limits* of our language. Put this way, it seems that Lear can be understood as failing to overcome the temptation to conceive of grammar as a limitation on language. He ends up falling back onto the psychological point of view that Wittgenstein consistently sought to "throw away". These claims need a more careful discussion given that Lear followed Williams' repeated emphasis on: 1) how the idea of alternative practices in the later Wittgenstein do not lead to a difference we can make sense of, and 2) how those failures

of understanding become an indirect approach to conveying the plain insight that one *cannot* go beyond the conditions of thought that come with our "form of life". With these qualifications in mind, I now move to a discussion of Mulhall and how his resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein can be construed as a critique of Lear.

3.3 Mulhall's "resolute method"

Mulhall's would-be criticism of Lear can be summarized in terms of how Lear fails to see Wittgenstein as someone who employs a resolute method of "exploding an illusion from within". This method also shows how Mulhall's position differs from that of Lear, specifically on how the idea of limits and use of nonsense come to have significance in Wittgenstein's philosophy. The term "exploding from within" which I associate with Mulhall's resolute reading comes from Conant who coins the term as he refers to Wittgenstein's own description of the indirect manner by which philosophy deals with the linguistic confusions, i.e., by giving it an imaginative content which makes its illusory character more evident. In that passage Wittgenstein writes:

> In philosophy we are deceived by an illusion. But this illusion – is also something, and I must at some time place it completely and clearly before my eyes, before I can say it is only an illusion. (*MS* 110, 1931 as cited in Conant 2002:424)

Conant used this passage to summarize what he takes to be "the method of the *Tractatus*", a philosophical method which he takes to be continuous with the method Wittgenstein also practiced in the *Investigations*. I use the term "exploding from within" to describe Mulhall's resolute reading because of how I take Mulhall to be in essential agreement with the notion of philosophical elucidation that comes with Conant's austere conception of nonsense, and how that "austerity" also finds expression in Cavell's views about the self-critical nature of Wittgenstein's philosophizing. In the context of such links, let me proceed to my discussion of Mulhall as I did in my previous chapter, i.e., by articulating Mulhall's would-be "resolute criticism" of Lear as a critique that coheres with the ideas of Conant and Cavell.

Based from Conant's works, the idea of a transcendental reading falls under the ineffabilist category of the standard reading of Wittgenstein and the criticisms addressed to ineffabilist reading also apply to the transcendental readings I have discussed. Conant writes:

> [A]ny commentator who holds that the sentences of the *Tractatus* aspire to hint or gesture at ineffable truths counts, by my lights, as a proponent of the ineffability interpretation, even if he or she (unlike most proponents of the

> ineffability interpretation) is textually scrupulous enough to refrain from ever employing the term 'showing' to designate the activity of so hinting or gesturing. (Conant 2002: 425, endnote 4)

If this remark is taken in the context of the *Investigations*, it follows that Lear's transcendental reading falls under the ineffability interpretation Conant speaks of. Lear's later works, in contrast with his early works, may have been, as Conant says, more "textually scrupulous" in avoiding the term "showing". This can be found, for example, in how the later Lear now portrays Wittgenstein to be attempting to clarify, by means of nonsensical propositions, the inexpressible nature of our form of life. But even in the later Lear, Wittgenstein's use of "nonsensical expressions" essentially involve a failure of language to express knowledge of a "limit" which we understand in some way. This is illustrated, for example, by the passage I cited in the previous section where Lear portrays the conflict between the subjective and objective aspects of a form of life as something that enables the idea of a form of life to "emerge as an absent object" (Lear 1989: 41). It seems that the term "emerge" functions in a similar manner to what the early Lear describes as the role of "pointing" in Wittgenstein's philosophy. In the later Lear, the dialectical mode of writing that comes with Wittgenstein's remarks on rule-following and form of life seems to function as forms of nonsense which indirectly convey an understanding of inexpressible truths about the limits of language.

In so far as Mulhall intended his idea of a "resolute later Wittgenstein" to be in essential agreement with what Conant says in WWAT and TMTT,[113] we can also take Mulhall to be critical of Lear, specifically in terms of how Lear ends up describing Wittgenstein as someone who falls into the trap of "psychologism". This psychologism can be seen in how Lear portrays Wittgenstein as an author who uses nonsensical forms of writing to point at some inexpressible insight about the limits of thought. I have discussed this psychologism in the previous chapters, Part 2, Chapters 1 and 2, in relation to how the "logical point of view" endorsed by the resolute reading essentially functions as a kind of contrast to the "psychological point of view" endorsed by standard readers of Wittgenstein. And I have previously explained how Conant takes this "psychological point of view" to be related to a "hovering" that makes it appear as if there is a "meaning" of an expression outside its "context of significant use" in ordinary language. In what follows, I shall rearticulate this psychologism in terms of the ineffabilist view that Lear can be taken to endorse as a result of his adherence to "transcendental insights" that come with

[113] Consistent with my discussion in Part 2, I use "WWAT" to refer to "Why Worry of about the *Tractatus?"* (2004) and TMTT to refer to "The method of the *Tractatus*" (2002).

a deep understanding of our "form of life". I shall explain how Mulhall and Conant might take these "transcendental insights" to be among the psychological or "extra-logical" content which Wittgenstein aimed to overcome.

For Conant and Mulhall, Wittgenstein endorses a logical point of view in philosophical elucidation. And from this point of view, there is no such thing as an inexpressible limit of whatever kind that nonsense gestures at. This is because once the elucidatory work of philosophy has finished, everything that can be expressed will have been expressed *in* language. Given this kind of success in expression, the idea of a logical point of view construes the silence and nonsense in Wittgenstein as something that is now empty. If there are still doubts about this emptiness, then it means that the task of clarification is not yet finished and philosophy must continue in its elucidatory work. In WWAT (2004: 185), Conant describes the end of this elucidatory task in a metaphorical manner as something that can only be "finished with us [when] we are able to throw sentences about "the 'limits of language' away". The "us" here may refer to the philosophically deluded person himself, but it may also refer to the recognition of the emptiness of a philosophical claim which the deluded now *shares* with his philosopher interlocutor. I am rather ambivalent here on whether to interpret the resolute reading to acknowledge a stopping point for philosophizing which leads to a perspicuous representation that finally clarifies our thinking by letting us see the symbol in the sign. Or, whether to interpret such a perspicuous representation as giving merely a temporary stopping point that cannot be used for clarifying other instances of language-use. I am currently inclined to think of the resolute reading in terms of the latter, and this view seems to be supported by the greater role that Conant's Wittgenstein gives to philosophical elucidation. As I understand Conant's position in TMTT (2002), he says that philosophical elucidation can clarify the "symbol" in the "sign" through the help of perspicuous notation provided by ordinary language. But since ordinary language evolves, then elucidation also never stops.

As I have discussed in my previous chapter, I have taken Mulhall to adopt Conant's view in taking Wittgenstein to emphasize the logical point of view in philosophical elucidation.[114] This means that Wittgenstein employs a philosophical method that is stubbornly persistent in engaging a reader's imagination in the attempt to "elucidate" and express the "coherent thought" that may be found in a use of language that is "signified" by a particular expression. Or, which might make the reader recognize that such an expression is empty because of a failure of meaning or "signification". As I have come to understand the resolute

[114] See the introduction of Mulhall's *WPL* (2007: 2-3) as he discusses and acknowledges this logical point of view which he refers to as "the point of view of logic" in a minimal manner.

reading's notion of philosophical elucidation, these "two alternatives" are in fact two sides of the same coin. The former is important to understand the significance of the resolute reading's claims about the emptiness of Wittgenstein's use of "nonsense" in his early and later works. The "charitable exchange" between the philosopher and his interlocutor is what allows the illusion of meaning, say, for example, about the inexpressible limits of thought, to be "exploded from within". This "explosion from within" comes about because the process of elucidation turns into a shared investigation of language which enables the deluded person to articulate his misgivings on how a particular expression fails to express his intended meaning. The activity of philosophical elucidation involves an imaginative activity where the interlocutor and the philosopher meets each other half-way in exploring uses of words which might allow a particular "meaning" to be expressed. Because of the charity and persistence that characterize this linguistic investigation, there is usually an "agreement" on whether an expression is indeed containing a thought (which is then expressed in language) or whether that "thought" is simply confused (which then allows for a shared recognition that an expression is empty).

In this context, Lear's claims on how philosophical propositions involve a nonsense that gestures at an inexpressible form of life becomes appraised as a philosophical position that is not able to move from the psychological point of view to the logical point of view of philosophical elucidation. Here, we can look into how Conant repeatedly criticizes ineffabilist readers of Wittgenstein whose position seems to be significantly similar to Lear's. For Conant, we should also consider how the "inexpressible insight" gestured at by Wittgenstein's use of "nonsense" also comes to be conveyed and understood. And if that "insight" is in fact understood, then the medium through which it is expressed also functions as a form of language. Thus, the idea of a limit of thought that is incapable of being expressed by language is also an illusion that must be overcome. Accordingly, the examples of nonsense that Wittgenstein uses to respond to his interlocutors are not really "stopping points" where a philosophical theory is indirectly conveyed or evoked (say, for example, about the transcendental limits of thought). Rather, these uses of "nonsense" are better understood as "transitional remarks" that become useful in the process of searching for words that bring clarity of thought and expression. However, once these transitional remarks are able to accomplish their purpose of clarifying our thoughts and their means for expression, they are now to be thrown away as empty. Thus, the "emptiness" of philosophical propositions that the resolute reading associate themselves with also come with a clarity of thought and language that gives philosophy "peace" (*PI* 133).

To be sure, Lear also talks about the importance of being able to "kick away" propositions about our form of life. But this "kicking away" seems to be different from the

"throwing away" of philosophical propositions in Conant's and Mulhall's resolute reading. In the case of Lear, the "kicking away" of philosophical propositions involves a deep philosophical insight about our form of life or the conditions of our-mindedness which language can "show" but not express. In the case of Conant and Mulhall, there is no longer any claim about such philosophical insights or about such a notion of showing. Indeed, we can find in both Lear's transcendental reading and Mulhall's resolute reading an emphasis on the importance of a non-propositional (and hence indirect) understanding of competence in language use. However, it seems that from the perspective of Mulhall's resolute reading, Lear ends up theorizing about linguistic competence through his claims about the transcendental nature of our form of life. There is an absence of such robust claims in the resolute reading of Mulhall and Conant. But as I understand their reading, this absence is not meant to be taken to mean that they find those transcendental insights unimportant or that they encourage a kind of silence that suppresses the "thoughts" which an interlocutor wants to say.

On the contrary, Mulhall and Conant can be understood as also taking heed of a remark Wittgenstein wrote in 1947, "Don't *for heaven's sake*, be afraid of talking nonsense! But you must pay attention to your nonsense." (*Culture and Value, CV*: 64). I have earlier discussed how the transcendental reading takes heed of this remark by braving on to employ nonsensical expressions as a creative way of conveying knowledge of the limits of thought, where one intentionally violates the limits of language so as to *manifest* the limits of thought. But it seems that the resolute reading is equally capable of heeding this advice by Wittgenstein on not being afraid to speak nonsense *and* paying attention to one's nonsense talk. This time, however, the resolute reading can be understood as giving particular attention to how Wittgenstein *intended* his reader to pay attention to nonsense talk. As I understand the resolute reading, it is not so much that we cannot say anything about the non-propositional nature of linguistic competence. What is important is that such claims should be framed under a critical context where we do not end up theorizing about linguistic competence. [115]

A crucial aspect of this critical context is how Conant and Mulhall repeatedly emphasize the importance of not to letting an interlocutor's hovering in meaning remain a failure of expression. In the process of overcoming this failure of expression, Conant and Mulhall do not really encourage silence. In fact, they can be understood as encouraging an engagement and

[115] I am indebted to conversation with Christian Erbacher for making this idea more explicit. He explains that his dissertation (2010) on the *Tractatus* illustrates how Wittgenstein employed a mode of writing where he "showed what he intended to say *and* said what he wanted to show". It seems to me that the same thing can be said for what Mulhall (2007:10) calls as a "properly resolute reading of the *Investigations"*.

investigation of nonsense talk with the intention of bringing greater clarity to one's thought and use of language. Here, a "resolute engagement" in nonsense talk may be found, for example, in how Mulhall seems to portray Wittgenstein's language-games in terms of an "imaginative exploration" of words that aims to satisfy an interlocutor's particular need for expression.[116] In Part 2, Chapter 2, I have earlier described this imaginative exploration in terms of the so-called imaginative activity that comes with clarifying an expressions context of use in ordinary language. I explained that this mode of clarification involves a cooperative activity between the philosopher and his interlocutor as they try to meet each other half-way in being able to overcome their struggle for understanding and expression. In the context of this "overcoming", the silence that the resolute reading endorses is that of the case where a particular elucidatory activity "completed". And this "completion" is indicated by how the interlocutor accepts that the words the philosopher offers appropriately describes the thought he wants to express.[117]

Thus, I believe Mulhall's and Conant's "silence" is meant to be construed in the context of how their resolute reading takes Wittgenstein to be undermining descriptions of linguistic competence that are irrelevant or theoretical. In this "resolute view," Wittgenstein is concerned with a "use" of language that can be made evident when such theoretical claims become shown as empty alongside a certain triumph in expression. Here, it seems that Mulhall's and Conant's reading of Wittgenstein considers the reading of Lear as irresolute in so far as it clings on to a notion of the inexpressible which ends up impairing its ability to really "kick away" propositions about the form of life (instead of simply paying attention to how language is actually used in ordinary life, say, for example, as a kind of tool for responding to a particular need for expression). One might notice here that Lear and Mulhall use Wittgenstein's notion of form of life differently. Lear seems to consider it as a kind theoretical notion related to how we might understand our mind as a "thinking subject". Mulhall, on the other hand, seems to treat it similar to McDowell (1992). That is, Wittgenstein's notion of "forms of life" is meant to function in the service of a "deconstructive procedure" in cases when we end up advancing theoretical claims about our uses of language. Here, the idea of "deconstruction" relates to how Mulhall describes the resolute method in Wittgenstein to be employing what I earlier mentioned

[116] See Mulhall (ibid.: 47) discussion of Cavell on how Wittgenstein also aimed to acknowledge and find a better way of articulating what the sceptic might have meant. This applies, for example, in acknowledging the occurrence of first person uses of the claim "I know I am in pain" (see also ibid.: 84).

[117] By "completion" I am also alluding to a possible response to how the resolute reading has been described by David Stern as "pyrrhonistic". Stern (2004: 54) has earlier depicted the resolute reading to be aiming at a stopping point which ends philosophy. But as I now come to understand the resolute reading, it is in agreement with Stern's own view "of how 'ending philosophy' and 'doing philosophy' become interwoven in the *Investigations*" (ibid.).

in my discussion of Conant as an approach that "explodes an illusion from within".[118] In the case of Lear, what seems to need "exploding" is the idea of a form of life as it relates to a philosophical self-understanding that we are unable to express. With the resolute reading's firmer emphasis on an understanding that brings our expressions back to their "context of significant use" in ordinary language, these philosophical insights or thesis about our inexpressible form of life becomes successfully overcome by the sheer practical competence of being able to employ expressions in a meaningful manner.[119]

So from what has been discussed, we might now ask more directly what is it that makes the transcendental negation method I have associated with Lear "misleading"? Here, let me articulate two responses that complement each other. One response comes from Conant's WWAT which gives a more direct diagnosis of Lear's "logical mistake". The other response comes from Mulhall's *WPL* which illustrates an example of how such a "logical mistake" might be overcome. Conant has previously described this logical mistake in terms of how standard readers of the idea of a private language portray Wittgenstein as endorsing an incoherent mode of reasoning: one that denies a nonsensical claim and makes that piece of nonsense meaningful. Wittgenstein himself seems to have been aware of this incoherence as he talks about how a "negated proposition" is also a proposition that has a sense (*TLP* 4.0641). However, Conant (along with Diamond) insists that it is quite unbecoming for a philosopher of Wittgenstein's intelligence to commit this logical mistake. This view is in contrast with Lear's position that Wittgenstein, both early and late, somehow resigned himself to endorsing forms of "self-conscious incoherence" to hint at the inexpressible "We-mindedness" that comes with understanding our form of life (Lear 1982:385). Conant along with Diamond writes:

> Wittgenstein was a man of quite exceptionally high standards, throughout his life, when it came to carrying through a line of thought which might appear to run into difficulty; **he was not at any point a willing tolerator of inconsistency or logical mess.** (Conant and Diamond 2004:50, emphasis added)

Nonetheless, despite this intellectual reputation, we can find that the idea of transcendental negation that Lear and his predecessors in the transcendental reading ends up

[118] In "Must We Show…", (1989: 253), Conant describes this deconstructive procedure as involving the "hard labor" of not just imagining the possibility of an illusion but of giving it "content" through the form of one's philosophizing, which in the case of Wittgenstein and Kierkegaard came in the form of their writing. In that kind of writing, the lack of a substantive claim can be understood in terms of a philosopher's charity as he persistently struggles to "close the distance between him and his interlocutors" (ibid.).

[119] See also Mulhall's discussion of "form of life" in his article "Realism, Modernism and the Realistic Spirit: Diamond's Inheritance of Wittgenstein, Early and Late"(2012). In that article, Mulhall refers to the idea of form of life as among the "signature concepts" in Wittgenstein that must inevitably give way to the sheer practical competence of being able to communicate important concepts through the use of the available resources provided for by our ordinary language.

attributing a logical inconsistency to Wittgenstein's philosophical method. The idea of a transcendental negation seems to be a method where one denies a piece of "nonsense", turns that piece of nonsense into something meaningful, and then somehow endorse a substantial insight through that nonsense. In saying, for example, that there is no metaphysical subject "in an important sense" or that a form of life is "neither one nor many", one turns the sense of absurdity in Wittgenstein's remarks into a "substantial insight" about the inexpressibility of the metaphysical subject or our form of life. This sense of absurdity, for example, seem to be found in the *Tractatus* when Wittgenstein says that all his philosophical propositions are nonsensical (*TLP* 6.54). And in the *Investigations,* this absurdity might be drawn from that idea of following a rule which becomes ambivalently described as involving a "receptivity" (*PI* 232) that is both uniquely "personal" and "public" (*PI* 241-2). To be sure, the resolute reading agrees with the transcendental reading that these "insights" deserve attention. But that kind of attention seems to come under the spirit of "deconstructing" those insights so that we can reorient our attention to the relevant uses of language that clarify our thought, as opposed, for example, to appealing to some kind of "utterly vague" insight about the limits of thought. [120] As I understand it, emphasis on this kind of self-criticism is the sense in which the resolute reading takes Wittgenstein to be interested in clarity rather than theory.

Let me now turn to Mulhall's second would-be response on how the idea of transcendental negation becomes misleading. Here, I now describe the kind of deconstruction or "exploding from within" which I take Mulhall and Conant to endorse specifically with regards to the idea of a limits of thought that can be found in Lear. In the context of Mulhall's exegesis of the idea of a private language, Lear's depiction of the idea of a form of life seems to become a limit to what we can say rather than a "clear thought" we can understand and express. Lear (1989: 41) describes "form of life" as a "living conceptualization" that is essentially "not a concept" we can understand. In this view, the idea of a form of life and the self-consciousness we associate with it makes our ordinary uses of language become inescapably futile in expressing what we actually mean. It is in this latter aspect of trusting language and portraying the resources of language in a more positive light where I take Mulhall and Conant to differ from Lear.

As I see it, Mulhall and Conant take Wittgenstein to be critical of the approach of saying that "there is no limit to language" in a way that it becomes a contrary to the claim "there is a

[120] This claim about "utter vagueness" comes from Conant and Diamond (2004:54) as they criticize the idea of showing in the Wittgenstein reading Meredith Williams. I now transfer and apply Conant and Diamond's critical remark to Lear's idea of limits and "form of life".

limit to language set by our form of life". What their resolute reading proposes is to pay attention to the sense of inadequacy one feels when the existing conventions of our language fail to express "thoughts" that our interlocutor finds important. The failure to find words for expressing thoughts we find important seem to be aptly described by Lear in terms of Wittgenstein's interest in cases where "explanations peter out". Rather than leave that failure of expression and "utter vagueness" as is, Mulhall's and Conant's resolute approach seems to suggest a way of going back to elucidation, i.e., the imaginative activity that comes with our investigation of different language-games. So, as I understand Mulhall and Conant, the freedom in the use of words that we acquire as we continue to play our language games also involve the ability to undermine the idea of a limit associated with Lear's conception of form of life.

I take this sophisticated response to be the implication of Mulhall's therapeutic reading of *PI* 374 where Wittgenstein describes the difficulty of not treating grammatical investigation "as if there were something we couldn't do. [and] As if there were really an object of our investigation, but I were unable to shew it to anyone". In the context of constructing Mulhall's critique of Lear, we can say that Mulhall links what is mentioned in *PI* 374 as that "something which we couldn't do" with the idea of an inexpressible limit of thought or with that kind of mindedness which Lear wanted to emphasize in both early and later Wittgenstein. Mulhall uses *PI* 374 to highlight how Wittgenstein is explicitly critical of the idea of a limit of thought of the kind that Lear wanted to associate with Wittgenstein.

Thus, it is important to emphasize how Mulhall brings attention to Wittgenstein's suggestion on how we can overcome the difficulty of treating grammatical investigation as kind of prohibition. For Mulhall, Wittgenstein proposes that a philosopher of ordinary language: "yield[s] into the temptation to use this picture [of a limit of language, my note], and then investigate how the *application* of the picture goes". [121] One can think of this "yielding" that Wittgenstein speaks of in terms of the imaginative activity that characterize our language-games as we use words in different ways. And because of the skill we acquire in those language-games, we somehow find a way to *say* what we have previously been unable to express. So in this resolute view, our engagement in language-games functions as an essential activity for both the philosopher and his interlocutor to overcome their struggle for expression. It is not so much that the "thoughts" we are thinking of are essentially inexpressible, but that we lack the skill in finding the relevant words and contexts of use that can give our "thoughts" their clear expression. In this context, we can rephrase what Wittgenstein says in *TLP* 6.522 and represent

[121] See Mulhall (2007:9). See also my discussion of *PI* 374 in the previous section.

the resolute reading as saying: "There is indeed the inexpressible, but it *shows* itself in the linguistic competence we acquire in our language-games (not in the mystical)."

It is also in this context that we might think of the transcendental reading of Lear as a case where the limits of thought are imagined as outrunning the limits of language: there are "insights" about the limits of thought that we can somehow understand, but "that" which we understand is something we cannot express.[122] By contrast, the resolute reading seems to be a case where elucidation brings us to the point where the limits of thought are taken to be the same as the limits of language, and where thought itself is language.[123] Here, the idea of a resolute reading in Mulhall can be understood as criticizing Lear for how he portrays Wittgenstein to be endorsing the "myth of rules as rails" (*PI* 218.) This myth depicts "applications of a rule" as if they were rails of a train that have been laid up in advance by the thought process of a "metaphysical subject". This "thought process" seems to be something which our uses of language attempt but *fail* to express. Here, the resolute reading may be understood as engaging the reader to look into the dialectic of how Wittgenstein did *not* use examples "to point beyond" (*PI* 210) what he is actually able to mean and say. So when we meet a person who does not yet have our concepts, our resort to teaching him our concepts by means of examples does not mean we "downgrade" or "dumb down" our concepts in such a way that we end up communicate something less than what we actually mean. Thus, Wittgenstein specifically writes in *PI* 208:

> [I]f a person has not yet got the *concepts* [of '*regularity', 'uniformity', and 'sameness*' in applying a rule], I shall teach him to use the words by means of *examples* and by *practice.*—And when I do this I do not communicate less to him than I know myself.

Based from the passage above, we might say that the case where we are able to communicate our concepts by means of examples also relates to the resolute view of what it means to acquire a "perspicuous representation" (*PI* 122). In Mulhall's and Conant's resolute reading, the idea of a perspicuous representation seems to have a central role. Through the imaginative activity involved in various language-games, we engage in a philosophical elucidation that gives us a "perspicuous" or "clear view" (*PI* 122) of the various contexts that

[122] I draw this description from *Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations* (Stern 2004). In that book, Stern (ibid.: 41-43) describes a "metaphysical reading of the *Tractatus"* which portrays Wittgenstein to be concerned with insights about the limits of language that are expressed indirectly by means of nonsense. I transfer Stern's description of the metaphysical reading of the *Tractatus* to Lear's transcendental reading of the *Investigations*.

[123] See also Warren Goldfarb (2011) as he specifically attributes this view to Wittgenstein. Goldfarb writes: "For Wittgenstein, *thought is a language itself, so that the account of language is meant at the same time to be an account of thought*". (ibid.: 9 italics mine).

give our expressions meaning. This view then enables us to find words that might now express what we previously felt incapable of expressing. Or, we come to realize that the "meaning" we considered as "inexpressible" is nothing but an incoherent desire. So it seems that the resolute reading engages in philosophical elucidation which enables us to finally overcome the idea of an inexpressible in our linguistic expressions, and hence become *firm* in either treating those expressions as having a clear meaning or treating them as empty.

It is in this context of aiming to show that our expression either has an ordinary use in language or that they are empty that we can understand the significance of Mulhall's complementary reading of *PI* 258 and *PI* 243. That is, of how the "banality" of the idea of a private sensation diarist in *PI* 258 comes to form a pair with the philosophical idea of a private language introduced in *PI* 243.[124] This connection seems to imply that the therapy Wittgenstein uses in showing a philosophical claim to be illusory also becomes combined with an investigation of examples on how those "philosophical" expressions might come to have a use in ordinary language. These examples seem to function as therapeutic tools under which our philosophical expressions become anchored back to ordinary language such that we can now say that we "*command a clear view* of the use of our words" (*PI* 122). The philosophical conception in *PI* 243 where the idea of a private language becomes conceived as a kind of inexpressible limit to what we can express becomes thrown away upon the discovery of a "context of significant use" where the idea of a private language might find meaningful expression. In this kind of linguistic analysis, we find the idea of a private language slowly being transformed from its "metaphysical use" to its "ordinary use", i.e., from a "use" of language we supposedly cannot express to a creative use of language that also becomes part of everyday language. Thus, the indirect way through which Mulhall might deconstruct a philosophical insight about the idea of a form of life in Lear might consist in how the idea of a "form of life" can find expression in the discovery of contexts that respond to a human being's particular need for clarification.

Attention to this latter point seems to show the sense in which we can find Lear's portrayal of Wittgensteinian philosophical insights as not totally misleading. This can be drawn from Lear's claims on how Wittgensteinian therapy is similar to the practice of therapy in psychoanalysis.[125] For Lear (1989:44), there is a sense in which insights or propositions about our form of life are useless. He says that the only time people understand those philosophical insights is when they are situated in the context of a "re-enacted conflict" (ibid.: 44). Similar to

[124] See also my discussion in Part 2, Chapter 2 and how Mulhall (2007:102) draws this link from Cavell.
[125] See in particular p. 43-45 of Lear's OR (1989).

the case of Mulhall's resolute reading above, it is in this "re-enacted conflict" that our linguistic uses of the term "form of life" become transformed and constituted by the needs they are now responding to. Lear writes:

> Philosophical claims about, say, forms of life are as shrill as they are boring when they are not firmly rooted in the conflicts which lead us to invoke them. Perhaps this is why the history of philosophy is an essential part of the practice of philosophy in a way that the history of a physical science is not an essential part of a science. If one does not actively re-enact the conflicts which led to the philosophical resolutions, then the accumulated resolutions lose their content as well as their therapeutic value. (ibid.: 44)

The "re-enactment of a conflict" described in the above passage can again be understood as originating from Lear's views about the dialectical relationship between "the transcendental" and "the anthropological" and how the conflict in that dialectic becomes important for creating the context under which insights about our form of life become intelligible. The difference, as Conant and Mulhall might put it, is on how the resolute reading presents the result of Wittgenstein's philosophical elucidation as something that is free from "hovering in meaning", and hence also free from the remnant of the inexpressible that comes with that hovering. This critical view applies, for example, to the meaning of the term "form of life" as it is described ambivalently as something that we are constantly attempting, but also always failing, to express. In both Mulhall's resolute reading and Lear's transcendental reading, there is a heuristic and dynamic conception of language which Wittgenstein's philosophy seeks to investigate. But it is in Mulhall's resolute reading where we can find a greater degree of heurism in its "positive" portrayal of what that linguistic investigation aims to accomplish. In saying that Wittgenstein's use of the term "nonsense" is empty, the resolute reading is in fact describing how we have somehow found a perspicuous representation from which to express our thoughts with clarity. From the resolute reading's perspective, philosophical claims are nonsensical not because they gesture at inexpressible insights about the limits of thought. They are nonsensical because we have found them no longer having a "use" in light of having overcome the struggle to clarify and express what we needed to express. In this context, we may understand the logical point of view that the resolute reading speaks of as a case where a particular struggle for expression has been overcome.

To clarify this resolute view of "overcoming", let me become more liberal in my discussion and draw from *PI* 133 and Diamond's discussion of the "complete disappearance"

of philosophical problems that Wittgenstein's later philosophy is able to accomplish.[126] Diamond (2004) says that Wittgenstein's later philosophy in the *Investigations* can be understood as using examples in a way that they respond to "particular questions" in contrast to the "big questions" of the *Tractatus.* Wittgenstein seems to refer to this distinctive way of using examples as he writes in *PI* 133 that he is looking for a discovery that makes him "capable of stopping philosophy", and where "peace" in philosophy comes from how "philosophical problems are solved (difficulties eliminated), not a *single* problem". It is interesting here how Diamond (2004:209) comes to read the phrase "not a *single* problem" as the later Wittgenstein's emphatic claim that the philosophical problems he now seeks to address are "particular problems" or "a motley of problems" in contrast, for example, to the "*single* problem" of the *Tractatus* on how to describe knowledge of "the general form of the proposition".[127] So under this resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein, the so-called singular and generic questions of philosophy become transformed into the particular and varied linguistic confusions that we encounter in everyday life. When an example is used to clarify that particular linguistic confusion, the philosophical question is eliminated altogether and there is no longer any need for further explanations.[128] This again relates to *PI* 133 on how the use of "a method of examples that can be broken off" can lead to a "complete clarity" that gives "philosophy peace". This metaphor of describing the stopping point of philosophy as something "peaceful" can be understood in the context of how the later Wittgenstein has overcome the temptation to see his explications as responses to the general, and hence metaphysical, problems of philosophy. This implies that the reason why the idea of the inexpressible remains in Lear is because of how he ends up taking language-games as responding to "big questions". Thus, Lear's transcendental reading can be understood as portraying Wittgenstein's idea of teaching by means of examples as a way of "pointing beyond" (*PI* 208) as opposed to merely addressing the particularity of the question at hand. From such a transcendental reading, philosophical questions are not really "dissolved"; there still remains a substantial conception of nonsense that gestures at a metaphysical subject. By contrast, the resolute view of "teaching by means of examples" is

[126] Here, I particularly refer to Diamond's "Criss-cross philosophy" (2004) and how Diamond clarifies a difference in the philosophical method found in the *Investigations* (as opposed to that of the *Tractatus*).
[127] This question about the general form of the proposition and how philosophy problems are essentially attempts to articulate skepticism towards that general form seem to have been addressed in the concluding remark of the *TLP* preface where Wittgenstein says that "the problems [of philosophy] have in essentials been finally solved."
[128] As a particular illustration of how this comes to be case Diamond (2004:211-213) cites the example of how Wittgenstein "cured" the philosophical sickness of Elizabeth Anscombe in using the example, "Painy is there" in contrast to the expression "Blue is there." That example worked for Anscombe and helped her overcome the tendency to ask further philosophical questions in so far as Anscombe was inclined to treat the term "blue" as a sign that represents some kind of property observed in the world as a kind of given. Diamond (ibid.: 213) explains that a different example might be needed by others who take the sign "blue" as representing a sensation.

capable of giving philosophy "peace" and a "stopping point" because it is able to "eliminate" and respond to the need for linguistic clarification that is posed by the situation at hand.

In this light, the resolute reading's would-be criticism of the inexpressible in Lear is not meant to be associated with the endorsement of a philosophical theory which one can now articulate more systematically, say, for example, about the human form of life or about language-games. In light of the "peace" and "complete disappearance" of a philosophical problem I just explained above in *PI* 133, such theories become superfluous. Here, theories become "ornamental copings that support nothing" (*PI* 217).[129] Mulhall (ibid.: 9) himself is explicit about the need for this qualification as he claims that the idea of grammar in the later Wittgenstein eschews even a "philosophical grounding" that comes from "the idea of criterial semantics, or a theory of language-games, or an anthropology of a form of life". But it seems to me that the significance of this caveat can be further understood by paying attention to how Conant (2002) repeatedly expresses his partiality to the ineffabilist-transcendental reading over the positivist reading. For Conant, the ineffabilist reading has an advantage over the positivist reading in the sense that it considers Wittgenstein's difficulty of expression as important, and this applies especially in relation to how it pays attention to the deluded person's "hovering". This is a difficulty that positivist readers of Wittgenstein end up neglecting as they attempt to link his views to a systematic philosophical theory and abandon altogether the significant role that nonsense plays in Wittgenstein's idea of philosophical clarification.[130] The resolute reading, on the other hand, recognizes how Wittgenstein's philosophical therapy involves a clarification of language-use that might respond to a particular need for expression. That need is either "liberated" or "dissolved" through the discovery of how it might connect with relevant contexts of use in ordinary language.

This clear-cut result of either liberating or dissolving a "thought" seems to be the sense in which Mulhall's reading becomes a parallel to what Silver Bronzo (2012) has described in the resolute reading as the role of a perspicuous representation in either translating a sentence to an expression we can clearly understand or in showing that sentence to be empty.

[129] I am here alluding to "other" readings of the later Wittgenstein that the idea of a resolute reading might be critical of, like for example, the transcendental reading of Glock (1992) who becomes explicit in claiming that the later Wittgenstein may be coherently understood as endorsing a theory about framework conditions of thought which we can express by means of grammatical propositions. My discussion have steered away from a discussion of such readings to focus on Lear's transcendental reading, which turns out to be a kind of ineffabilism.

[130] See, for example, Conant (ibid.: 425, endnote 3) as he explicitly expresses partiality to the ineffabilist reading in so far as it pays attention to the significance of Wittgenstein's use of nonsense in giving "philosophical illumination". For Conant, the positivist reading of Wittgenstein is guilty of some kind of straightjacketing as it ignores the heuristic function of the forms of nonsense found in Wittgenstein's early and later philosophy.

Bronzo writes:

> By using a *Begriffsschrift*, we can present the potential victim of a philosophical confusion with different ways of meaning the words that she wants to use, each one being clearly distinguishable from the others. Our interlocutor can then accept one of these "translations" as an accurate rendering of what she wanted to say, or, alternatively, she may come to recognize that she was hovering indeterminately between different options, without decisively meaning any one in particular. In the latter case, the person should come to realize that there was nothing at all that she wanted to say. (Bronzo 2012: 54)

Bronzo addresses this remark to the resolute reading of the *Tractatus,* but his description also applies to Mulhall's resolute exegesis of WRPL. So let me now discuss how the conception of linguistic analysis explained above by Bronzo also applies to Mulhall's exegesis of WRPL in a way that revives my discussion in Part 2. In his *WPL*, Mulhall describes how Wittgenstein employs remarks that encourage his reader to imagine different possibilities that may fit his idea of a private language. This is described, for example, in *PI* 243 as a language which he alone as the speaker of that language understands. Through that process of imagination and attempts at a description, the reader may eventually find the idea of a private diarist in *PI* 258 as an apt portrayal of his own "anthropological experience" of trying to understand the thoughts of another human being (e.g., Wittgenstein) who thinks and writes in an eccentric manner. This "remark" then liberates a reader's view of what makes the idea of a private language meaningful while at the same time dissolving its appearance as a "philosophical idea" which one is unable to describe or associate with any context of significant use. Here, the Tractarian *Begriffsschrift* Bronzo mentions in the above passage becomes expressed in the *Investigations* as the "perspicuous representation" (*PI* 122) through which a reader is able to "*command a clear of view* of his words". By "seeing connexions" between the various examples of the idea of a private language that Wittgenstein offers and by finding and inventing "intermediate cases" where his idea of a private language might finally find articulation, the philosopher is finally able to give his understanding "peace" (*PI* 133). I find this understanding of the "peace" mentioned in *PI* 133 as also clarifying what Wittgenstein mentioned in *PI* 201 as the solution to the paradox of rule-following: this solution involves being able to pay attention to an application of a rule that is *"not an interpretation*". That passage confusingly ends with the remark that "we ought to restrict the term 'interpretation' to the substitution of one expression of the rule over another". This concluding remark becomes clearer once we consider what Bronzo describes in the above remark as the role of perspicuous representation: the perspicuous representation seems to offer a way of "translating" our confused way of using words into a way of using words which helps us become clear about the thought we are intending to express.

Once the "translation" has been performed by means of our investigation of language-games we now see clearly the "symbols" which our "signs" represent, and we shall no longer consider a particular application of a rule as "mere interpretation". [131]

In this context, I believe we can also take Mulhall's and Conant's resolute reading to depict Wittgenstein as someone who is consistently concerned with a philosophy that is aimed not so much about insights about the limits of language but of finding the "liberating word." To clarify this point, we can reflect about the weight of what Wittgenstein meant when he said in the 1930s that "Everything we do [in philosophy] consists in trying to find the liberating word (*Das erlösende Wort*)" and that this "liberating word" is "the word that finally permits us to grasp what up until now has intangibly weighed down our consciousness".[132] From the perspective of the resolute reading, the idea of a limit of thought may very well be that which is "weighing down our consciousness" and this needs to be overcome by a "liberating word". Lear's views about the self-consciousness that comes with the limit of reason that we supposedly encounter as we attempt to understand and express the idea of "form of life" seems to function like "an atmosphere accompanying the word, which is carried into every kind of application".[133] The philosophical understanding of form of life is something we cannot express by any particular instance of language use, but it is something we presume as part of the condition of meaningful language-use. On the other hand, the "liberating word" may be understood in terms of the examples and remarks Wittgenstein gives in aiming to "dissolve" the psychologism that comes with a continued adherence to philosophical insights say, for example, about the form of life and the idea of a Kantian metaphysical subject in Lear. This "liberating word" is something that we find and discover in the imaginative activity that Wittgenstein invites his readers to engage in, say, for example, in understanding the nonsensicality that comes with the idea of a private language. In this imaginative activity, Wittgenstein's various cases and examples become the means through which we are able to understand and "see connexions" that enable us to find the "liberating word". This conception

[131] Aside from the importance of a certain kind of "translation" that is mentioned in *PI* 201, I am here also alluding to Conant (2002:402) and his description of the idea of *Begriffsschrift* where "each sign would wear its mode of symbolizing on its sleeve". Conant interestingly uses modern symbolic logic to illustrate this idea of *Begriffsschrift.* But the context of his discussion emphasizes that such precision in language-use comes from how the varying context for the use of an expression directs our clarification of meaning. I take it that in Conant's and Mulhall's respective resolute reading, there is no dichotomy in Wittgenstein between the use of notations of symbolic logic and the activity of connecting those notations with their context of use in ordinary language.

[132] My quotes here combine a remark which Wittgenstein is thought to have said to Moritz Schlick along with a remark in *PO* 165 as it is cited in Ostrow (2002:1). Ostrow presents this remark as a consistent view that Wittgenstein held in both the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations*.

[133] The quote comes from *PI* 117 which I cite in the context of Conant's (1998: 240) discussion of the said passage as a particular instance of how Wittgenstein describes psychologism.

of philosophical therapy and "philosophical liberation" which I now associate with Conant's and Mulhall's resolute reading comes from how I take them to endorse Cavell's view on how "the idea of limits" figures in Wittgenstein's work as a "picture" that is meant to be overcome in the course of philosophy's search for "terms of criticism". Let me cite that remark by Cavell:

> [T]he idea that what happens to the philosophic mind when it attempts speculation beyond its means is that it transgresses something we want to call limits, is an idea that cannot as it stands constitute a serious term of criticism for Wittgenstein but must remain merely a "picture," however significant. Kant, however, really does take the mind as confined in what it can know, takes it that there are things beyond the things we know, or something systematic about the things we know, that we cannot know, a realm of things-in-themselves, noumenal, open to reason, not phenomenal, not presentable. When Wittgenstein speaks of "bumps the understanding has got by running its head up against the limits of language," the very obviousness of figurative language here works to suggest that thought is not confined by language (and its categories) but confined to language (*Pursuits of Happiness*, 1981:78, as cited in Conant 1989:277-278)

What we can find significant in the above remark by Cavell is the distinction between a thought that is "confined by language" and a thought that is "confined to language." This distinction seems to become a parallel to what Mulhall (2007) and Conant (2004) have described as the distinction between a prohibitive conception of grammar that the standard reading of Wittgenstein endorses and the permissive conception that comes with their resolute reading. Let me again clarify this point in terms of what Mulhall's says in *WPL*. Mulhall claims that WRPL is meant to be understood as involving a conception of grammar that enables us to say what we intend to say in the process of attempting to clarify an expression and in discovering our relationship with our uses of words (ibid.: 9). In that process of clarification, the appeal to grammar does not really become a limit which prohibits us from expressing certain "thoughts". Hence, the philosophical expression "There is a private language" is not a really a "thought" that grammar cannot express by means of our sense of the impossibility to imagine otherwise (which then creates this sense of having some knowledge of the limits sense). That philosophical expression ("There is a private language.") is rather made up of "signs" that involve "a failure to symbolize" in so far as we have not given them a "use". As I see it, it is in this resolute conception of grammar where we are given the opportunity to imagine a "use" or "place in our lives"[134] for a particular nonsensical expression that the idea of limits in Lear truly becomes "kicked away".

[134] The idea of how the "use" of language in Wittgenstein becomes correlated with the "place in our lives" is an idea that Mulhall draws from Diamond (1989). Mulhall uses Diamond's phrase "place in our lives" several times (Mulhall 2007: 29, 98, 99). I find this metaphor very apt given how it seems to undermine the view that the "context of use" Wittgenstein is concerned with is not something completely arbitrary.

Let me again further clarify this point about the permissive nature of grammar that Mulhall shares with Cavell in a way that is similar to my previous discussion of Mulhall's analysis of the expression "Chairman Mao is rare". This time I shall use the expression "Socrates is identical" that Wittgenstein mentions in *TLP* 5.4733.[135] That passage illustrates how Mulhall views grammar as something that is permissive rather than prohibitive, and it also expresses Cavell's position on how Wittgenstein's grammatical investigation involves a case where thought "is not confined ***by*** language (and its categories) but confined ***to*** language".[136] From Mulhall's perspective, the extent to which we might recognize take the expression "Socrates is identical" as nonsensical does *not* depend on how it violates existing logical rules for combining constituent signs. The nonsensically of the propositional sign does not depend on how that whole violates rules for combining the term "identical" with the term "Socrates" through the use of the copula "is". Rather, that expression is nonsensical because we have failed to give *the whole expression* a context of significant use. This failure of use becomes evident when we distinguish how that nonsensical expression might, for example, be "understood" by a philosopher and a toddler. The toddler's perspective may be associated with the resolute reading in terms of how he is inclined to be more open to entertaining different contexts of significant use. That openness might be contrasted to the more restricted mind of an adult who is already acculturated and attached to particular conventions of use. The adult's perspective is similar to the philosopher of a substantial kind: their knowledge of conventions makes them think that those conventions fixes a limit to the meaningful use of our expressions.

For a philosopher of a substantial kind, the expression "Socrates is identical" becomes nonsensical because he has become inclined to believe that the term "identical" belongs to a logical category that relates one object to another. Upon hearing the expression "Socrates is identical", that kind of philosopher might respond: "Socrates is identical to what?" Here, As a result of his fixation on a certain training and convention, he might think that there *must* be some other object to which "Socrates" becomes "identical with" as expressed, for example, in the expression "Socrates is identical to the person named 'Socrates'". Thus, the expression "Socrates is identical" becomes nonsensical *not* really because the *whole* expression is considered nonsensical but because it contains an individual *symbol* that occurs in the "wrong place". We understand the meaning of "Socrates" and "is", but we do not understand the

[135] In what follows, I take cues from Conant and Diamond (2004: 56,93) as they refer to *TLP* 5.4733 to be a passage which supports an austere conception of nonsense.
[136] See Conant's quote from Cavell in the previous page, emphasis added.

meaning of "identical." In this mode of understanding each word has a meaning and that meaning determines how we can understand the meaning of other words it is combined with.

This way of analyzing the nonsensicality of a sentence, might be contrasted with the way a child might think upon hearing the expression "Socrates is identical". In the case of the child who has not been accustomed or trained to think that the term "identical" must be a logical category that compares two objects, the child might consider *the whole expression* as not having any meaning all. This now treats the signs making up the expression "Socrates is identical" as similar to the signs making up the gibberish "blah, blah, blah". All the constituent expressions are taken to be meaningless outside how they are given meaning by a context of use. In this case, the child might consider different possibilities. He may, for example, take the whole expression to have a particular context of use, and respond "Yes, you are right. Socrates is identical". Because the child is not attached to some prior meaning of the individual signs in the expression "Socrates is identical", he is more open to considering how the whole expression might be projected in a particular context of use. For example, the child might think of a time when the expression "Socrates is identical" was used by a parent to say something like "Socrates (your dog) is hungry. (Let's feed him)." In this context, the term "identical" might now be understood as an adjective which makes the expression "Socrates is identical" meaningful. That expression, "Yes, you are right. Socrates is identical." might now mean, "Yes, Socrates is indeed hungry. Let us feed him." In this case, the whole expression, which is previously, considered nonsensical is now given a meaningful use.

Thus, it seems to me that the resolute reading takes Wittgenstein to be taking this kind of child's perspective in understanding how an expression may become nonsensical. This is because the child understands the nonsensicality of an expression to be coming from a failure to give that expression a context of significant use. In this child's perspective, nonsense involves a failure of imagination; it is not violation of some logical rule that limits the possible ways in which words can be meaningfully combined. For the child, as with Mulhall's resolute reading, the only thing that becomes relevant in recognizing whether a particular combination of words becomes meaningful is the context of significant use in ordinary language. Upon elucidation, all other things, like unexpressed "logical categories" or "grammatical rules", become empty or superfluous.

Accordingly, we can find Conant and Diamond (ibid.: 56) pointing to a closer reflection of *TLP* 5.4733 where Wittgenstein says that "the reason why 'Socrates is identical' says nothing is because we have not given any *adjectival* meaning to the word 'identical'". In this remark, the resolute reading takes Wittgenstein to imply that the whole expression "Socrates is

identical" is not nonsensical because it violates some unexpressed understanding of the logical categories that determine the application of its constituent "signs" (as if those logical categories *inhere* in those "signs"). That philosophical expression is nonsensical because we, or the way our life currently is, have failed to give those signs a "use". In this light, Lear's views on how philosophy involves insights about our inexpressible form of life become what is for Mulhall (and Conant and Cavell) the illusion of limits that Wittgenstein wanted to undermine. And the reason for this "undermining" is so that we can do justice to a conception of thought that is "confined ***to*** language [but not confined ***by*** language]".

So it seems that from the perspective of the resolute reading, the idea of limits of thought that Lear adheres to creates a kind of hierarchy in the way we understand our expressions. And that "hierarchy" ends up having to refer to something inexpressible outside language. This is because if those "limits" are things we can understand and yet cannot express, then they become somewhat like a mysterious non-linguistic entity that obstructs our understanding. In this sense, the idea of limits also fuels the impulse for the traditional conception of philosophy Wittgenstein criticizes as well as the sideways on perspective that Lear wanted to avoid. Thus, transcendental readings such as that of Lear attribute to Wittgenstein a traditional mode of philosophizing in so far as they take him to endorse a competence in the use of language that is based on an inexpressible understanding of a "transcendental subject", "form of life", or "limits of thought". As I have earlier discussed, this inexpressibility becomes legitimized by means of the ambiguity in the standard reader's conception of "showing" which involves a kind of hovering that obstructs clarity of thought.[137] If we are to consider how Wittgenstein himself becomes critical of this idea of showing, one might again consider what Wittgenstein says in *PI* 117 to a person who simply says:

> You understand this expression ["form of life"] don't you? Well then—I am using it in the sense you are familiar with.

I took the liberty of inserting "form of life" in this passage because it seems to me that that remark can also be understood in the context of Lear's (1989: 41) discussion of the "deepest use of expression 'form of life'". This use seems to make it appear as if the term "form of life" has a deep essential meaning which we can only gesture at through a special kind of nonsense. This brings us back to the psychologism depicted in *PI* 117. That remark may be understood as Wittgenstein's would-be criticism for how Lear uses the idea of "gesture" to fuel some kind of

[137] See my discussion of this in Part 2 and also Conant's WWAT (2004: 176, 182-183) for a more detailed account of the resolute reading's criticism on how standard readers of the later Wittgenstein employ a notion of "showing" that is psychologistic.

psychologism. In this instance of psychologism, the meaning of the term "form of life" becomes somewhat like "an atmosphere accompanying the word" that is carried into its every application. This "atmosphere" or "deep meaning" seems to belong to the metaphysics or "houses of cards" (*PI* 118) that Wittgenstein aimed to collapse through attention to the particular circumstances where our expressions comes to have use. This can be applied even in our understanding of the term "form of life" which is not so important and deep that we cannot give it a use we can also understand and express *in* ordinary language.

Mulhall (2007) does really not say much about the idea of transcendental showing and indescribability. But it seems that his discussion of how various cases under which the idea of a private language might be either expressed or dissolved can be construed as his form of indirect criticism on positions such as that of Lear. His method of resolute imagination implies that there is nothing of the sort of showing that Lear speaks of in his depiction of a "form of life" that our language ultimately cannot "represent". To be sure Mulhall (ibid.) talks about a certain kind of ineffability and showing that he is willing to acknowledge. But he says that this "ineffability" is not really a kind of inexpressibility in so far as it is manifestation of a "practical ability" that can be acknowledged by those sharing similar competence. Mulhall writes:

> [A]ccording to the resolute reading, the ability to recognize the distinction between sense and nonsense—what one might call our capacity to acknowledge the limits of intelligibility—is not a matter of grasping ineffable necessary truths about language, thought, and reality. It is simply the capacity to recognize when a sign has not been given a determinate meaning—even when it appears that it has been. In another sense, however, **the practical know-how we are thereby drawing upon is such that any attempt to state it in words will produce an utterance that anyone who possesses that know-how must recognize as itself nonsensical.** In this sense, the understanding is ineffable: but that is **not because its object or content is a species of ineffable truth**; and its ineffability in would-be declarative utterances does not amount to its ineffability *per se*—since **its presence is directly manifest in a certain kind of practical ability**, including the ability to distinguish nonsense from sense in the domain of philosophical discourse. (Mulhall 2007:7, emphases added)

This passage can be understood as Mulhall's response to the criticism that the resolute reading "throws away the baby with the bathwater" as he seems to imply that his resolute reading also preserves Wittgenstein's notion of "showing" (*zeigen*). Critics of the resolute reading claim that the idea of a resolute reading seem to abandon the distinction between saying and showing which allows Wittgenstein to be able to communicate the non-propositional character of the linguistic competence that philosophy is concerned with. So in "throwing away" the idea of a nonsense that shows the limits of thought, critics claim that the resolute reading also undermines the very means through which Wittgenstein is able to communicate something

that is of "philosophical significance". [138] In the context of responding to this criticism, Mulhall's remark may be taken to mean that his resolute reading still acknowledges the significance of *zeigen* in Wittgenstein's work.[139] However, this idea of *zeigen* is not so much a gesture to the inexpressible limits of sense. In Mulhall's and Conant's resolute reading, the notion of *zeigen* now refers to a manifestation of a practical ability in language use that is capable of being recognized by others with similar linguistic competence.

In this context, Mulhall's remark above can be understood as making a distinction between a conception of showing that substantial readers like Lear endorse and an austere conception of showing that resolute readers like himself and Conant finds unproblematic. This is much like the distinction between the substantial conception of nonsense and the austere conception. In the former case (i.e., the transcendental case), the idea of *zeigen* involves reference to something that is at the limits of language which that use of language is unable to directly express. In the latter case (i.e., the resolute case), the idea of *zeigen* turns into a certain kind of self-reference where the various uses of language do not point to any kind of understanding incapable of being expressed by those uses of language. This difference in what the idea of showing in Wittgenstein is able to accomplish also seems to provide the opportunity for distinguishing the indirection transcendental readers attribute to Wittgenstein from the indirection that is also emphasized by resolute readers. In the case of the resolute reading, indirection is necessary because recognition of the emptiness of nonsensical expressions must come from the reader's own concession that the "meaning" he had in mind is really empty. That is, after "exhausting" the possible contexts of use that might be used to articulate that "thought" he finds that there is nothing in what he wants to say. In the case of the transcendental reading, indirection is necessary because the reader's recognition of insights about the limits of sense is ultimately incapable of being expressed. Here, the limits of language are somehow "understood" upon philosophical clarification, but understanding their nature as transcendental insights also means understanding why they can only be gestured at. As I discussed in part 1, Lear takes Wittgenstein's claims about a form of life to be involving a kind of Kantian apperception where whatever one says about "it" ends up as something that is *within* language rather than *at* its "limits". On the other hand, Mulhall's notion of practical competence in language undermines this idea of limits and its attendant notion of "showing" by emphasizing

[138] See in particular how Meredith Williams argues for this position in "Nonsense and Cosmic exile" (2004)
[139] See also Conant and Diamond (2004: 52 note 18) and Conant (2002: endnotes 4, 22, 23, and 27). I find Conant's endnote 23 particularly instructive as he explains how the distinction between saying and showing "has no application to Unsinn." Here, as I said in footnote 93, I take it to mean that the distinction between saying and showing can only be understood within the context provided for my meaningful propositions in ordinary language.

an imaginative activity where nonsensical expressions become analyzed via elucidation of their link with relevant contexts of use. That process of elucidation helps us recognize the symbol in the sign or helps us recognize the emptiness of our signs in relation to our inability to connect them with a significant context of use. As I see it, this is the spirit under which Mulhall's Wittgenstein employs a dialectic (of cases) where a reader is prodded to explode his illusion of the limits of language. This also seems to be the reason for his emphasis on *PI* 500 where he takes Wittgenstein to say that the reason why we end up treating a philosophical expression as nonsensical is not really because it has a sense that we cannot express. It is rather because of how we have failed to give it a context of use. I take it that in Mulhall's resolute reading, this failure to give an expression a context of use is what Wittgenstein refers to when he wrote that a nonsensical sentenc*e* involves "a combination of words [that] is being excluded from the language, withdrawn from circulation." [140]

So, as I understand Mulhall, the linguistic competence of a philosopher becomes somewhat like the competence of painter who constantly develops a skill in drawing important details that might clarify and represent that which would have otherwise been considered as "indescribable". If we look to the *Investigations*, we can actually find Wittgenstein portraying this linguistic competence as if it were a cure for indescribability:

> I may recognize a genuine loving look, distinguish it from a pretended one… But I may be quite incapable of describing the difference. And **this not because the languages I know have no words for it. For why not introduce new words?** – If I were a very talented painter I might conceivably represent the genuine and the simulated glance in pictures." (*PI* II xi, emphasis added)

In this passage, Mulhall's resolute reading is to the point: Wittgenstein's attention to our words "context of significant use" also highlights the need for a therapeutic philosopher to employ new and creative uses of words.

3.4 On the possibility of "resolute transcendentalism"

In this section, I would now like to consider the possibility of a synthesis between Mulhall and Lear through what one might call "resolute transcendentalism". This idea comes from how the resolute reading might acknowledge Lear's transcendental reading by giving his idea of a "Wittgensteinian thinking subject" a context of significant use. This is how I shall go about in my discussion. First, I shall give attention to an impasse that comes about when one appeals to Wittgenstein's writing style to address the issue of whether Wittgenstein supported

[140] See also Part 2, Chapter 2 for my detailed discussion of *PI* 500 along with *PI* 374.

Lear's "transcendental negation method" or that of Mulhall's "resolute philosophical method". Second, I consider how Mulhall's presentation of the resolute philosophical method leaves a gap by failing to give adequate attention to how therapeutic insights about the "thinking subject" might be articulated. Finally, I consider how Lear's concern for a "Wittgensteinian thinking subject" might be situated in the context of Mulhall's treatment of the idea of private language in *PI* 258 and *PI* 261.

3.4.1 The "impasse" on linking Wittgenstein's writing style to his method

There seems to be an impasse[141] in appealing to Wittgenstein's writing style to decide on the philosophical procedure he intended to endorse. Both the resolute reading of Mulhall and the transcendental reading of Lear pays attention to how Wittgenstein's writing style becomes importantly connected with his philosophical method. I believe this point needs emphasizing to rule out the claim that non-resolute readers of Wittgenstein have failed to acknowledge the relation between form and content in Wittgenstein's philosophy. This also puts the transcendental reading of Lear in a more charitable light. It highlights how Lear acknowledges the important connection between form and content in Wittgenstein's philosophy, and how his reading is also a plausible way of understanding Wittgenstein's later philosophy.

In what follows, I now explain how the impasse between Lear and Mulhall might hold even when we apply their interpretation to the preface of Wittgenstein's *Investigations*. As I see it, attention to this preface is important in the sense that it contains Wittgenstein's explicit "meta-remarks" about his mode of writing. That preface may be understood as the closest to being a "frame" through which we can understand the body of Wittgenstein's work in the *Investigations*.[142] The reasoning that supports attention to these meta-remarks might go this way: if the content of Wittgenstein's philosophy is inseparable from our understanding of his manner of writing, then understanding his remarks about his own writing can also be understood as having a bearing on his remarks about the content of his philosophizing. Thus, Wittgenstein's

[141] I draw and develop this term largely from what Cahill (2005: 28) describes as the "skeptical impasse" in Wittgenstein's antinomical mode of writing.

[142] This claim needs qualification given my previous discussion (Part 2, Chapter 1) of how it is misleading to talk about a "body" and "frame" in the *Investigations*. Partly because the *Investigations* is unfinished and partly because it takes the form of an album, I have argued that the *Investigations* has an unconventional structure that makes this distinction between "body" and "frame" inappropriate. Yet, I also take inspiration in the reply of Conant and Diamond (2004) to Peter Sullivan that such distinctions are meant to be understood heuristically: an understanding of the "frame" of Wittgenstein's work might interact with our understanding of its "body". As I shall now show, the difficulty I often find myself in is that even Wittgenstein's supposed meta-remarks about his own writing are also ambiguous and difficult to decipher.

so-called chapter on philosophy in *PI* 89-133 may also be related with what he says about his writing style in the preface of *PI*. So let me now show how that preface may be read as supporting both Lear's transcendental reading and Mulhall's resolute reading.

3.4.1.1 Constructing Lear's reading of the *PI* preface

On Lear's reading, there is a Wittgenstein whose concern for transcendental insights seems to have led to a mode of writing that also reflects the nature of the insights he is also conveying. I have already discussed this in terms of what I called the idea of a transcendental negation method I have associated with Lear, and how that method becomes connected with the ostensive role of the forms of nonsense found in Wittgenstein's remarks about "rule-following" and "form of life". Let me now illustrate how this transcendental reading might also be applied to Wittgenstein's *PI* preface.

The *PI* preface can be read in the way Lear does if we consider how Wittgenstein professed to have adopted a mode of writing that acknowledged (or at least did not distort) the philosophical thoughts he was trying to convey. This can be inferred from what Wittgenstein writes in his preface:

> It was my intention at first to bring all this together in a book whose form I pictured differently at different times. But the essential thing was that the thoughts should proceed from one subject to another in a natural order and without breaks.
> After several unsuccessful attempts to weld my results together into such a whole, I realized that I should never succeed. The best that I could write would never be more than philosophical remarks; **my thoughts were soon crippled if I tried to force them on in any single direction against their natural inclination**.—And this was, of course, connected with the very nature of the investigation. For this compels us to travel over a wide field of thought criss-cross in every direction.— The philosophical remarks in this book are, as it were, a number of sketches of landscapes which were made in the course of these long and involved journeyings…. Thus this book is really only an album. (*PI* preface, emphasis added)

In this passage, we can find Wittgenstein confessing his initial plan of writing the *Investigations* in a more conventional manner. That is, in a way of writing where the "thoughts" he is clarifying will "proceed from one subject to another in a natural order and without breaks." Wittgenstein says that he dropped this plan when he realized that those "thoughts" were soon "crippled" as he "tried to force them [in a] direction against their natural inclination". In these remarks, there seems to be a tone in which Wittgenstein treats his philosophical "thoughts" as if they have a life of their own, that is, as if those thoughts were insights that required a certain

way of expression through forms of nonsense that gesture at the limits of thought. Notice that this way of describing the relation between Wittgenstein's philosophical thoughts and his manner of conveying them almost makes it appear that the objects of his grammatical investigation have some kind of Platonic character: they are "thoughts" that show some independence from our means for expressing them. This can be seen, for example, in terms of how Wittgenstein describes his (philosophical) thoughts as becoming "crippled" when they are forced in a "single direction against their natural inclination". And conversely, it seems that our descriptions of those "thoughts" become more accurate when Wittgenstein wrote in such a way that also reflect the nature of those thoughts.

As Lear and Williams might say more explicitly, Wittgenstein is concerned here with articulating the limits of thoughts. These limits can be accessed only from the first person perspective of the language user, and so they resist meaningful expression in language. In this transcendental view, Lear is also likely to interpret the later Wittgenstein's remark in the *PI* preface in a way similar to the *TLP* preface. Wittgenstein's remark in the *PI* preface "This book [*PI*] is really only an album" can be understood as a parallel to his remark in the *TLP* preface "[the *TLP*] is not a textbook" and that it will "be only understood by someone who has himself already had the thoughts … expressed in it – or at least similar thoughts". [143] Lear interprets these remarks from the preface of *TLP and PI* as Wittgenstein's way of adopting a Kantian approach of letting his work and manner of writing become a "mirror" through which a reader might turn his attention inward to the limits of his own thought (Lear OR: 26-27). According to Lear (ibid.:26), Kant sought to investigate the nature of our "knowing" or "observing mind." But he realized the difficulty of doing so because any account of the knowing mind will inescapably just be a *perception* and leave out the very nature the "reflective consciousness" which he intends to investigate. Thus, Lear (ibid.: 27) explains that Kant adopted an indirect mode of investigation which presumed that "nature is the mirror of the mind". This means that in "understanding the teleological judgments we make about nature we end up learning more about ourselves ["as systematic inquirers"] than about nature" (ibid.: 26, 27). So for Lear, in attempting to know about the reflective consciousness that makes up our mind, the best way to go about is to employ an indirect approach. He writes:

> We need not make mind an object of study: since nature is the mirror of the mind, we may place nature under the microscope and learn more about the mind. (Lear 1989:27)

[143] This is from the Pears-McGuinness translation.

Likewise, Lear takes Wittgenstein to be employing an indirect approach to studying the mind in a way similar to this "mirroring" of Kant: in attempting to understand a unity (or meaning) in our linguistic expressions, we end up learning more about ourselves (and about the limits of our thought) than about those expressions. [144] To go back to applying this idea to *PI,* we can say that this aim of "mirroring" of transcendental insights can be understood as the reason why Wittgenstein chose a mode of writing that comes in the form of "philosophical remarks" that "criss-cross in every direction". Those criss-crossing remarks and "sketches of landscapes" can only suffice to make an "album". But this album-like character involves an essential incompleteness that is meant to be filled by the imaginative activity of the reader. [145] For Lear, this incompleteness is the sense in which *PI* can be understood as an "impossible book". Similar to *TLP*, Wittgenstein's so-called *Bemerkungen* style of writing in *PI* is his way of conveying transcendental insights that he can only gesture at to his reader. This now implies that the idea of a "liberating word" can also be understood more broadly as a metaphor that includes the use of "action" and "silence" as a means for pointing to the transcendental insights that Wittgenstein seeks to communicate. Let me now explain how this transcendental interpretation might be challenged by the resolute reading.

3.4.1.2 Constructing Mulhall's reading of the PI preface

From the perspective of Conant's and Mulhall's respective resolute reading, we might also think of Wittgenstein's writing style not really as aiming to clarify or "mirror" the transcendental nature of philosophical thoughts. It seems that for their resolute reading, clarifying the transcendental nature of insights about our form of life are not as pressing as the need *to respond to the philosophical problems* and linguistic confusions. This might be inferred, for example, from how Mulhall transfers the essentially dialectic and responsive character of Wittgenstein's philosophical prose to the dialectical and purely responsive character of Wittgenstein's philosophical method.[146] In this resolute perspective, Wittgenstein is firm in his

[144] See Lear (1989:27) especially his claim on how it is important to contextualize this insight in relation to Kant's *Critique of Judgment.* According to Lear (ibid.), there is likely to be mistake when this kind of indirect approach is situated in the context of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. The framework of the latter gives the impression that Kant's transcendental philosophy involves knowledge of limitations on how we can know the mind. Kant's *Critique of Judgment,* on the other hand, becomes a cure for correcting this limited and purely skeptical view by making us focus on how we can acknowledge that our "teleological judgments" also have "subjective validity".
[145] See Lear's LWA (1982) as he explicitly draws from the imaginative activity that Williams earlier highlights in the later Wittgenstein's interest with practices that pushes the reader on the verge of incoherence as he finds himself in the very grips of the limits of language.
[146] See Mulhall (2007:20). I think this is also what Conant and Bronzo ended up implying in their emphasis on the logically posterior character of the resolute reading.

claim that his mode of philosophizing does not aim at endorsing philosophical theses (*PI* 128). His interest in being able to describe uses of language does not aim at conveying some insight that can stand on its own; grammatical descriptions are *not* insights that exist prior to the need for clarification brought about by a philosophical problem. In this view, Wittgenstein is interested in being able to describe uses of language for the modest aim of bringing clarity to whatever it is that we are intending to say, whatever those "thoughts" are. This is the sense in which we can make sense of Wittgenstein's own claim that his philosophical method "consists essentially in leaving the question of *truth* and asking about *sense* instead." [147]

Based on these remarks, this resolute reading seems to be concerned with portraying Wittgenstein as someone who is firm in aiming at "descriptions" rather than "explanations". The resolute reading seems to draw this insight from *PI* 109. In that passage, we can take Wittgenstein to say that the clarification sought by means of his language-games involves having to make "descriptions" that "gets its light, that is to say its purpose, from the philosophical problems". I take the resolute reading to be drawing on this remark to emphasize the pragmatic nature of descriptions that come with Wittgenstein's grammatical investigations, which I have earlier referred to in Part 2, Chapter 2 as "elucidations". Given the merely pragmatic function of these elucidations, the transcendental interpretation of the *PI* preface comes to lose its force. That interpretation, which I discussed above, seems to favor transcendental insights that end up becoming "explanations" rather than "descriptions". Let me here distinguish between "explanations" and "descriptions." It seems that "explanations" are self-standing; they are presented independently of the need to "eliminate" philosophical problems (*PI* 133). "Descriptions", on the other hand, are more pragmatic; they arise only in the context of a need to address a particular "urge to misunderstand" the "workings of language"(*PI* 109). It is from this purely pragmatic understanding of "descriptions" that the transcendental reading's pseudo-Platonic treatment of philosophical insights comes to lose its significance. Wittgenstein's grammatical descriptions are nothing more than responses to particular linguistic confusions; they do not aim at conveying any systematic or inexpressible truth. Again, as I discussed in Part 2, Chapter 1, this is the sense in which the resolute reading it is "parasitic" on the psychological point of view taken by the so-called standard readers of Wittgenstein. It has no content of its own outside its critical function. It merely observes and waits on the transcendental reader to manifest particular linguistic confusions, and then provide "piecemeal" descriptions that might aid the resolute reader dissolve those confusions. Here,

[147] See *Culture and Value* (Wittgenstein et al. 1998: 3) *MS* 105 46, 1929.

Wittgenstein's phrasic and criss-crossing mode of writing in the *Investigations* also becomes a kind of illustration of the purely responsive and "piecemeal" character of Wittgenstein's philosophy as it eschews the endorsement of any philosophical thesis or theory.[148]

What my discussion now shows is that that there is an important "impasse" in Wittgenstein's writing style that allows it to be read either way: it is possible to interpret it transcendentally and resolutely. There is a certain difficulty that we encounter even when we appeal to Wittgenstein's "meta-remarks" about his writing and his conception of philosophy. But as I see it, this "impasse" along with a certain kind of cognitive dissonance that it allows the reader to experience is what enables the Wittgenstein reader to be free from the one-sided thinking that only the transcendental reading or the resolute reading is right. Cahill (2005:28) discusses the importance of this "skeptical impasse" in relation to the dialectical nature of Wittgenstein's writing style in his remarks on rule following. Despite some differences, Cahill argues that the impasse that one experiences from such writing style becomes therapeutically similar to the kind of non-dogmatism that a reader might learn from Kant's antinomies of pure reason. That antinomical mode of writing becomes an essential part of how Wittgenstein "purges" philosophical claims of their "unwarranted metaphysical assumptions" such that those claims become fully transformed into claims of ordinary language (ibid.: 24-25).

As I understand Cahill, this way of purging metaphysical assumptions is what Kripke missed by proposing a "skeptical solution" that neglects the piecemeal therapy that comes with Wittgenstein's mode of writing. What that mode of writing implies is a kind of non-dogmatic solution that is somehow alluded to by Wittgenstein in *PI* 201 as a way of "grasping a rule which is not an *interpretation*". This non-dogmatic solution of "grasping a rule which is not an *interpretation*" can be understood in the tone of Wittgenstein speaking in "full voice"[149] as he has now overcomed the particular linguistic confusion that comes with the use of an expression and takes on the perspective of ordinary language. That kind of non-dogmatism, to borrow Conant's metaphor, is like a jewel that is firmly placed in the "setting" of Wittgenstein's mode of writing. That jewel of non-dogmatism is often disfigured when separated from that setting as Kripke, for example, did.[150] Given that Lear has more sophisticated attention to Wittgenstein's structure of writing, Lear's reading cannot simply be likened to that of Kripke. So in what follows, I shall set aside Cahill's (2005) polemic against Kripke but adopt his

[148] See Diamond's discussion of this piecemeal approach in "Criss-cross philosophy" (2004:211-213).
[149] See Cahill (ibid.: 25)
[150] Conant (2002: 426, endnote 7) says this of the *Tractatus* and the literary form in which it is written. I transfer the application of these remarks to the similar importance of the literary character of Wittgenstein's writing in the *Investigations*.

approach of emphasizing the "skeptical impasse" that is found in Wittgenstein's antinomical mode of writing (ibid.: 28). I shall take that impasse as an essential starting point for clarifying a non-dogmatic conception of philosophizing in Wittgenstein in a way that establishes greater connection between the reading of Mulhall and that of Lear.

3.4.2 A gap in Mulhall's resolute reading: the "thinking subject"

The Lear and Mulhall debate I have simulated seems to leave a gap, and this gap can be understood as coming from within the framework of Mulhall's resolute reading. As I have emphasized in Part 2, Chapter 2, there is a deep sense in which the resolute reading seeks to "acknowledge" the supposed metaphysical claims of an interlocutor. The task of elucidation does not really stop unless the philosopher is able to secure the consent of his interlocutor. This consent comes when the philosopher has found the right words ("liberating words") which satisfy the desires and wishes of an interlocutor in his struggle to convey an intended "meaning". Thus, Wittgenstein also writes in 1931:

> One of the most important tasks [of philosophy] is to express all false thought processes so characteristically that the reader says, 'Yes, that's exactly the way I meant it.'
> Indeed we can only convict someone else of a mistake if he acknowledges that this really is the expression of his feeling.

Conant (2002: 426, endnote 7) says this remarks to apply to the *Tractatus* and the literary form in which it is written. I transfer the application of these remarks to the similar importance of the literary character of Wittgenstein's writing in the *Investigations*. I take these remarks above to also form a part of how we might understand the resolute reading's "method of exploding an illusion from within" (see Section 3.3). What I find useful about these remarks is that they can be interpreted in a way that highlights the importance of also persuading the standard readers of Wittgenstein to give up their perception of the nihilistic nature of the resolute reading. That is, to give up the view that the resolute reading's emphasis on the emptiness of philosophical nonsense is also self-refuting. Hence, it is not the case that the activity of reading Wittgenstein's work resolutely has the character of being an empty "wild-goose chase".[151]

This *perception* of emptiness may be situated in the context of the Lear-Mulhall debate I have simulated. The idea of the transcendental reading in its portrayal of Wittgenstein as

[151] See Part 2, Chapter 1 where I have described this type of criticism as coming from what Conant and Bronzo (2017) has called "standard criticisms" of the resolute reading of Wittgenstein.

someone concerned with articulating insights about the thinking subject might find the resolute reading vacuous *if* all the resolute reading does is to show that their conception of the thinking subject is incoherent. From that non-resolute perspective, the resolute reading needs to be able to articulate its therapeutic insight in a more robust manner in a way that it does not end up merely as a kind of "no-thesis idea". [152] This might be the current condition of the resolute reading as it responds to the criticisms of standard readers of Wittgenstein with a certain kind of "meagerness". This meagerness seems to come from the perception that the resolute reading's concern for the therapeutic aspect of Wittgenstein's philosophy ends up stifling the thoughts and insights that an interlocutor really wants to express.

However, it seems to me that this perception is misguided. This is because the resolute reading endorses an imaginative activity that in fact encourages an interlocutor to find the words that might liberate and clarify his thoughts. As I have discussed, the resolute reading seems to strive for some kind of neutrality in its analysis of language. And one good indication for this is how the resolute reading, upon engaging their interlocutor in certain kind of imaginative dialogue, finds it important to give to the interlocutor a say on whether his expression is in fact meaningful or nonsensical. As Conant (2002, 2004) and Mulhall (2007) have emphasized, as long as there remains a hovering in the reader, then the task of philosophical elucidation is not yet finished. The philosopher helps the interlocutor by giving him examples of uses of words that might give a clear description of his thoughts. And as mentioned in Wittgenstein's 1931 remark cited above, the philosopher's interlocutor should be able to say "Yes, that's exactly the way I meant it". Upon demonstrating the incoherence of what has been said and getting this kind of full consent from the interlocutor, then and only then can philosopher claim that the thought being expressed was nothing but an illusion. But as Conant (ibid.) and Mulhall (ibid.) emphasizes, so long as the interlocutor remains dissatisfied with the way the philosopher has given expression to his thoughts and so long as the interlocutor feels that the words the philosopher offers fails to express what he finds important, then the resolute philosopher must continue with his philosophical elucidation.

In this context, we might also consider the possibility that the resolute reading is not really able to secure the full consent of someone who takes the perspective of Lear's

[152] See for example "No nonsense Wittgenstein" (2009: 436) where Thomas Wallgren explicitly label's Conant's and Diamond's resolute reading as a "no thesis idea." For Wallgren, the meagerness of their resolute reading turns it into a reading of Wittgenstein that is "too conventional" in its failure to commit to "draw conclusions" and "risk living by the judgment we make" (ibid.: 437). Conant and Bronzo's (2017) calls this kind of criticism as belonging to "standard criticisms" of the resolute reading, and they claim that it can be addressed by focusing on the "logically posterior character" of the resolute reading.

transcendental reading. This applies more specifically to how a reader might find appealing Lear's portrayal of Wittgenstein as someone who struggles to articulate insights about ourselves as thinking subjects. I for one find this concern for the thinking subject appealing because of how Wittgenstein has also been firm in not conflating philosophical inquiry from scientific inquiry. I find it compelling how Wittgenstein thought of philosophy as a discipline aimed at some kind of self-knowledge that makes it resistant to being encroached upon by the sciences. In fact, as I understand it, *both* the resolute reading and the transcendental reading share the view that the conceptual investigation in philosophy differs from that of science, especially in its concern for some kind of inward Socratic knowledge. Let me explain how this is the case for Lear, and then move on to explain how it also applies to Mulhall.

In the case of the transcendental reading of Lear, his later works (TA and OR) concede that the sciences might in fact be concerned with deep conceptual inquiries that can enrich philosophical inquiry. But those works also emphasize that such investigation can only be philosophical in the Wittgensteinian sense if it leads to a non-empirical insight about our mindedness or "form of life". So while Wittgenstein's conception of philosophy has some form of dialectical overlap with the sciences, there is still something that makes philosophy a discipline that is resistant to being "encroached" upon by the sciences.[153]

In the case of the resolute reading of Mulhall and Conant, the same kind of distinction between philosophy and the sciences can be drawn. Their resolute approach focuses only on a philosophical method concerned with clarification of meaning via the context principle, but this approach still turns philosophy into activity that is distinct from the more systematic and "outward" concern of sciences. To paraphrase what Conant says in TMTT (2002), philosophy is concerned with a kind of conceptual investigation that reveals the deepest confusions of a person's soul; it is aimed at coming up with elucidations that are brutally Socratic in making us realize our ignorance of the ways we end up failing to give meaning to our words. [154] Likewise, Mulhall's literary approach in portraying Wittgenstein's treatment of nonsense and grammar in the *Investigations* seems to have the same kind of inward concern. This can be seen in terms of how Mulhall (2007: 86-7) emphasizes an imaginative activity that directs philosophical clarification to an analysis of concepts where the practical consequences of nonunderstanding

[153] Later Lear's tone of finding a domain for philosophical activity is slightly less assertive than that of Hacker (2001). However, despite the later Lear's proposed "dialectical" interpretation where the domain of the philosophical is not fixed and may constantly overlap with those of the sciences, it seems to me that Lear's position is still somewhat the same as that of Hacker: emphasis on philosophy's concern for non-empirical insight about our so-called we mindedness still depicts it as discipline that is distinct from the sciences.

[154] See in particular TMTT (2002: 421) as Conant says that "our most profound confusions of soul show themselves in… our confusions concerning what we mean… by our words."

relate to matters that have weight for the interlocutor. Here, the clarification of the idea of private language is guided by the reader's temptations, wishes, and illusions. This gives the linguistic clarification of philosophy a personal and maybe even existential tone that is often absent in the sciences.[155] I find this a consistent theme in Mulhall's exegesis in *WPL* (2007) as he emphasizes a mode of philosophical elucidation that acknowledges the equal status or authority of the sceptic *vis-a-vis* the philosophical interlocutor (ibid.: 83). This egalitarian approach is found in terms of the uninsistent tone of Wittgenstein's writing and in how that uninsistent tone aids the reader in finding his own voice in the course of the linguistic discourse (ibid.: 20-22).[156] Thus, as I understand Lear and Mulhall, their respective readings of Wittgenstein's philosophy becomes inseparable from a certain kind of inwardness that scientific inquiry is inclined to neglect.

To situate these insights in the context of the debate I have raised, it seems that the challenge for the resolute reading is to be able to rearticulate Lear's idea of a Wittgensteinian thinking subject in such a way that it becomes transformed into what Mulhall (ibid.: 102) describes as an "everyday banality" of ordinary language. Here, we might take the resolute approach of considering the possibility that Lear is trying to say something "important" through his claims about the inexpressibility of the thinking subject. In that approach, it seems inadequate to simply say that Lear's claim's about inexpressibility involves an incoherent desire. If the resolute reading is to secure the full acknowledgement of someone partial to Lear, then it should be able to offer "friendlier ways" of rearticulating Lear's concern for the thinking subject. This friendly approach seems to be not too far off from the idea of the resolute philosophical method I have just described: the transcendental reader should be able to say to the resolute reader "Yes, that's exactly the way I meant it".

It is in light of practicing this charitable exercise of philosophical clarification, that we can understand the significance of Wittgenstein's remark that "If one tried to advance theses in philosophy, it would never be possible to debate them, because everyone would agree to them" (*PI* 128). I take this remark to be expressing the same point that Wittgenstein makes in *PI* 599:

[155] See also Part 2 chapter 1 my discussion of Conant and Bronzo's defense of the resolute reading and how there are versions of the resolute reading that involve ethical and even existential insights. See also Conant's article "Kieerkegaard's *Postscript* and Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*" (1997) and how it seems to provide an existential context to Wittgenstein's conception of linguistic clarification.

[156] Mulhall, however, falls short in giving a more focused discussion of how this voice connects with the idea of thinking subject in Wittgenstein. See in particular Mulhall (ibid.: 22) where he seems to be closest to giving this idea of thinking "self" attention.

"Philosophy only states what everyone admits."[157] It means that when we clarify the use of expressions by means of language-games, we are using those language-games as "*objects of comparison*" (*PI* 130). We are not using them as a theory which functions as another ideal paradigm or "preconceived idea" (*PI* 131) to which our uses of language must correspond. In encouraging his readers to find the place of a word in a language-game, Wittgenstein does not employ the context principle to say "It must be like this" (*PI* 155). The context principle is indeed something that Wittgenstein uses to describe our uses of language, but these descriptions are not meant to function as some kind philosophical hierarchy or foundation. Rather, by contrasting various cases and examples, Wittgenstein simply aims to aid his reader to develop clarity in his thought and use of language. Wittgenstein aims to make his reader see connections that enable him to clarify and express the "symbol" he intended to convey by his use of "signs". As I see it, it is only in the context this charitable mode of clarification that it becomes possible for the philosophically deluded person to acknowledge that his use of linguistic signs involve a failure of signification.

So, as I see it, a neglected aspect of the resolute reading is on how it also provides examples or contexts of use that might allow an interlocutor *to feel aided* in being able to express the thoughts he really wants to express. Using the terminology of the *Tractatus*, one might say that the resolute reading is not only able to show that "signs" fails to symbolize, it is also able to elucidate how a particular "symbol" may be found in an interlocutor's use of a "sign" through a clarification of that sign's possible context of use. It seems to me that it is in being able to include this latter aspect (of being able to help an interlocutor overcome his struggle for expression) that the resolute reading is in fact a charitable friend of the transcendental reading. So in what follows, I would now like to pursue this charitable aspect of the resolute reading by considering the possibility that Lear's views about Wittgenstein's "thinking subject" might also be understood in the context of Mulhall's emphasis on the need to analyze the idea of a private language from the perspective of the need for new and creative uses of language.

[157] Kuusela devotes a whole chapter (chapter 6) for discussing this latter remark by Wittgenstein in his book "Struggle Against Dogmatism" (2008). I find Kuusela's reading of *PI* 599 compelling, and so I draw my interpretation of that remark based on how I understand that chapter.

3.4.3 On Lear's "thinking subject" and Mulhall's "private diarist"

In this section, I now offer an instance of a "resolute transcendentalism" that might "bring back" and transform Lear's concern for a thinking subject "from [its] metaphysical to everyday use" (*PI* 116). As I have mentioned in Part 2, chapter 2, Mulhall' reads *PI* 258 in a way similar to Cavell. The description of a private diarist in *PI* 258 functions as a metaphor that describes a certain relationship between Wittgenstein and his reader. Both Wittgenstein and his reader are in the same condition: they are both private diarists having a kind of personal relationship with words. In reading and understanding those words, they come to "bear…[their] meaning even when one comes to feel that no one else could understand what they mean" (Mulhall 2007:107).

Mulhall's metaphor, I believe, can be broadened to apply to the condition of Wittgenstein and his reader. This is because there are many times when we as native speakers of a language find ourselves in a situation of having to talk to others who do not yet have our concepts. In these cases, our own concepts end up somewhat like a private language which we are unable to explain. We find ourselves at a loss for words to explain our thoughts even as we feel that our "thought" is there. This lamentable condition seems to be what Wittgenstein remark in *PI* 261 articulates. That is, on how philosophers are often tempted to simply utter nothing but an "inarticulate sound" for that feeling of failing to express, by means of language, whatever it is we find most important to express. Below is the whole remark which directly discusses how such a temptation arises in the context of having to justify uses of words that describe and refer to a sensation.

> What reason have we for calling "S" the sign for a *sensation?* For "sensation" is a word of our common language, not of one intelligible to me alone. So the use of this word stands in need of a justification which everybody understands.—And it would not help either to say that it need not be a *sensation;* that when he writes "S", he has *something*—and that is all that can be said**.** "Has" and "something" also belong to our common language.—So **in the end when one is doing philosophy one gets to the point where one would like just to emit an inarticulate sound**… (PI 261, emphasis mine)

This condition of being at a loss for words also seems to be the situation of someone who is in a certain "tip of the tongue experience". In Part *II* of the *Investigations,* Wittgenstein mentions this as view held by William James:

> James, in writing of this subject, is really trying to say: What a remarkable experience! The word is not there yet, and yet in a certain sense is there,—or something is there, which *cannot* grow into anything but this word." (*PI* II xi p.219).

What we can find in Wittgenstein's remarks above is the robust articulation of a temptation which may have a strong descriptive appeal in relation to our experience with the everyday use of language. This resonance holds especially when we reflect on cases where we find ourselves being unable to fully express ourselves to others and yet having a sincere conviction that there is "something" in what we are unable to say. That "something" or meaning is at the tip of our tongue and we are simply unable to say it. I think these phenomenological descriptions also applies to the kind of reading that Lear endorses. In the remarks above, we can find a similar description of how, according to Lear, Wittgenstein finds himself in a situation of failing to express his philosophical consciousness. That philosophical consciousness is an expressible "we-mindedness" that all speakers of a language possess as native speakers of a language, but it is a kind self-consciousness that speakers can only gesture at by some failure of expression.

As such, it seems important to consider Wittgenstein's polemic against this conception of the tip of the tongue experience. That polemic may also apply to Lear. In response to the tendency to consider the tip of the tongue experience as an instance of consciousness which we cannot fully explain, Wittgenstein writes:

> "The word is on the tip of my tongue". What is going on in my consciousness? That is not the point at all. Whatever did go on was not what was meant by that expression. It is of more interest what went on in my behaviour.—"The word is on the tip of my tongue" tells you: the word which belongs here has escaped me, but I hope to find it soon**.** …
> The words "It's on the tip of my tongue" are no more the expression of an experience than "Now I know how to go on!"—We use them in *certain situations,* and they are surrounded by behaviour of a special kind, and also by some characteristic experiences. In particular they are frequently followed by *finding* the word. (Ask yourself: "What would it be like if human beings *never* found the word that was on the tip of their tongue?") (PI II xi p.219)

In this passage, one may simply focus on the kind of *reductio ad absurdum* that Wittgenstein writes in the concluding parenthetical remark, "Ask yourself: 'What would it be like if human beings *never* found the word that was on the tip of their tongue?'" I think this question is an apt summary of what a resolute approach to reading Wittgenstein might "criticize" in Lear's claims about the inexpressible consciousness that is gestured at by philosophical claims about our form of life. "What would it be like if we as users of language *never* found a word that was on the tip our tongue which is also the deepest meaning of 'form of life'"? It is here that a sense of incoherence about Lear's notion of thinking subject and form of life might become palpable. There are times when we might indeed find ourselves unable to explain to others what a form of life consists in, but there are also cases when we are in fact

able to do so. In this context, we might say something similar to what Wittgenstein's writes in *PI* 261: it is only against the background of these cases that the *temptation* to think of our form of life as inexpressible becomes manifest. "Having knowledge of our form of life" might only mean, "'Now I know how to go on!' — We use them [form of life] in *certain situations,* and they are surrounded by behaviour of a special kind…" (ibid.)

To relate this kind of response to Mulhall's resolute exegesis, we can pay attention to how he also integrates *PI* 261 to his exegesis of the private diarist in *PI* 258. There is a dialectic found in *PI* 261 between the need to articulate a justification for the name we give to a sensation and the temptation to give up justification and simply emit an articulate sound. The resolute response in that dialectic might be found in the last sentence in the remark where Wittgenstein writes: "But such [inarticulate] sound is an expression only as it occurs in a particular language-game, which should now be described." It is in the nature of this need to further describe an "inarticulate sound" which philosophy is tempted to "emit" that we can now make sense of what Mulhall describes as the philosopher's need for new and creative use of language. As the ordinary language philosopher bears responsibility for the "meaning" he thinks he understands, he is now bound by some obligation to employ elucidations that can also enable others to understand that meaning. This kind of public understanding seems to be what Wittgenstein articulates in *PI* 261 when he says that a "'sensation' is a word of our common language, not of one intelligible to me alone. So the use of this word stands in need of a justification which everybody understands." This kind of public understanding seems to entail a form of clarification that employs words in new and creative ways. These creative ways of using words are essential as one adopts a trial and error approach that might then enable us to reach public agreement in our uses of language. Or, we in fact reach a case where do not reach such agreement, and we simply come to recognize that we are experiencing a breakdown of language because of our failure to give sense to our expressions.

In this light, we may again look into Mulhall's (2007:107) claim on how understanding Wittgenstein seems to require "acts of reading so personal as to form the possibility of communication without the support of convention, but with the hope of their becoming the source of new conventions." Mulhall writes this remark in the context of his discussion of Cavell's and Wittgenstein's view on how an ordinary language philosopher has the obligation to give voice to the experience of the skeptic (ibid.). But that remark also refers to a resolute way of reading *PI* 261. In that reading, it seems that there is this optimistic view of struggling with our thoughts *and* finding the words to help us become understood. This optimism might then be applied as a therapy for that philosophical tendency to merely emit an "inarticulate

sound". That tendency seems to relate with what Mulhall describes as that aspect of understanding Wittgenstein that bears the meaning of someone who performs "acts of reading possibility of communication without the support of convention" (ibid.). In this approach of giving voice to an interlocutor's "inarticulate sound", the stopping point for the resolute reader is when he finds the "liberating words" that are at the tip of the transcendental reader's tongue.

Thus, I believe that the resolute reading is indeed a superior reading of the philosophical procedure Wittgenstein's aimed at. But it is important to note that this superiority depends largely on how it can show itself to be helping transcendental readers overcome their struggle for expression. This charitable stance to linguistic clarification is what I take "the possibility of resolute transcendentalism" to consist in.

3.5 On Lear's vs. McDowell's reading of form of life

To conclude, let me again give attention to Lear's theoretical reading of Wittgenstein's philosophical treatment of the idea of form of life and point to how this theoretical reading becomes questionable in light of McDowell's therapeutic understanding of that idea.

There is quite a hovering in Lear's understanding of Wittgenstein's use of the term "form of life". On the one hand, Lear portrays Wittgenstein's use of the term to be conveying a deep philosophical concept we are nonetheless able to understand. This understanding comes about as we become involved in the conflicts ubiquitously found in philosophy. These conflicts, according to Lear, are important because it is through our engagement with them that we acquire the linguistic competence which manifests the reflective consciousness that constitutes the idea of form of life. Lear writes:

> Form of life is the philosopher's concept par excellence. One acquires the concept by working through the conflicts within interpretative activity which lead one to posit forms of life in order to legitimate one's judgement. The conflicts [in philosophy, my note] themselves give one the training in the form of life which grounds the acquisition of the concept form of life. (OR, 1989:39)

On the other hand, we can find that Lear is also insistent in portraying the idea of a form of life as an elusive philosophical concept we cannot fully articulate and understand. He writes:

> What emerges from this activity [the reflective activity of understanding "form of life", my note] is the realization that the form of life is not an object. The form of life is not one tribe among others. In its deepest use, all beings who are possible objects of our interpretations are part of the form of life. Thus, the form of life is **not an item with respect to which a philosopher can take an observational stance**: for he cannot get outside it in order to observe it. Neither is it something which he can make an *object* of reflection, for it is not a possible

> object of consciousness – for example, an imagined tribe- can be a form of life only in a more restricted and superficial use of the expression. Such objects may be useful in philosophical thinking. But what the philosopher should come to realize is that they are the ladder which one eventually kicks away. **They are helpful in coming to realize that the understanding one is after could not possibly be constituted in this way**. (ibid.: 40-41, my emphasis)

The passages above are views that continue Lear's exegesis of Wittgenstein's remark, "What has to be accepted, the *given* is – so one could say – forms of life" (PI II, p. 226 as cited in Lear ibid.: 37). Lear finds that remark "ambiguous", and he says that philosophical reflection on that remark may allow us to realize that Wittgenstein intended it to evoke a reflective activity that might help overcome our conflicting conceptions of that idea. For example, between the the view that our forms of life are something "basic" and "incapable of being understood in terms of anything more fundamental", and how it conflicts with the view that it is also "legitimated"; and hence, that it is something that is also distinguishable from being another dogma or "myth of the given." (ibid.)

What I take to be worth emphasizing in Lear's interpretation of that remark on the givenness of our forms of life is how he depicts Wittgenstein as someone who *failed* to fully overcome that dichotomous conception. This can be seen in how he portrays Wittgenstein to be taking a "tragic view" in the philosophical investigation of reflective consciousness. This portrayal depicts Wittgenstein as someone whose therapeutic conception of philosophy is "underdeveloped". Because of this underdeveloped philosophical therapy, Lear does not really take the later Wittgenstein as someone who was able to eschew an observational stance with respect to understanding form of life. As textual proof for this, let me quote in a fuller manner a passage in Lear which I have earlier mentioned in part 1: [158]

> There is a strain of the tragic in Wittgenstein's approach to philosophy. Wittgenstein was immensely aware of the problem of saying anything philosophical. This problem overwhelms his earlier philosophy, and it is not overcome in the *Investigations*. In the *Tractatus*, he rather desperately thought that you could kick away the ladder at the end of philosophy. **In the *Investigations* he is kicking away the ladder – or maybe he is just kicking- all the time.** He is constantly attacking the activity in which he is engaging. There is, for him, no place from which philosophy can be practiced and there is no way legitimately to incorporate philosophical reflection into our lives. The only respectable activity, for Wittgenstein, is to treat therapeutically the impulse toward an essentially futile activity: thus Wittgenstein's compulsive insistence that philosophy must speak the language of everyday, that is must not advance theses, that it must leave everything as it is. **Yet the therapeutic idea is not**

[158] See section 1.3.

> **developed: it is used (rather untherapeutically) as an expression of hostility toward the tragic position he finds himself in.** (ibid.: 38, my emphasis)

Lear's portrayal of Wittgenstein's conception of philosophical therapy as underdeveloped is in stark contrast with that of John McDowell. McDowell's reading of Wittgenstein, like that of Cavell, is considered to be a major inspiration among resolute readers.[159] And so, I now use McDowell's voice to criticize Lear and to further clarify the idea resolute transcendentalism I attribute to Wittgenstein. In McDowell's view, Wittgenstein's use of the term form of life is in fact also therapeutic, and it does not gesture at some kind of "positive philosophy" that endorses a view on the unsurmountable difficulty of acquiring understanding of reflective consciousness. McDowell writes:

> Readers of Wittgenstein often suppose that when he mentions customs, forms of life, and the like, he is making programmatic gestures towards a certain style of positive philosophy: one that purports to make room for talk of meaning and understanding, **in the face of supposedly genuine obstacles**, by locating such talk in a context of human interactions conceived as describable otherwise than in terms of meaning or understanding. But there is no reason to credit Wittgenstein with any sympathy for this style of philosophy. When he says, "What has to be accepted, the given, is—so one could say—forms of life", **his point is not to adumbrate a philosophical response**, on such lines, to supposedly good questions about the possibility of meaning and understanding or intentionality generally, but to remind us of something we can take in the proper way only after we are equipped to see that such questions are based on a mistake**.** His point is to remind us that **the natural phenomenon that is normal human life is itself already shaped by meaning and understanding**. (1992: 50-51 my emphasis)

In relation to Lear, a critical point that McDowell can be understood as making above is how Lear, even in his later works, continues to present the idea of a form of life as a kind of "obstacle" or "limit" on our talk about "meaning" and "understanding." As I interpret McDowell's remark, we can understand Lear to be locating talk about "form of life" in a context of human interaction where our talk about "meaning" or "understanding" implies acceptance of the tragic view that we can only have "partial grasp of our thoughts" (Lear ibid.: 41). That "partial grasp" implies that "the content of our thoughts cannot be fully available to us" (ibid.: 42). This "partial grasp" in Lear is not really negative; it functions as a "programmatic gesture" for understanding that whole which characterizes the activity of reflective interpretation, and of

[159] See how Bronzo (2012) associates the resolute reading with the "influential" collection of readings that was published in *The New Wittgenstein* (Crary 2000a), which then led to how resolute readers are also called "New Wittgensteinians". But Bronzo (ibid.: 48) also mentions how the label becomes a misnomer given how it also draws from "an approach to reading the later Wittgenstein which had already been around for several decades", for example, as found in works of McDowell (1981) and Cavell (1979).

which our partial understanding is nonetheless useful for hinting at that inexpressible whole which is our "form of life". As such, we can find that Lear takes it that Wittgenstein's kicking away of philosophical claims about form of life is not really successful. By the idea of "form of life", Lear ultimately depicts Wittgenstein to be gesturing at something that language cannot represent.

Thus, for Lear, both early and later Wittgenstein continue to have a conflicted attitude in relation to being tempted to go outside our linguistic practices and making philosophical claims about our form of life. On the one hand, Wittgenstein knows that he should simply accept that it is only through the background training provided by our linguistic practices that we are able say anything meaningful about our form of life. But on the other hand, he ends up going outside those practices as he advances remarks which make it appear that his claims about forms of life are meaningful. In writing about these transcendental claims, Lear takes Wittgenstein to adopt an "observational stance" (ibid.: 40) relative to the consciousness we acquire in our linguistic practices. As such, Wittgenstein's reference to the givenness of our form of life (and the uses of "meaning" and "understanding" that come with it) are philosophical ladders that are meant to thrown away upon our understanding of what they are unable to say. Thus, we find Lear (ibid.: 41) saying that in philosophy we come "to realize that the understanding [of reflective consciousness in language, my note] we are after could not possibly be constituted in this way". Thus, he says that the later Wittgenstein can be understood as constantly "kicking away" his claims about form of life all the time (ibid.: 38). These views by Lear do not hold for McDowell; and hence, I believe also for Mulhall's and Conant's respective resolute reading.

In McDowell's account of Wittgenstein's "form of life", Wittgenstein is in fact portrayed as someone who succeeds in not taking an observational stance in relation to our talk of "meaning" and "understanding". There are indeed many cases where Wittgenstein can be understood as writing in a way that aims to evoke the philosophical temptations of his reader. But it seems to me that there are also some remarks in the *Investigations* which can be understood as manifesting in full voice the freedom and clarity of expression that comes with being able to employ new and creative uses of words in everyday language. And as I understand McDowell and the resolute reading, it is not that we *cannot* use terms such as "form of life", "meaning", and "understanding". Rather, "upon being reminded" through resolute dialogue that the "natural phenomenon" of our "normal human life is itself already shaped by meaning and understanding" we may realize that our "philosophical responses" about the limits of language are based on a mistake. In those cases, philosophical elucidation becomes successful and our uses of a words become recreated in a way that they no longer function as a kind prohibition or

limit to what we want to say. Through the literary aspect of Wittgenstein's mode of writing and philosophizing, we might find ourselves employing creative uses of language that can in fact describe the "full content" of the thoughts we were intending to express.[160] In the resolute reading of Mulhall, these aspects of Wittgenstein's philosophy can be found in terms of how Wittgenstein's literary approach becomes inseparable from an endorsement of creativity and innovation in our use of language. That literary approach encourages us to reinvent our ordinary linguistic expressions so we can have greater freedom and clarity of expression.

I take it that it is this ease and freedom of expression is what the resolute transcendentalism in Wittgenstein also aims at. This seems to be what McDowell (1992:51) refers to when we are able to see, through our uses of language, that our "normal human life is already shaped by meaning and understanding". Again, I find that this way of being able to bring our words back to their everyday use in language comes about as a result of how the philosopher and the reader have both submitted themselves to what I have described in Mulhall and Conant as a kind of yielding to the desires in meaning of their interlocutor.[161] I find that what McDowell describes above as Wittgenstein's eschewal of positive philosophizing comes about a result of this kind of "yielding". This yielding comes with a reconstrual of when our expressions become meaningful and nonsensical through what Mulhall (2007:14-15) has described as the "literary" and "perfectionist" dimension of the exchange between a philosopher and his interlocutor: it comes with an exploration of contexts of use under which those desires about meaning might be satisfied (or dissolved) through the full consent of parties involved in the dialogue. This literary exchange also seems to articulate the same idea behind Lear's views on the importance of taking a non-observational stance in understanding the reflective consciousness we acquire in our analysis of language.

Thus, we can find that the central mistake in Lear is not really his emphasis on not taking an observational stance to the philosophical investigation of reflective consciousness in language. Rather, his mistake is on how he takes Wittgenstein to have *failed* in overcoming that observational stance as a result of an "underdeveloped" philosophical therapy.

[160] As I see it, this view can be inferred from what Lear has earlier described as a kind of union between the revisionary and non-revisionary aspect of Wittgenstein's appeal to ordinary language, and from how Wittgenstein employed a conception of philosophy whose methods of linguistic clarification are responsible to everyday use of language in his remark *PI* 120. See my discussion of this ideas in Part 1 as I draw from Lear's LWA and TA.
[161] See also my discussion of this "yielding" in relation to *PI* 374 in Part 2, Chapter 2.

Part 4 - Resolute Transcendentalism on Wittgenstein and Political Thought, Crary vs. Nyíri

In this part of my dissertation, I now consider how the idea of resolute transcendentalism I discussed in part 3 might have application in the context of the debate on the implications of Wittgenstein's later philosophy on political thought. I orient the application of this resolute transcendentalism in relation to clarifying a shared perspective for understanding the contrasting positions taken by JC Nyíri (1982) and Alice Crary (2000b) on the issue of whether Wittgenstein's philosophy implies a form of political conservatism or a type of liberalism.

My discussion shall take as its starting point of analysis Crary's "Wittgenstein's philosophy in relation to political thought" (WRPT, 2000b) . I have found that article significant because of how it provides an example of a resolute reading which discusses how therapeutic insights from Wittgenstein's philosophy comes to have a bearing on political thought. So, my discussion presupposes that Crary's work WRPT can be reappraised. It can be understood as a support for the more recent contention advanced by Conant and Bronzo (2017); i.e., that the resolute reading is not vacuous, and it can also come with insights that have practical significance, say, for example, in the domain of political thought.

According to Crary, Wittgenstein's later philosophy involves an emphasis on the "sensitivities we acquire in learning a language" (2000b:138) and this emphasis implies support for the "ideals of liberal democracy" (ibid.: 141). She presents this view as contrary to that of JC Nyíri. For Crary, Nyíri presents Wittgenstein's later philosophy as implying support for political conservatism and this conservative reading results from having misinterpreted his philosophy as one that takes an external perspective on language. While I take Crary to be right in taking Wittgenstein to be supportive of liberalism of a certain kind, I point out that there are aspects of Nyíri's neo-conservative reading that agrees with her view of how Wittgenstein's later philosophy is firm on criticizing an external perspective on language. Because of this, I point out there are aspects of Nyíri's reading which indicate support for the gradualist form of liberalism that Crary associates with Wittgenstein.

Below are the topics which outline how my discussion shall proceed:

4.1 Mulhall and Crary: a continuity in reading Wittgenstein resolutely

4.2 The external perspective on language: Crary's criticism of Nyíri

4.3 Eschewing the external perspective: Crary's "resolute transcendentalism"

4.4 Nyíri's Neoconservative reading of Wittgenstein and the idea of limits

4.5 Does Wittgenstein's later philosophy imply liberalism or conservatism?

4.1 Mulhall and Crary: a continuity in reading Wittgenstein resolutely

In this section, I would like to make explicit the continuity between the resolute reading of Mulhall in *WPL* and the resolute reading of Crary in WRPT. There will be a certain redundancy in my discussion since I will have to repeat my views on Mulhall's reading of *PI* 500 and *PI* 128. Those same passages are also mentioned and used in Crary's WRPT, and I believe that comparing Mulhall's use of those passages with that of Crary can show the extent to which those two authors agree in their way of reading Wittgenstein's later philosophy in a resolute manner. As I understand Crary, a certain resolute reading of *PI* 500 and *PI* 128 is brought into play as part of her criticism of the so-called "inviolability interpretations" of Wittgenstein (Crary 2000b:120). These inviolability interpretations take Wittgenstein's view of "finding meaning in use" as involving a "use-theory of meaning" where the idea of "attending to use" is taken to mean a way of *fixing* the meaning of an expression.[162] So, though Crary's WRPT may be more immediately classified as an application of Wittgenstein's philosophy to political thought, her critical use of *PI* 500 and *PI* 128 further indicates how those "Wittgensteinian political ideas" [163] fall within the idea of a resolute reading of Wittgenstein that I have described in Parts 2 and 3.

As I have discussed in Part 2, Chapter 2, Mulhall considers *PI* 500 to be functioning as Wittgenstein's meta-remark on what it means to understand his philosophical methods; that is, Wittgenstein's methods of clarification involves an analysis which does not end up treating nonsensical sentences as if they have an identifiable "sense". For purposes of clarity and

[162] See ibid.: 119. See also endnote 3 (ibid: 142) where Crary cites *PI* 43 as the usual passage where the so-called use of theory of meaning is inferred. Crary points out how Wittgenstein himself is careful not to describe the idea of attending to the use of an expression as a view that "fixes or determines" meaning (ibid.) This is presumably because Wittgenstein qualifies that the idea "the meaning of a word in its use in language" applies only to a "large class of cases" and not to all cases.

[163] Crary does not use the term "Wittgensteinian political ideas" and she does not really make any substantive discussion of any particular idea in liberalism, say, for example, about the right to free speech or the right to be free from harm. But she does talk about a certain kind of sensitivity in the use of language that can be drawn from Wittgenstein, and she discusses that sensitivity as supportive of the same liberal values that Rorty endorses. See Crary (2000b: 141).

making this link between Crary and Mulhall explicit, let me again quote *PI* 500 and summarize what I have said about how Mulhall reads the remark:

> When a sentence is called senseless, it is not as it were its sense that is senseless. But a combination of words is being excluded from the language, withdrawn from circulation. (*PI* 500 as cited in Mulhall 2007: 9)

I have previously elaborated Mulhall's use of this remark in relation to how he can also be understood as drawing from Conant's WWAT (2004) as the latter warns about the danger of portraying Wittgenstein to be someone who wavers in his emphasis on the context principle, i.e., the idea that our signs become meaningful only in the context of the whole provided by their use in ordinary language. In this light, I understand *PI* 500 as Wittgenstein's way of alluding to the context principle as he explains that certain "combination of words" are meant to be "senseless" because of how they have not been in use in our linguistic practices. Here, the point that our nonsensical sentences have no use is described in *PI* 500 as a state of being "excluded" or "withdrawn from circulation". *PI* 500 can thus be understood to emphasize the view that when a philosopher takes the perspective of use in his clarification of language, the only type of sentence he ends up with are either ordinary sentences or gibberish. Hence, it is not the case that Wittgenstein's grammatical investigations ends up with nonsensical sentences whose meanings are "impossible" or "wrong" because of how they function as gestures toward contrary transcendental truths. As Conant (2004) says, this view portrays Wittgenstein to be someone who endorses a form of incoherent reasoning: a philosophical claim is considered "nonsensical" to the extent that we do not see its context of significant use and yet it is also "intelligible" to the extent that it enables us to discern truths about grammatical rules (through their violation). Mulhall (2007) follows Conant's emphasis on the context principle in a way that is able to throw away this intelligible nonsense.[164] There is no such thing as a "wrong" or "impossible" meaning conveyed by a nonsensical expression because that whole expression along with its constituent parts come to have meaning *only* in the context of their use in the propositions of ordinary language. This implies that the appearance of a "meaning" or transcendental content which we cannot express is also something that philosophical clarification aims to show as an instance of psychologism. We are meant to overcome and dissolve that psychologism as we acquire the relevant creativity and competence for expressing thoughts in everyday language.

[164] See specifically p. 2-3 of Mulhall's *WPL* (2007) as Mulhall talks about the context principle in terms of the "point of view of logic".

Now, with reference to Crary's use of *PI* 500 in WRPT, we can find this same eschewal of psychologism. Through that remark, we can find Crary portraying Wittgenstein to be someone who takes nonsensical expressions as completely empty when they are viewed from outside our explorations of their use in everyday language (Crary ibid.: 138). Crary now calls this faulty reasoning "coherent nonsense" (ibid.: 121) which can be understood as an alternative label for the "intelligible nonsense" that Mulhall (2007) and Conant (2004) thought Wittgenstein to criticize in *PI* 500. To make the connection between Mulhall and Crary more explicit, let me quote Crary's own mention of *PI* 500 in WRPT:

> It is a characteristic gesture of Wittgenstein's, throughout his work, to distance himself from the idea that when we reject a sentence as nonsense, we do so because we grasp what it is an attempt to say and then discern that *that* cannot be said. (On one occasion, he puts it this way: **calling a sentence senseless is not a matter of identifying a "senseless sense."** [includes a footnote referring to *PI* 500, my note]. (Crary 2000b:121, my emphasis)

The context of this remark comes from how Crary recalls passages in Wittgenstein which are at odds with how inviolability interpreters have portrayed his philosophical procedure. In the view of those interpreters, Wittgenstein draws from a conception of the limits of sense that makes room for "coherent nonsense" (ibid.) Crary uses this label to refer to inviolability interpreters of Wittgenstein who take his ideas of language-games and forms of life to be a thesis on the limits of thought. She says that for these interpreters, critical remarks addressed to our form of life end up as nonsensical in a way that comes to have some content. They are, hence, forms of substantial nonsense: they are nonsensical but at the same time "intelligible because of what they try (unsuccessfully) to say." (ibid.). Crary (ibid.), explains that the analysis of those nonsensical sentences proceeds somewhat like this: the idea of *not* transgressing the limits of sense ends up as a "something", e.g., a transcendental truth about the limits of thought. And "that" is what we are able to grasp in what has been said. After grasping that "meaning", it is when that we realize that what has been uttered cannot be said, i.e., that the language we used is in fact "unsuccessful" in expressing the "meaning" we have somehow understood (ibid.). In the following section, I shall say more about the view from where this analysis is made through what Crary describes as the *illusion* of being able to take an external perspective on language. For now, let me simply state that Crary finds this conception of philosophical analysis as confused. It presumes that a metaphysical utterance is sufficiently coherent in a way that its denial can be understood and meaningfully rejected. In this sense, Crary can be understood as using *PI* 500 to point out this confusion as she points to the emptiness that Wittgenstein aims to make patent in our analysis of metaphysical utterances.

Again, this resolute view may be phrased this way: outside our exploration and debate on our words' contexts of use, we do not grasp anything in the nonsensical sentence.

In relation to Crary's use of *PI* 500, I also find it important how she links up a reading of that remark with *PI* 128. As I see it, this link is how Crary further explains how the application of the context principle in the later Wittgenstein can be understood as *not* endorsing a thesis. She says for instance that to understand the significance of Wittgenstein's remarks on the relation between meaning and use, those remarks must "be understood in a way which does justice, simultaneously, to his remarks about the limits of sense and to his remarks about the nature of his own philosophical procedures" (ibid.). I take Crary here to be providing a hint on how the idea of attending to an expression's "circulation" of language use (in *PI* 500) relates to the idea of having a philosophical procedure that does not involve having to endorse philosophical theses. As I see it, this idea means that if we become firm about the view that our linguistic expressions become nonsensical (because of our inability to project them to possible contexts of use), then those nonsensical expression become empty rather than "wrong". The idea of a "wrong" or "impossible" sense also ends up as a kind of philosophical thesis, and in *PI* 128 Wittgenstein speaks directly about his critical attitude about philosophy's supposed endorsement of theses.

Crary mentions *PI* 128 in relation to her interpretative proposal that Wittgenstein's view of meaning can be better understood when it is separated from views which portray his conception of meaning as *fixed* (ibid.: 199). She insists on this being the case regardless of whether what fixes meaning is the so-called "use" of an expression, or by something like a practice or form of life that is somehow independent of "use". This idea is raised more clearly in her introduction to the articles in the *New Wittgenstein* (Crary 2000a: 2-3) where she talks about how standard readings of the later Wittgenstein fail to capture the therapeutic character of his philosophy through a conception of grammar that fixes the meaning of our words. That conception of grammar, Crary says, also ends up determining the possible combination of words that can become meaningful in a specific circumstance. As I understand it, this idea of fixing meaning turns Wittgenstein's conception of "finding meaning in use" into a *doctrine* rather than an *activit*y. Whenever there is a kind of fixing in meaning, the idea of "use" or "practice" in Wittgenstein becomes a type of mechanical procedure which obscures our view as we look to the uses of an expression, investigate it, and find the meaning of that expression

in that very investigation.[165] As I see it, this idea of "looking and seeing" has an essentially phenomenological nature which undermines the philosophical theses and explanations of meaning that Wittgenstein wanted to eschew. And this is also how we can make sense of how Wittgenstein wanted his philosophical investigations to be something that looks into the "spatial and temporal phenomena of language" and not on "preconceived ideas" of how language is meant to work (*PI* 108,105).

It is with this connected reading of *PI* 500 and *PI* 128 discussed above that we can understand an aspect of Crary's articulation of the implications of Wittgenstein's philosophy to political thought. That drawing of implications is derived from a resolute reading of Wittgenstein that is continuous with the resolute reading of Mulhall and Conant which I have described in Part 2. I find this worth emphasizing. This is because Crary's contends that the reason why writers such as Richard Rorty and JC Nyíri misrepresent Wittgenstein's philosophy on the issue of philosophical thought is because they draw from a misinterpretation of Wittgenstein's "view of meaning" as well as a misleading view of what it means for philosophical clarification to investigate and acknowledge the limits of sense.[166] While Crary (2000b: 121) talks about a conception of the limits of sense that may seem "familiar and natural", she also talks about how that conception of a limit might be confused given how that idea becomes a kind of prohibition on what we might in fact be able to say clearly through our creative uses of language. As I see it, the overcoming of this idea of limits as a prohibition is the criticism that Crary advances against inviolability interpreters of Wittgenstein. This is because these interpreters unwittingly advance a conception of "meaning in use" where the idea of grammar is portrayed as something that fixes meaning.[167] This confusion applies to both Rorty and Nyíri and the conception of meaning from which they draw the political implications of Wittgenstein's later philosophy. In what follows, I shall now orient my discussion of the inviolability interpretation to Crary's criticism of Nyíri.

[165] I draw this claim from Crary's mention of *PI* 43 (See ibid.: 119), and also from the type of linguistic investigation that Wittgenstein pursued when he urged his reader in *PI* 66 to "look and see" at the multifarious relationships and features that make up the application of the word "game".
[166] See Crary (2000b.:118,121).
[167] See ibid. (2000a: 6) as he criticizes the idea of an impermissible thought that comes with the external perspective on language. See also (ibid.: 2) as Crary describes the so-called standard narrative of the continuity in Wittgenstein's thought where the later Wittgenstein is portrayed to have a substantive conception of grammar.

4.2 The external perspective on language: Crary's criticism of Nyíri

While Crary claims that the misreading found in the idea of inviolability interpretation applies to both the Wittgensteinian reading of Nyíri and Rorty, much of her discussion in WRPT is focused on how Rorty endorses a type of liberalism that does not follow from Wittgenstein's later philosophy. There is thus a meagreness in Crary's discussion of Nyíri's reading of Wittgenstein as a consequence of her focus on Rorty. There is, for instance, only one section in WRPT where Crary discusses Nyíri.[168] That discussion even involves an attention that is shared with writers like Gellner who also interpret Wittgenstein as a relativist and conservative philosopher. So, to address this meagreness and to set the background for a more charitable reading of Nyíri in the following section, I shall set aside Crary's polemics against Rorty and orient my discussion towards details of her views about Nyíri.[169]

This is how I shall proceed in my discussion in this section. First, I shall explain the sense in which Crary takes Nyíri's conservative reading of Wittgenstein as falling within the idea of an inviolability interpretation of Wittgenstein. I point out how Crary takes this mistake to be coming from a conception of form of life which becomes a philosophical thesis on the limits of language. Then, I point out how this explanation of meaning connects with the illusion of an external perspective on language, and how Wittgenstein's view of meaning-as-use becomes critical of this illusion.

4.2.1 Nyíri's inviolability interpretation: form of life as thesis

Crary's discussion seems to also allow for different types of inviolability interpretation, and she argues that Nyíri falls within the inviolability interpretation in so far as it ends up with a "use of theory of meaning" that draws from Wittgenstein's ideas about practice and form of life (Crary 2000b: 120). Crary has earlier simplified the idea of inviolability interpretation to refer generally to how some readers of Wittgenstein take "external criticism[s] of our form of life" as impossible, and how this "impossibility" can be seen in the kind prohibition that comes from having turned Wittgenstein's view of meaning-as-use into a form of philosophical theory

[168] See ibid.: 121-122, section (i) "Wittgenstein as a conservative philosopher." I have however found Crary's endnotes very instructive and somehow telling of the influence that Nyíri had on the writing of WRPT as one can find reference to Nyíri in endnotes 1, 13, 14, 15-17

[169] There is an extent to which these details have to be an inference and reconstruction because of the limited claims that Crary makes on Nyíri. I do acknowledge, however, the sense in which this meagerness is not really a fault because it is a natural limit that comes from Crary's different focus (i.e., on Rorty).

(ibid.). We can find this simplified definition in a parenthetical remark that she writes early on in her article:

> For the sake of convenience, I will hereafter refer to interpretations of Wittgenstein on which he develops a use-theory of meaning so that it prohibits external criticism of our form of life as "inviolability interpretations". (Crary 2000b: 120)

This remark applies to Nyíri in so far as Crary portrays his reading of Wittgenstein as endorsing a theory of meaning that involves a conception of "use" linked with the inviolability of our practices and forms of life. [170] In this view, the spade of thinking and meaning-making used in political thought becomes turned upside down when we "bring into question the very practices within which … [our critical concepts] are made to function and become intelligible"(ibid.: 120). This remark about the limits of meaningful criticism of practices involves a kind of "spade turning" in our thinking that seems to parallel Crary's more explicit attention on how Nyíri took Wittgenstein to adhere to the view that "the possibility of other orders does not in the least weaken the inexorable binding force of our own" (ibid.: 122). I shall later quote the passage where Crary refers to this idea in Nyíri. For now, let me focus on how Crary portrays Nyíri's conception of "orders" in terms of how the rules that come from our deeply held practices function as the bedrocks of meaning; these "orders" or rules are the inescapable conditions for the very possibility of understanding any other variant rules. They are bedrocks or limits in this sense. So, similar to the transcendental readers I discussed in Part 1, Nyíri takes Wittgenstein's interest in certain nonsensical sentences to be coming from a conception of philosophy that is aimed at knowledge of the limits of thought.

In light of the abovementioned insights, we can say that Crary presents Nyíri as a kind of transcendental cultural relativist where Wittgenstein is taken to endorse the view that the most fundamental practices or forms of life of a society become both the condition and limit for using language in a meaningful manner. As I earlier mentioned, Crary finds this idea of limits in Nyíri as *prohibitive*; those practices or forms of life become the necessary conditions for any meaningful use of language for agents who are somehow thrown into those practices. This is why, for inviolability interpretations, the only kind of criticism possible are either:

[170] In Crary's discussion of those two writers, the idea of "use" in Wittgenstein becomes used to locate different sources of immunity or inviolability from criticism. In Nyíri's reading of Wittgenstein, this this immunity from criticism seems to be located and drawn from the inexorability of shared practices associated with in an understanding of Wittgenstein's idea of form of life. This is in contrast with that of Rorty where this immunity from criticism is drawn from the more arbitrary stipulations of meaning that can be inferred from Wittgenstein's so-called "pure 'language-game' view of language" (Crary 2000:124-5). In what follows, I limit my discussion to Nyíri and reorient Crary's remarks about the inviolability interpretation in such a way that it further articulates her reading of Nyíri.

1) those forms of "internal criticism" where we reason from within the normative concepts found in those practices, or 2) those "purely rhetorical or persuasive methods" where we accept that the use of our critical concepts are themselves not reasoned or justified (ibid.). The latter, the so-called purely rhetorical methods, take the place of what radical liberals might consider as the needed forms of "external criticism" useful for inducing radical political change.[171] The former, on the other hand, is something that Crary ends up attributing to Nyíri in connection to how he takes the latter to endorse a dogmatic conception of the inexorability of our practices. I take it that it is through this conception of inexorability that Crary is able to connect Nyíri's interpretation of Wittgenstein's view of meaning with his supposed view on the conservative nature of Wittgenstein's later philosophy.

This view of Nyíri as someone who takes Wittgenstein's philosophy as politically conservative draws from Crary's interpretation of how Nyíri construed the idea of "form of life" or "practice" as a philosophical thesis on the limits of sense. This interpretation can be inferred from Crary's remark below:

> Nyíri lauds Wittgenstein for demonstrating how a conservative social attitude towards our own practices (an attitude he thinks is thrust upon us when we appreciate that "traditions cannot be judged") can be compulsory in a world which contains many different social practices, a world which is undeniably pluralistic. Wittgenstein's "solution" to this "neo-conservative paradox," according to Nyíri, is "his insight that the possibility of other orders does not in the least weaken the inexorable binding force of our own." Nyíri argues Wittgenstein should be credited with having demonstrated that, although we can recognize different forms of order in the lives of others, we nevertheless "cannot entertain a liberal attitude as regards irregularities in our *own* society." (Crary 2000b:122)

I have found the passage above as Crary's most explicit and continuous discussion of Nyíri's relativist reading of Wittgenstein and of how that reading takes Wittgenstein's later philosophy to involve a theory of meaning that supports political conservatism. This remark occurs after Crary's discussion of how inviolability interpreters of Wittgenstein consider criticism of deeply established ways of life as unintelligible (i.e., external criticism). The above remark about Nyíri's reading of Wittgenstein as a conservative comes from how Crary classifies Nyíri to be endorsing ideas about how our "given form of life cannot be transcended" (ibid.: 122). This impossibility of transcending our given form of life is linked with a kind of

[171] Crary (ibid.: 120),associates this radical liberalism to Rorty, whom he takes as attributing to Wittgenstein's language-games the idea of a "new vocabulary" that allows for the initiation and pursuit of radical social change. But the idea of "purely rhetorical methods" is something that Crary attributes to writers such as H.O. Mounce and D.Z Philipps on moral discourse, Kai Nielsen on religious discourse, and E. Gellner on intercultural conversations.

unintelligibility that is also connected to a conception of substantial nonsense. We can, for example, find Crary to be explaining how Nyíri rejects external forms of criticism in a way that makes their nonsensicality intelligible:

> [O]ur sentences (namely, those we formulate when we are vainly attempting to criticize forms of life) should be jettisoned as intelligible because of *what it is* – they are intelligible at least to the degree that we can make this out.- they futilely aspire to say (ibid.)

Crary's analytical remark above shows that, on her reading of Nyíri, the sentences we use to criticize forms of life are not really nonsensical in an empty manner. I take it that this failure to see that emptiness comes from how the idea of transcendental negation also applies to the reasoning that Crary attributes to Nyíri. Let me illustrate this transcendental negation that I have discussed in my previous chapters in a way that parallels the reasoning in the abovementioned remark. First, we might encounter the claim, "Bribery is unjust". Then, that claim might be shown as nonsensical from the perspective of certain societies that consider particular forms of gift-giving as a way of showing gratitude or affirming good relations. From that clarification, the claim "Bribery is unjust" is taken to be somehow falsified, say, for example, by the claim "Bribery is not unjust". But I take it here that such a claim is not simply presented as a truth claim that might be capable of being directly affirmed. On account of the kind of falsification that can be made possible by more counter-examples, one comes to acquire a transcendental insight, for example, about how the practices in our culture function as the very condition for the possibility of understanding what it means for an action to be just or unjust. So, we might say as a matter of simplification that Crary takes Nyíri to be saying: "In a transcendental sense, it is our practices that constitutes meaning." And we discover these transcendental practices through the way other peoples' practices become nonsensical to us.

In the context of this kind of transcendental reasoning, the earlier remarks above which Crary quotes from Nyíri turn out to be forms of theses about the limits of sense; they are insights about the very framework of judgement which we are able to infer from the negation of a claim that is supposedly nonsensical. Here, there is a kind hovering in understanding those normative claims (e.g. "Bribery is unjust."). On the one hand, they are considered to be utterances *we do not understand at all* unless we situate ourselves in the practices under which they are uttered and from there investigate those utterances' contexts of use. On the other hand, they are also claims that we understand as *false* or *wrong* based on a certain transcendental thesis about the conditions of our own judgment; i.e., that our practices determines what counts as just. Crary can be understood as taking Nyíri to be presenting this transcendental thesis as something we

are somehow able to understand in a philosophical nonsense. These transcendental theses are what our nonsensical sentences in philosophy "futilely aspire to say" (ibid.). In this context, the remarks that Crary (ibid.: 122) cites from Nyíri above end up as transcendental theses.

These transcendental theses are:

1) "[T]he given form of life cannot be *consciously* transcended."
2) "[T]raditions cannot be judged."
3) "The possibility of other orders do… not weaken the inexorable binding force of our own."
4) "[We] cannot have an entirely liberal attitude as regards irregularities in our *own* society."

I take it that, for Crary, these remarks end up as philosophical theses about the relativity of our form of life which Wittgenstein aims to clarify indirectly through the analysis of nonsensical sentences. Thus, the first of Nyíri's remark on how our form of life cannot be transcended can be understood as kind of baseline remark from which the other remarks might be inferred

As I see it, these philosophical theses come from a process of transcendental reasoning (i.e., transcendental negation) that comes from the illusion of understanding which Crary calls "the external perspective on language". Crary finds it important that we understand Nyíri's reading of Wittgenstein as falling into this illusion, and so it is to that idea that I now discuss.

4.2.2 Nyíri as taking the illusion of an external perspective on language

The idea of the external perspective on language is central to what Crary considers as the mistake of inviolability interpreters in understanding Wittgenstein's view of meaning and philosophical method. This is because it is when we take the external perspective on language that we turn Wittgenstein's view of meaning into a thesis and take his philosophical procedure to involve "coherent nonsense". It also seems to be the perspective which makes it appear that the idea of transcendental negation is plausible. I have already discussed these insights in Section 4.1 in terms of Crary's resolute reading and her interrelated use of *PI* 500 and *PI* 128. However, my discussion in that section did not make any mention of the illusion of an external perspective and of how Nyíri falls into that illusion. This has been intentional so that I can give that idea a more focused treatment in this section. So, in what follows, I shall now address this lack. I shall clarify the idea of an external perspective on language and explain how Crary takes Nyíri as falling into that illusion.

One way to understand what Crary describes as the illusion of an external perspective on language is to relate it to the kind of irresolutism that comes from interpreting Wittgenstein as someone who dithers in his emphasis on the context principle. I have found this approach useful in understanding Crary's manner of reading Wittgenstein resolutely. Her idea of falling into the illusion of an external perspective on language seems to become a kind of correlate for when we construe the meaning of our expressions in a way that has not fully overcome psychologism. I have earlier defined psychologism broadly in terms of what Conant (2001b) has described as whatever meaning we think we are able to understand outside our interrogation of an expression's context of use. Crary now seems to describe this psychologism in terms of the kind of investigation independence that makes us think that Wittgenstein's ideas of "grammar," "use", and "forms of life" are ideas that fix meaning. As I see it, this fixing of meaning is what obstructs our full exploration and debate on an expression's context of use and how that exploration can lead us to develop and acknowledge linguistic sensitivities shared by those involved in the debate. We can see this in terms of how Crary herself explicitly writes about the external perspective on language:

> When Wittgenstein urges us to attend to use … his aim is to get us to see that a specific kind of investigation of use is relevant to answering our questions about meaning. The kind of investigation in question can only be undertaken by someone competent in a given region of discourse. **It calls for exploring contexts of use in a way which draws on sensitivities acquired in learning the language**. Wittgenstein wants us to recognize that it is only in so far as we thus survey the use of a word that we are in a position to say whether a given projection of a word preserves its meaning. Only now can we say whether the projection is a *natural* one, whether the connections with other uses of the word it respects are important. **In the context of the idea of an external perspective on language, however, it appears that any investigation of this kind is beside the point.** (Crary 2000b:137-8, emphasis added)

I find the passage above important because it makes evident how the idea of an external perspective on language comes from a certain kind of neglect or misunderstanding of Wittgenstein's emphasis on the context principle. In this passage, I take Crary to refer to Wittgenstein's emphasis on the context principle through Wittgenstein's way of urging his readers to "attend to use". This whole remark however occurs in the context of Crary's *criticism* of the view that Wittgenstein's discussion of the contingency of our concepts is meant to be understood as a way of endorsing a conventionalist account of logical necessity (see ibid.: 134-139). Within this context, she mentions Wittgenstein's discussion of people who have radically different ways of calculating and reasoning where the reader is brought face to face with some

realization about the contingency of his concepts.[172] Among these examples are the people in *RFM* 155 who do not accept a mistake in coming up with different results for the same calculation, the people selling goods in *RFM* 153 who do not have regard for the number of coins they give and receive, and the wood sellers in *RFM* 159 who sell piles of timber for a price based only on the area the pile covers.[173] In these cases, the idea of an external perspective on language becomes relevant in dealing with the kinds of differences and the forms of nonsensicality that those cases present. This is because Crary portrays the external perspective on language to be the perspective under which we are *tempted* to infer a conventionalist understanding of Wittgenstein's call to find the meaning of an expression in its use in language.

In the case of Nyíri, this conventionalist view becomes expressed in terms of how the experience of non-understanding in our encounter with different practices leads to a kind of transcendental thesis on the inexorability of our forms of life. And here we may now understand Nyíri in terms of how Crary takes standard readers of Wittgenstein's later philosophy to be making a substantive claim from "something like a negation" of a metaphysical utterance.[174] What makes that kind of negation appear legitimate is the idea of an external perspective on language which is described above by Crary as that which neglects the need to survey contexts of use in a way that draws from the sensitivities we acquire in the course of that investigation.

I find that Crary's description of the external perspective fits very well with how it becomes the perspective through which the idea of a transcendental negation becomes mistakenly associated with Wittgenstein's philosophical procedures. As I earlier mentioned, someone who adheres to the idea of a transcendental negation wavers in the application of the context principle in the analysis of the signs making up a nonsensical expression. On the one hand, it treats those signs as completely empty outside the connections in meaning that is discovered during our actual investigation and debate about those signs' context of use. On the other hand, it also treats those signs as somehow intelligible in light of their link with a "meaning" that those nonsensical sentences are unable to express because of how the structure of our language is so dependent on them.

When we relate this to the sense of Crary's would be portrayal of Nyíri's transcendental reading, we might say that Nyíri is a strong transcendental reader because of how he leans more

[172] Thus, Crary (ibid.: 137) is also using the passage as a kind of synthetic remark for her discussion of passages from the *Remarks about the Foundation of Mathematics* in section 2 (i) and (ii).
[173] All these examples from *RFM* are in Crary (2000b ibid.: 135). I shall later discuss in more detail the wood-sellers example in RFM 159.
[174] See Crary (2000a: 4) as she depicts this approach as the standard account of the continuity in Wittgenstein's later philosophy. See also my discussion in Part 1 especially the transcendental negation that can be found in Williams and Lear.

onto the latter; that is, the nonsensical sentences that philosophy examines shows the transcendental truth of how our established practices or forms of life determine meaning. It is in this sense that we can take Crary to also attribute this claim to Nyíri: "genuine criticism can only be possible if meaning is somehow fixed independently of use" (ibid.: 130). Hence, the idea of form of life becomes important because it is the transcendental convention through which we are able to find meaning in the face of the contingency of our concepts.

In light of this, *PI* 500 and *PI* 128 become relevant in the way I have earlier discussed in Section 4.1 of this chapter. This is because the idea of a transcendental negation takes Wittgenstein to be involved in a philosophical analysis of nonsensical sentences whose sense is senseless (i.e., substantial nonsense). That negation on how our form of life determines meaning also becomes a thesis or philosophical explanation of meaning. And this determination of meaning undermines the need to explore contexts of use that draw from the sensitivities we only acquire in the course our exploration of that language use. In this last aspect, what Crary (ibid.: 122) says about the inviolability interpretations' neglect of Wittgenstein's view about the "unstable [nature] of the limits of sense" applies to this feature of Nyíri's Wittgenstein. When there is a failure to become resolute in the application of the context principle, the ideas of practice and form of life become notions that fuel the illusion of an external perspective on language.

To sum up, we can say that Crary takes Nyíri to be falling into the illusion of an external perspective on language because: 1) he neglects the significance of Wittgenstein's emphasis on the context principle in relation to the idea of form of life, 2) he portrays Wittgenstein's notion of form of life as a thesis on how our practices fixes meaning (hence, disregards *PI* 128) and 3) he takes Wittgenstein's philosophical method as involving transcendental negations which induce forms of "coherent nonsense" (hence, disregards *PI* 500).

4.3 Eschewing the external perspective: Crary's "resolute transcendentalism"

In light of my previous discussion, Crary's idea of not taking an external perspective on language can be understood as a way of being resolute in our emphasis on the context principle, This resolute emphasis explores the use of an expression, deals with the contingent responses we encounter in that exploration, and then develops sensitivities from that exploration which might be used to recognize the meaning of an expression (or its lack thereof). I draw this idea from the quote in the earlier section where Crary explains her own reading of what Wittgenstein meant when he asked his readers to "attend to use". What I would now like to focus on from

that remark by Crary (2000b:137-8) are details of what I perceive to be a certain kind of Aristotelianism as she refers to Wittgenstein's exploration of contexts of use as one that: 1) draws on "sensitivities acquired in learning the language", 2) "can only be undertaken by someone competent in a given region of discourse", and 3) allows for a "natural" projection of a meaning of a word. I shall proceed to discuss the first two points in a way that leads to the third one, which I take to be related to Crary's resolute transcendentalism as she attempts to rescue the meaning of words like "meaning" and "criticism" back from their metaphysical to their everyday use (ibid.: 130).

4.3.1 On the idea of drawing on "sensitivities"

The first thing that strikes me as having an Aristotelian character in Crary's view of Wittgenstein's way of "attend[ing] to use" is her depiction of it as something that involves being able to "draw on sensitivities acquired in learning the language" (ibid.). I find the idea of sensitivities here reminiscent of how Aristotle talks about virtue as something that does not come from principles or rules, but from the practical wisdom (*phronesis*) of the virtuous man. For Aristotle (2000), the "mean" which characterizes virtuous actions is something that is relative and inexact. And so, being able to hit this "mean" as the aim of our action implies a certain skill for good approximation. This skill is the good judgment that comes from the acute perceptive skills of the virtuous man, which he has acquired and developed in the practice of doing virtuous actions. There is thus a sense here in which virtue is constituted by the ability of the virtuous man to perceive in an accurate manner what the situation is and what kind of action it requires.[175] A similar conception of *phronesis* seems to be useful in clarifying the "sensitivities" Crary speaks of. As I understand her discussion, these are sensitivities developed in the same way we come to develop kinds of shared responses and modes of understanding when we engage in a linguistic practice and find our way about as participants of that practice. These practices, while not always understood as part of our judgment, end up as something that is constitutive of our actual judgment and of what counts as a correct application of a rule in our practice. The constitutive character of these sensitivities is something that Nyíri missed

[175] See, for example, McDowell's "Virtue and Reason"(1979) for a more thorough discussion of the phronesis that is operative in Wittgenstein's rule following considerations. McDowell describes phronesis in terms of the sense of salience that one brings into a virtuous man's practical judgment about a situation. He discusses this sense of salience as the minor premise of an argument when that practical judgment is expressed in syllogistic form. That minor premise has practical significance because it somehow constitutes what will count as the relevant kind of action needed to respond to the situation (which McDowell takes to be uncodifiable). I take Crary to be also drawing from that article in terms of her emphasis on the kind of "sensitivities" we acquire as we investigate an expression's context of use.

when he construed the Kantian character of Wittgenstein's writing in terms of a thesis on the inexorability of our practices.[176] There is indeed something shared in this idea of sensitivities, but this kind of shared judgment is not something fixed; i.e., it is not a necessary condition. It is rather something that presents itself as useful for the need to understand the use of a concept in a given stretch of discourse. The idea that it is a sensitivity also seems to imply that it is capable of being refined and even changed as it gets informed by the contingent responses from within the continuity of the relevant discourse.

To make my discussion more concrete, we might consider what this exploration of contexts of use in Crary amounts to in the case of the so-called strange wood sellers that runs through what Wittgenstein writes in *RFM* I, § *147-150.* In *RFM* § 149, Wittgenstein writes that these wood sellers " [pile] the timber in heaps of arbitrary, varying height, … [sell] it at a price proportionate to the area covered by the pile" and then justify that practice with the remark "Of course, if you buy more timber, you must pay more". Crary cites this example in her discussion of the contingency of concepts which she claims to be something that Wittgenstein wanted us to face.[177] I believe that it is a good example for those types of cases where we encounter modes of understanding that are so different from ours to the extent that our very idea of consistency and justification is put into question. In her discussion of these cases, Crary claims to bring our understanding of the limits of criticism back to everyday use through a line of interpretation that might run as follows.

If we encounter people selling timber for the area covered regardless of the height, acceptance of the difference in the relationship between quantity and price is not always the end of the matter. It may just be the beginning. One might also have to consider the fact of continuous social interaction between the seller and the buyer. For example, in the conversations that follow, the wood sellers might end up seeking for some form of internal consistency in the way they practice selling timber. This search for consistency might occur to them because of the realization that they give way more effort in gathering this heap of timber over another heap (even as both heaps cover the same area). So the continuous transaction

[176] Crary (2000b:145, endnote 67) says that this is the Kantian character that Rorty missed. It cannot be said that Nyíri has missed that character. But as I shall show later, Crary seems to take Nyíri as misinterpreting the resolute character of this Kantian perspective in Wittgenstein because of how Nyíri ends up endorsing a thesis on the limits of sense as opposed to simply bringing our words back to their context of use in everyday language.

[177] Here, Crary (2000b ibid.: 135, 145 endnote 59) acknowledges drawing from Cavell's discussion of the woodsellers' in *The Claim of Reason* p. 115-25. I limit my discussion to the wood sellers example for purposes of brevity, but the insights I raise also applies to other cases she gives (e.g., those found in *RFM* 153 and 155). See Crary (2000b:135), see also my description of these cases in the previous section.

between the buyer and wood sellers might in fact help the wood sellers pay attention to a difference that leads to the recognition that the height of the timber heap is also relevant in determining its selling price. It is possible that the wood sellers may just be new to the practice of selling timber, and interaction with a foreign buyer who has a different way of calculating price presents an inconsistency that prods reflection about the internal consistencies in their own practice of timber selling. It is, of course, also possible that they might not acknowledge that the difference in height of the timber heap is something significant. This might happen, for example, if they are unusually strong and find the activity of gathering timber a leisurely activity rather than a tedious one. In that latter case, the area covered by the timber would then stay insignificant and they can agree to disagree by acknowledging that they do not know our concepts at all. But in both cases, the fact as to whether the difference in their concept of estimating price is something trivial or significant *cannot be determined* prior to our actual involvement in the linguistic practices where the buying and selling of timber occurs. Such a determination would count as taking an external perspective on language.

My discussion here of what it means not to take an external perspective on language in the case of the wood-sellers is rather lengthy. But it is parallel to how Crary explicitly articulates her own view of how Wittgenstein asks us to acknowledge the contingency of concepts as we attend to the use of an expression. She writes:

> Our first attempt to convince them may not be the end of the matter. We may be inclined to think that they really are 'following a rule which escapes us', and we may accordingly try new demonstrations with them. For instance, we may say: 'Surely, you don't believe that if we wait a little bit numbers which give one sum might come out to more.' And perhaps they reply: 'But naturally we do.' We try yet again: 'But isn't it absurd to think that a man could correctly calculate on one day and that he needs 10 foot boards for a building project only to determine on the next day… that he needs 12 foot boards'. And they respond: 'Where's the absurdity?' Perhaps, at least for the time being, this is the end of the matter… We may nevertheless continue to assume we will find our feet with them, possibly by attempting to make sense of the behaviour using different concepts. (Crary 2000b:135)

Crary presents a line of reasoning above in a way that also parallels her earlier discussion of a passage in Wittgenstein's *Zettel* where a tribe member have become too dazed and confused from a serious injury and it is the other members of the tribe who can in fact "know" that the person is indeed in pain. Crary argues against taking as nonsensical those types of knowledge claims to the private sensation of others. This is because of her view that not taking the external perspective in matters of "use" implies that we actually investigate the different practices that come with the use of the expression "pain", make contrasts and

connections *within* our investigation of that expression, and develop a judgment from that investigation. [178] And so, Crary explains that it is only in the context of such an investigation that we are able to recognize whether a particular feature of a practice in the use of an expression functions as an accidental difference or an essential one. It may turn out that the difference in our linguistic practice is in fact accidental and we can actually say the same thing in the use of different expressions, but it may also turn out that the difference is essential and we simply have to profess our ignorance in the way we understand others' use of language. The point is that these are "differences" we must investigate and discover, and they are not differences we can "simply assume" (ibid.)

It seems to me that the mode of analysis given in these examples becomes mindful of an insight that can be drawn from *PI* 290. In that remark, Wittgenstein reminds us that being able to answer the question of whether something is the "beginning" or the "end" of our attempts to describe the use of the expression "pain" cannot be settled unless we play the relevant language-games themselves. When we transfer this remark to our attempts to understand the uses of expressions related to calculating and reasoning given above, we might say that our particular description of different criteria for the use of an expression need not be the end of philosophical clarification. As Wittgenstein writes in the concluding part of *PI* 290, "You need to call to mind the differences between the language-games". This concluding remark can be understood as a response to the position taken by inviolability interpreters as they interpret Wittgenstein's idea of language-games and forms of life to be an endorsement of a limit to what we can describe by means of language. But we can also find how Wittgenstein's remarks in *PI* 290 problematize the idea of a limit or terminus of description (even if that description were the criteria we use for our private sensations). And this is because the very idea of a language-game is a conception that may offer a way of questioning the criteria we give. Like the case of the wood seller's or even in the injured tribe member in *Zettel*, personal descriptions of a particular case of language use may not be "the end of the matter" because those descriptions may fail to satisfy the actual need for action in the relevant domain of discourse. In this sense, even the criteria we give may show themselves to be the mere

[178] See Crary (2000b: 133) as she compares cases where doubt about one's own pain does not make sense with those cases where doubting one's pain may in fact make sense. Crary's discussion of the use of the pain expression in *Zettel* is similar to Mulhall's Cavellian exposition of the grammar "I know I am in pain" (See my previous discussion of this in Section 2.2.4.2). There are indeed cases where the concept of doubting or justification do not have meaningful application to the expression "I know I am in pain", for example, in its use for articulating first person immediate experiences. But such cases are just one among the language-games possible. The case of the tribe member in *Zettel* also shows the significance of the possibility of considering cases where such claims about one's own experience of pain is trumped by the need to consider the epistemic condition of the relevant linguistic agent, for example, when one is too dazed to effectively register immediate recognition of his own pain.

"beginning" of philosophical clarification as the contingent responses we develop in a practice continue to inform our ways of understanding and using words. Thus, *PI* 290 along with the analysis of the cases above can be understood as a criticism of the way inviolability interpreters like Nyíri have unwittingly construed Wittgenstein to be endorsing the idea of language-games and forms of life as a limit of language and reason.[179]

To sum up: Crary's appeal to sensitivities in relation to the idea of what it means not to take a perspective external to language is apt. The notion of *sensitivities* emphasizes a connection with strategies and techniques we develop in understanding the contingent responses we encounter as we talk to others with whom we differ and from whom we continue to seek some form of mutual understanding. As we investigate the meaning of an expression, it means being able to ask further questions and give clarificatory examples. It means not brushing these inquiries off through appeal to a conception of "use" or "convention" that fixes meaning like that of Nyíri. Crary believes that if we are to consider Wittgenstein's claims on the contingency of concepts, we should not favour any inviolability interpretation, whether it is Nyíri's view that meaning is fixed by convention or even that of Rorty where meaning is fixed by the "experimental" nature of Wittgenstein's language-game inspired vocabulary.[180] Such substantive interpretations involve theses which prevents us from seeing the actual differences in our investigations of use in language. So, in light of its way of acknowledging facts about the contingency of our concepts, Crary's idea of what it means not to take an external perspective on language implies that meaning and the limits of sense is not fixed at all. The terms "language-games" and "forms of life" in Wittgenstein are not inviolable bases of meaning. They are rather useful gestures towards an engaged process of socio-linguistic criticism.[181]

[179] In this context, my discussion of the idea of rule-following also relates to the idea of private language. The idea of following a rule as a transcendental or non-empirical phenomena in Lear relates to the substantial reading of the idea of a private language where Wittgenstein's idea of form of life becomes a limit to what language can describe. Crary's discussion of Wittgenstein's view about the contingency of concepts may be understood also as a criticism of the substantial conception of following a rule and private language that can be drawn from Lear's idea of form of life. See also Leich and Holtzman (1981) for a more explicit discussion of the relation between rule following, the idea of a private language, and relativism.

[180] With reference to Rorty, Crary (2000b) often speaks of a "Wittgensteinian vocabulary" (p. 128-129,141) for agitating social change. This vocabulary is supposedly motivated by "pure 'language-game' view of language" (p. 124,126) found in Wittgenstein's later philosophy. See also Crary (ibid.: 144, endnote 31) where she discusses the "experimental" and "liberating" aspect of this Wittgensteinian vocabulary by drawing from Rorty's "Contingency, Irony, Solidarity" (1989) and "Feminism and Pragmatism" (1998).

[181] See, for example, my previous discussion in Part 3 (Section 3.5) on how McDowell criticizes a programmatic conception of form life that can be seen in the reading of Lear.

4.3.2 On the idea of competencies in a given region of discourse

My discussion above about the Aristotelian nature of Crary's appeal to sensitivities acquired in learning a language might now also connect with her view on how Wittgenstein's investigations of use can only be pursued by those who have "competence in a given region of discourse" (ibid.). I believe that this remark is not meant to be understood as involving a kind of bracketing that excludes the possibility of understanding for those who do not have a similar or shared linguistic competence. Crary's idea of "competence in a region of discourse", I believe, is linked with how the sensitivities we use in dealing with variant practices are themselves in some sort of flux. These sensitivities can be refined and changed in the course of our debate on the meaning of a concept. Hence, the competencies Crary speaks of may also be conceived as a kind of discovered task as we attempt to recreate our ways of using language to achieve clarity in thought.[182]

It is in this context that we might also understand how Crary's idea of sensitivities in learning a language relates with her views on how non-moral or non-political modes of thought might have some bearing on judgments found within the moral or political domain. I find that this is a consistent view that Crary (2005, 2007) pursues in her writings as she challenges what she calls a narrow conception of objectivity which confines the study of ethics only to specific domains of thought. She argues that our neglect of these non-moral domains have the effect of also neglecting modes of judgment and action which also often find its way into more explicit spheres of moral judgment. Her article WRPT seems to point to this line of thought as her concluding remark talks about the need to "use imagination in a variety of ways, to seek experiences that refine our sensitivities, and so on." (2000b: 141). As I see it, this remark is her suggestion on how we might arrive at the "facts of a situation" (ibid.: 142) and respond to the challenge of understanding established modes of thought that might have a bearing on our political life. Hence, this suggestion also gives us some idea of what Crary meant with her view of how Wittgenstein called for a way of investigating use that can only be undertaken by those who have competencies on a given region of discourse. It means that in the face of our encounters with people who seem to have different concepts, Wittgenstein's approach would be some kind of suspension of judgment that nonetheless draws from the honest articulation of our biases and then testing those biases in the course of our dialogue with others. [183] Again, this

[182] See, for example, Crary's concluding remark on how these sensitivities may perhaps need further development and require a stretch of the imagination (ibid. 2000b: 141).
[183] See, for example, 2000b (ibid.: 137) as Crary's attributes a certain kind of suspension of judgment to how mathematical strangers calculate in relation to our awareness of the nonsensicality we encounter in our attempts

seems to be a kind of middle way that overcomes a dichotomy between, on the one hand, the unrealistic pretention that our own existing modes of judgment do not influence our understanding of other peoples' practices and, on the other hand simply, being uncritical in the use of our modes of judgment in understanding their practices. Here, I believe that Crary's approach involves a kind of concession with the transcendental reading's view that the nonsensical sentences we encounter in philosophy enable us to understand our own way of seeing the world. The difference is that Crary's reading invites us to go further so that this self-knowledge does not become another form of psychologism (or empty thesis on the idea of limits). As I see it, her way of overcoming the dichotomies of fixing meaning implies being able to also somehow criticize this self-knowledge (say, for example, in our way of seeing the world) so that we can find better ways to talk to others. I think this is partly what she means for Wittgenstein to be calling for an exercise of "rational responsibility" in our clarification of language where the ideas of "practices" and "use" do not undermine the distinct kind of human agency found in the use of language.

Now, let me sum up my view of this second feature of what it means not to take the external perspective on language: when Crary said that the explorations of context of use that Wittgenstein speaks of are those which can be pursued only by those who have competencies in a given region of discourse, she is not referring to competencies that are fixed and that are possessed by people in a way that others cannot acquire. As I understand it, the occurrence of this remark does not present the idea of linguistic competencies as a given but as a task we discover as we undertake our actual investigation of language use. Those "competencies" refer to sensitivities we might further "refine" or develop so we can arrive at some "facts about a situation" especially when we deal with the language uses of those whom we "conflict" with because of some difference in training or culture (ibid.: 142).

4.3.3 A natural projection of meaning: Crary's "resolute transcendentalism"

The way that Crary phrases her concluding remark on how there might be a way of refining our sensitivities so we arrive at the "facts of a situation" (ibid.) seems to relate well with the third point she makes: the idea of not taking the external perspective on language also acknowledges the possibility of projection of words that are "natural". I take it that these

to understand them. She says we cannot assert that they are "calculating … badly". She claims that there is tendency to misinterpret this suspension of judgment as a kind of quietism that excuses intellectual responsibility. In contrast with Crary's view on how this suspension of judgment or quietism might in fact be a "style" that is internal to Wittgenstein's view of meaning (see ibid.: 134), I argue against that misinterpretation by pointing out that those are cases where Wittgenstein evokes the need for new and creative uses of language in his reader.

projections of words also become natural because of how they can involve the "preservation of meaning" in our uses of words even as we talk to other people with different modes of thought. As I see it, this charitable exercise of clarifying language use in Crary is her form of resolute transcendentalism; she brings back the uses of words from their metaphysical to their natural occurrence in everyday language.[184] This process of bringing our words back to their everyday use allows for a projection of words that are natural. It also indicates how Wittgenstein endorsed a mode of philosophical clarification that is capable of showing how the meaning of words can still be the "same" despite their occurrence in a different instance of linguistic exchange. To discuss this point, let me begin by again citing a part of her remark on what it means to understand Wittgenstein's view of finding meaning-in-use:

> Wittgenstein wants us to recognize that it is only in so far as we thus survey the use of a word that we are in a position **to say whether a given projection of a word preserves its meaning**. Only now can we say **whether the projection is a *natural* one**, whether the connections with other uses of the word it respects are important. (Crary 2000b:138 emphasis added)

I interpret this remark as part of Crary's attempt to show that there is something in Wittgenstein's modes of philosophical clarification that does not simply show that our claims are illusory; they also show how our claims might have an everyday use. Thus, when we are able to "attend to use" in the way that Wittgenstein really intended, we might find that there may be cases when we can in fact say that the words we use have the same meaning despite their occurrence in a different practice. This sameness in use is something that we can clarify and describe by drawing on the "contingent responses we possess as language-users" (ibid.: 137), i.e., when we do not take an external perspective on language. Like in the case of the wood sellers in *RFM* 149 and the "epistemic use" of pain language by the tribe members mentioned in *Zettel,* the "sensitivities" we develop from our investigations of use help us see if there is sameness in meaning despite the difference in practice (e.g., the wood-sellers' case) or if there is a difference in meaning of the same word because of its occurrence in the practice (e.g, the *Zettel* case). I earlier belabored the point on how this view on the issue of sameness of meaning involves a way of attending to use that does not pre-empt specific discoveries in judgments that might come from our actual investigations of those words. Such investigation involves making contrasts that helps us see whether the differences in the features of our practice are "essential" in a way that they constitute a significantly different meaning or if they are features that are "accidental" in a way that their meaning becomes practically the same.

[184] See ibid.: 130 on how Crary also draws from Wittgenstein's remark in *PI* 116 for this.

In this regard, Crary's way of taking Wittgenstein to be criticizing an external perspective on language implies a charitable approach in dealing with others whose modes of thinking are so different that their utterances strikes us as nonsensical. In those cases, Wittgenstein's way of clarifying language use becomes open to acknowledging the possibility of clarifying and understanding the meaning he intends to express. Or, it at least engages that person in a discourse that might allow for the emergence of shared competencies for recognizing that the pertinent use of a word is empty and not understood at all. I find that this kind of nonsensicality is austere in the sense that the failure to understand a nonsensical remark is *not* interpreted as an endorsement of the view that there is something in the structure of language that prohibits us from saying whatever "it" is we are unable to say. It portrays Wittgenstein's clarificatory approach of bringing our words back to their context of use as also involving a kind of trust that we can in fact recreate our uses of words so that we can figure out how to express clearly the "meaning" we intend to say (or otherwise acquire the ability to discern when "it" is fact an illusion). The kind of charity and openness that characterize this kind of philosophical clarification is the sense in which I take Crary to also be also employing a resolute transcendentalist approach with regards to her criticism of inviolability interpreters.

This resolute transcendentalism is absent in the inviolability interpretation of Nyíri because his views about the inexorability of our forms of life become prohibitive. For Crary, Nyíri adopts a conception of limits of sense which prevents us from pursuing an investigation of use that might enable us to recognize different ways in which "sameness in meaning" might be preserved. Crary's resolute transcendentalism is contrary to this supposed position. She adopts philosophical clarification that is permissive in the sense that it does not take Wittgenstein's use of nonsense to be his way of prohibiting different uses of words. Rather, it construes ideas such as forms of life as an appeal to further investigate our expressions' contexts of use and understand and use language creatively (as opposed to simply accepting the limits of sense or description). For Crary, since these so-called limits are themselves constituted by the contingent responses we acquire in learning the language, it follows that they are unstable. And so, a better way to deal with the expressions we find nonsensical in others is not to shun away those expressions, but to clarify and investigate what they might possibly mean. Here, I find Crary's mention of "rational responsibility" (ibid.: 140) in the use of language particularly relevant. Because the limits of sense are not fixed, we must be ready to give further reasons and amend our uses of words so we can clearly express what we mean in the face of misunderstanding.

In this light, we can find Crary suggesting how it becomes misplaced to simply deny the uses of words like "truth" and "knowledge" and "accurate representation of the facts of the matter" (ibid.: 129). Such an approach backfires in the sense that the means through which such a denial arises becomes another form of metaphysics. I have called this approach "transcendental negation" while Crary describes it as a "mysterious capacity" (ibid.) for criticizing metaphysical utterances which is found in Rorty. The same polemic might be construed for Nyíri and the transcendental negation I have earlier associated with his views. By contrast, I think that the resolute transcendentalism in Crary offers a way of using language, and hence, also of reasoning from where we and where our interlocutors are. This relational aspect of language is something that Nyíri missed because he ends up denying the possibility of using meaningful language in talking to others with extremely variant ways of looking at the world. As I understand Crary, it is not that such denial is "mistaken" as if her criticism of Nyíri's position would end up as another "coherent nonsense". Rather, if skeptical claims about the possibility of meaningful communication with others indeed arises, those claims should not be presumed or accepted in advance. They should come *naturally* as insights that arise from our persistent attempts to figure out how to talk to them meaningfully. I take it that this is the sense in which the naturalism in Crary's resolute transcendentalism also has an essentially responsive and therapeutic character.[185]

In the latter parts of her paper, Crary seems to be consistent in this "naturalist" and responsive aspect of resolute transcendentalism as she talks about how the refinement of our sensitivities might help us arrive at "facts of a situation" when talking to people with "established [and differing] modes of thought and speech" (ibid.: 141). There seems to be a kind of optimism here that Wittgenstein's clarification of meaning might in the long run lead to some form of understanding and rational deliberation (which inviolability interpreters have precluded). At least in the case of Nyíri, this optimism has been unduly precluded by his supposed view of how our practices become the limits of our understanding. Based from Crary's discussion (ibid.: 130), Nyíri can be understood as someone who believes that it is only by fixing the limits of sense that authentic criticism and "rational assessment" of variant practices becomes possible. But it turns out that such a view of criticism also becomes unintelligible in light of facts about the contingency of our concepts and Wittgenstein's "unstable view of the limits of sense" (ibid.: 122). Thus, the idea of resolute transcendentalism

[185] See also Part 2, Chapter 2 (Section 2.2.4.3) for my discussion of the "essentially responsive" character of the philosophical therapy which Mulhall attributes to Cavell's reading of Wittgenstein.

in Crary takes Nyíri's approach to involve a way of pre-empting the kind of investigation of language use that Wittgenstein wanted to pursue. It is not that such insights cannot be made, but that when we clarify "use" we must "look and see" (*PI* 66); we must conduct our actual investigation first and then from within that investigation consider if those "facts" about the limits of sense indeed holds.

This conception of naturalism relates to how I understand Crary's resolute reading as also having a "logical posterior character" relative to the substantial conceptions it deals with. I have found this "logical posterior character" to be pervasively difficult to grasp. This is because it turns the resolute reading into something like water. Just as water does not have a form independent of how it fills up a container, so do the philosophical therapies employed by the resolute reading come to have a form only in relation to how it responds to illusions of the substantial reading it is currently attempting to "exorcise" or clarify. I take it that it is because of this kind of flexibility and fluidity to the problems it seeks to address that Wittgenstein conceived of his philosophy as involving a variety of philosophical methods "rather than a [single] philosophical method"(*PI* 133). The resolute transcendentalism found in Crary can be understood as sensitive to this idea through the way it eschews "theses" in favor of endorsing this kind of naturalism and variety in philosophical methods.[186]

4.4 Nyíri's Neoconservative reading of Wittgenstein and the idea of limits

In this section, I shall attempt to give a charitable discussion of Nyíri's reading of Wittgenstein. I shall consider the significance of how his conception of the limits of sense occurs in the context of the purported neoconservative character of Wittgenstein's later philosophy and how this neo-conservative character involves a critical attitude to theory that might have some compatibility with Crary. To be sure, Crary mentions the neoconservative character of Nyíri's reading of Wittgenstein's philosophy. She says, for example, that Wittgenstein presents a solution to a "neo-conservative paradox", and that this solution leads to insights about the "inexorable binding force" of the rules in our practice.[187] However, I believe there is a need to look further into what this neoconservative paradox means; and from there, re-evaluate whether Wittgenstein's philosophy solves this paradox in a way that might also

[186] See, for example, how Crary seems to manifest this idea in her writing as she becomes consistently careful in referring to Wittgenstein's philosophy to be involving "philosophical procedure*s*" as opposed to a single "philosophical procedure." This applies to both her articles in *the New Wittgenstein*, in the "Introduction" and her "WRPT" (Crary 2000: 2, 4, 10, 13; 2000b: 122,132.)

[187] See ibid.: 122 which is quoted as part of a whole passage in section II of this chapter.

support Crary's reading. Also, there might be a need to consider the difference between Crary and Nyíri in terms of how Nyíri becomes inclined to take a more genetic reading of Wittgenstein's philosophy. In this light, I shall go about in my discussion by first considering the difference in the manner by which Crary and Nyíri read Wittgenstein's philosophy. Then, I shall give details of Nyíri's views on how the later Wittgenstein presented a philosophy which functions as a significant solution to the neoconservative paradox that was manifested in his time. I discuss how this solution involves a continuity in Wittgenstein's thought through the manner in which he conceived of language use as something that is "organic" and tied with the network of agreements that make up our human form of life. Lastly, I evaluate whether Nyíri's conception of meaning as use in Wittgenstein involves an idea of limits that becomes problematically theoretical in the way Crary discussed.

4.4.1 Nyíri's genetic reading vs. Crary's immanent reading

A major difference between Nyíri and Crary is their basis for inferring conclusions about the political implications of Wittgenstein's philosophy. Although they do not classify themselves as such, Nyíri generally favors a genetic reading of Wittgenstein, while Crary generally favours the immanent reading. [188] Immanent readers tend to limit the basis of their inference to Wittgenstein's written texts specifically those in his published works. In this immanent approach, the intentions of the author are relevant only in so far as they are revealed from within the text itself. [189] On the other hand, genetic readers reject this kind of bracketing and draw more liberally not just from Wittgenstein's *Nachlass* but from the larger extra-textual background of Wittgenstein's work. Hence, Crary (2000b) argues for her position by appealing "almost exclusively" from passages found in the *Philosophical Investigations*, *Remarks on the Foundation of Mathematics*, *Remarks on the Frazer's Golden Bough, Zettel,* etc.. And this approach can be contrasted with how Nyíri (1982) draws inferences about Wittgenstein's

[188] This distinction between the immanent and genetic approaches to reading Wittgenstein originally comes from Glock (1992) and Stern (2002). But I draw my discussion from Cahill's more recent discussion of these approaches in his article *The Concept of Progress in Wittgenstein's Thought* (2006).

[189] See Stern's "Recent Work on Wittgenstein" (1994) as he discusses the debate about the extent to which we should consider the holism in Wittgenstein's writing as we clarify, for example, his conception of philosophy. Stern suggests that writers should be more open to developing a systematic way of being able to draw from Wittgenstein's *Nachlass*. Or, when this is not possible, give special preference to works that Wittgenstein specifically intended for publication like the Part I of *PI,* as opposed for example to part II which comes from the editorial judgments of his literary executors (See ibid.: 442-3).

conservatism not just from Wittgenstein's written and "unwritten works"[190] but also from the rich background of Wittgenstein's personal attitude and wider socio-historical influence.

Indeed, we can find Crary (2000b: 119) to be also quoting from Wittgenstein's personal views like the ones in Klagge's *Philosophical Occasions* (*PO*, 1993) . These quotes, however, are not used as the primary bases for developing her arguments as compared, for example, with her use of passages from Wittgenstein's actual works. To give an illustration, we can look into the remark Crary (ibid.: 119) mentions from *PO* on how our task in philosophy is "not [meant] to posit new parties – and creeds." That remark seems to be used as a mere background remark for supporting Wittgenstein's "meta-remark "in *PI* 128 on how Wittgenstein's philosophical procedures do not involve the endorsement of theses. To be sure, Crary does not make any explicit claim that she reads Wittgenstein in an immanent manner. But her explicit rejection of appeal to biographical data in favour of textual exegesis from within Wittgenstein's work is very telling. This is the first qualification Crary makes in the first footnote of her article as she claims that Nyíri's appeal to Wittgenstein's biography makes the project of clarifying the significance of Wittgenstein's later work to political thought more confused. Crary writes:

> Many thinkers who take an interest in Wittgenstein's political orientation are in the first instance concerned with the question of the political significance of his philosophical views and appeal to biographical data only in the hope of corroborating their preferred answer. (**A clear case of this is Nyíri**…) One of the premises of this paper is that most discussions about the political significance of Wittgenstein's philosophy… go astray because they help themselves to a misinterpretation of his view of meaning. The paper tries to arrive at a more adequate account of the bearing of his philosophy on political thought by clarifying his view of meaning. This project of clarification is by itself an involved one, and I am inclined to think that entering into biographical matters simply threatens to complicate matters. (Crary 2000b: 142, emphasis mine)

Crary, in the above remark, claims that it is best to enter into the project of clarifying the significance of Wittgenstein's later work to political thought by setting aside issues about his biography and focus instead on his view of meaning. A consequence of this bracketing is that the immanent reading taken by Crary now comes to have more opportunity to pay attention to establishing coherence from within Wittgenstein's texts. Since extra-textual information about Wittgenstein are considered relatively unimportant, one should be able to establish how Wittgensteinian insights about his philosophical methods become consistent with important passages in his written work, especially those which reveal Wittgenstein's intentions in making

[190] See Nyíri giving an explicit recommendation of the study of Wittgenstein's unpublished manuscripts in very first endnote of his article "Wittgenstein's later work in relation to conservatism" (1982: 45, 64).

those remarks, like, for example, *PI* 128 or *PI* 500. I have already discussed this idea in Section 3.1 of this chapter through Crary's resolute reading; i.e., on how any kind of drawing of insights about the political implications of Wittgenstein's later philosophy must follow from his view of meaning; and on how this view of meaning, in turn, follows from his explicit remarks on the nature of philosophy as expressed for example by *PI* 128 and *PI* 500 (2000b: 121).

Now to focus on Nyíri, we can find that his approach to reading Wittgenstein is in conflict with Crary and the kind of bracketing she employs in her immanent reading. Nyíri (1982) believes that it is essential to understand Wittgenstein's philosophy in terms of the cultural and historical factors that have influenced his writing. Thus, Nyíri explains that it is important to consider the parallel that Wittgenstein's philosophy has with the kind of thinking prevalent in his time, and how it involves a way of addressing the problems in that kind of thinking through his own work. The importance of this parallelism is something Nyíri emphasized. He writes, for example, that:

> Wittgenstein's philosophy emerged at a time when conservatism - in the form of neo-conservatism - was one of the dominant spiritual currents in Germany and Austria; and Wittgenstein received decisive impulses both from authors who deeply influenced this current and from representatives of the new conservatism itself. Wittgenstein dealt with problems which were fundamental problems also of contemporary neo-conservatism - albeit in a manner which was ... far deeper and more rigorous than that of the leading neoconservatives of his day - and he succeeds in solving these problems, in so far as they were theoretically solvable. Any presentation of Wittgenstein's later work that does not allow for these historical systematic parallels must remain essentially incomplete. (Nyíri 1982: 45)

In light of the two remarks above, we can say that while Crary takes Nyíri's reading to be too "mixed up", Nyíri will take Crary's reading to be incomplete. From the perspective of Nyíri's genetic reading, there are factors outside of Wittgenstein's written work that need to be clarified to understand the content of his writing, and these factors are part of the larger framework under which we can understand his philosophy.[191] And so, we can find Nyíri's remark above as saying that the study of Wittgenstein's later work will be incomplete without being able to situate his philosophy in the wider socio-cultural context under which he developed his thoughts. Wittgenstein's concern about philosophical clarification may appear obscure and confined to some kind of personal and solitary inquiry, but we can find Nyíri

[191] Nyíri explains that this applies even with reference to Wittgenstein's philosophical style and how that style invokes a kind of silence that can be understood as a "stamp" of the conservative. (See Nyíri on Mohler ibid.:47 and on Grabowski: 56)

claiming that there are socio-political aspects of Wittgenstein's philosophy in so far as it is a deep solution to the problems of his time.

As I see it, while Crary wants the basis for her drawing of political implications from Wittgenstein's philosophy to be more focused and clear, Nyíri wants the basis for his drawing of political insights to be more holistic even as it may make his inferences less simple and straightforward. Based on the remark above, for example, we might say that Nyíri would have to rely on analogical inferences between the thinking of neoconservatives and that of Wittgenstein. This approach is arguably less intuitive compared to the immanent approach employed by Crary who focuses her interpretational inferences from within Wittgenstein's written text. This comparative weakness, however, might be offset if we acknowledge Nyíri's claim that there are aspects of Wittgenstein's written text which is likely to be neglected without an understanding of the wider background under which they were written. This applies, for example, in terms of how the genetic reading of Nyíri might give better attention to what Wittgenstein says in the preface of his *PI;* i.e., his work is likely to be misunderstood because of the "poverty" and "darkness of [his] time."[192] The immanent approach taken by Crary is unlikely to be able to give attention to this part of the preface. This is because Wittgenstein's written work itself does not give any details about that socio-historical background (i.e., the "dark time") under which he wrote. At least in this respect, we might say that Nyíri's genetic reading offers the promise of complementing Crary's focus on the text by giving a discussion of this historical background. Through his remark in the *PI* preface, it seems that Wittgenstein himself has considered this "darkness of [his] time" to be quite a challenge to the reception and "correct" understanding of his work. In one sense, we might say that such a "challenge" also gives us an idea of the kind of thoughts that Wittgenstein tried to combat. I take it that this is because, for Nyíri's Wittgenstein, to understand the "solution" is also to understand the problem which it seeks to solve. Hence, if that "darkness" which characterize the thinking of his time is part of the problem that Wittgenstein wanted to solve through his philosophy and if this "darkness" refers to the problem of neo-conservatism, then it follows that it is essential to understand what that neo-conservative problem is and also to understand the sense in which Wittgenstein's philosophy responds to that problem. This contextualization in Nyíri's genetic

[192] Nyíri (1982) does not make any direct discussion on this, but his discussion of the unsettling atmosphere in Europe and the nihilistic sentiment during that time can easily be linked to his interpretation of how Wittgenstein's philosophy also tried to address those sentiments in his own work. I shall discuss these ideas in the following section.

reading thus turns the study of Wittgenstein's philosophy into something that has clear socio-political implications. Let me proceed to discuss these latter points.

4.4.2 Nyíri's "neo-conservative solution"

In "Wittgenstein's later work in relation to conservatism" (WRPC 1982), [193] Nyíri explains that it is important to understand Wittgenstein's philosophy as a response to the problem of neo-conservatism, and how it is a response that is "far deeper" (ibid.: 44) than the neo-conservative thinkers of his time. So first let me explain what the problem of neo-conservatism is, and then discuss the sense in which Wittgenstein's philosophy serves as a solution to that problem.

4.4.3 Neo-conservatism and its dilemma between preserving and destroying.

Based on Nyíri's discussion (ibid.: 48), it seems that one way to understand "neo-conservatism" is to distinguish it from what Nyíri calls "old conservatism". Both forms of conservatism aim to preserve "the durable, the constant, [and] the traditional" as they aim for some kind of "authenticity" in facing the conflicts brought about by change.[194] But whereas the old form of conservatism had an ontology of divine order or political order to appeal to in such conflicts, neo-conservatism is characterized by the difficulty of having no ontology whatsoever to draw from. This is because neo-conservatism came about amidst the unsettling atmosphere in Europe during the time around WWI (1914-1918). Nyíri (ibid.: 45) says that it was a time when Western values were being transvalued on a global scale, and so thinkers like Mannheim, Oakeshott, and Dostoevsky[195] faced a "dilemma between conserving and destroying", i.e., a dilemma between, on the one hand, having a "positive attitude toward civilization", and on the other hand, having a nihilistic attitude towards the reality of social change and cultural decline (ibid.: 48, 51). So unlike old conservatism, neo-conservatism dealt with an atmosphere of nihilism that somehow also puts into question the very idea of preserving a tradition. Because of the extensive scope of this socio-cultural decline, neo-conservative thinkers thought that the very idea of finding what is constant and traditional is a project that lacks a "basis". As Nyíri might describe it, these neoconservative thinkers wanted a "firmer foothold", but they did not

[193] Henceforth I shall refer to this article as WPRC. Throughout my discussion, I shall draw mainly from WRPC which is also the primary article Crary used in articulating her criticism of Nyíri.
[194] See specifically Nyíri's quotes from Gerd-Klaus Kaltenbrunner and Karl Mannheim in ibid.: 46-47.
[195] Nyíri (ibid.) refers to these people to which Wittgenstein also belongs as a "constellation of conservative thinkers" whom he later calls "neo-conservatives". There is quite a number of them where Nyíri cites and draws his parallelistic description from, and Nyíri seems to draw from them very liberally. I shall mention in my discussion only those that I found necessary to rearticulate Nyíri's neo-conservative reading of Wittgenstein.

know where to go. They find that "history has taken away the possibility of an ontology." [196] This resulted in a deep kind of inner crisis for neoconservative thinkers as they dealt with social and political conflicts with an anxiety that is both logical and "existential". We can find Nyíri himself describing the existential nature of this neo-conservative paradox in this manner:

> On the one hand man by his very nature, cannot do without absolute standards, that he needs and ought to observe fixed truths, but on the other hand all absolute standards have perished historically, are a thing of the past, and fixed truths do not exist at all. **This leads to a logical - and emotional - difficulty** which is **hardly solvable** by references to the (otherwise very suggestive) 'ceremonious behaviour.' (ibid.: 56 emphasis mine)

Nyíri writes the remark above in the context of his description of the parallelism and difference that Adolf Grabowsky makes between conservatism and religion. With regards to this similarity, Nyíri points to Grabowsky's view that the thinking found in conservatism *and* in religion finds the concept of reverence central. This is in contrast with the thinking found in "liberalism, democratism, and rationalism" which makes no room for the concept of reverence. With regards to the difference, Nyíri points out Grabowsky's view that the concept of "eternal truth" in religion is replaced by the concept of "ceremoniousness" in conservatism. This eternal truth seems to replace the "absolute standards" and "fixed truths" that humans naturally seek. However, we can find that the idea of "ceremoniousness" is something that Nyíri further deliberates on. The remark Nyíri cites from Grabowski merely says that the concept of "ceremoniousness" is something that is "insufficiently discussed" as it functions as a kind of alternative to the "fixed truths" of religion. And so Nyíri attempts to address this by giving further clarification on what a ceremonious behaviour is. There is a sense in which his clarification is not obvious since it comes in the form of a criticism. In the above quote, for example, we can locate his attempt at a clarification through his view on how the idea of ceremoniousness "hardly solves" the "logical- and emotional- difficulty**"** that neo-conservatives were in as they dealt with the extensive decline of absolute standards.

Later in my discussion, I shall point out the critical aspect of Nyíri's attempt to further clarify the idea ceremoniousness in terms of its link to Wittgenstein's insights on rule-following. For now, let me focus on Nyíri's view on how the idea of ceremoniousness needs to be connected with the "logical- and emotional- difficulty" that comes with having to face the "darkness" that came with the widespread changes occurring during Wittgenstein's time. I

[196] I draw this from Nyíri's discussion of the conservative ideas of Karl Mannheim and K. von Klemperer (ibid.: 47-48).

believe that this "logical- and emotional- difficulty" refers to the existential nature of Wittgenstein's solution to the problem of rule following. The remark I previously quoted shows that Nyíri does not explicitly use the word "existential"; he uses the word "emotional". That emotional difficulty is always connected with the logical, and vice versa (ibid.: 56, 65 endnote 12). However, the existential and religious-like nature of the crisis which Wittgenstein's philosophy aimed to respond can be easily inferred from Nyíri's discussion: Wittgenstein's philosophy faced the global skepticism to any ontology and order that was prevalent in his time, i.e., around the period of WWI (1914-1918). Thus, We can find Nyíri (ibid.: 57) paying attention to Wittgenstein's remark about this socio-cultural skepticism as he mentions a passage in *Culture Value* p. 6 where Wittgenstein says that his ideas around the early 1930s is "not in sympathy with spirit of the main current of the European and American civilization." In that remark or "sketch for a Forward" (ibid.), Wittgenstein explains that this lack of sympathy comes from how "the main current of the European and American civilization" ends up as "an age without culture" where "the power of an individual man is used up in overcoming opposing forces and frictional resistances". I take it that this kind of skepticism is also what Wittgenstein alluded to in his *PI* preface when he wrote that the thoughts expressed by his philosophical remarks faces the challenge of being (mis)understood by people who live in the "darkness of [his] time".

In this kind of contextual (or genetic) interpretation, Nyíri seems to emphasize that Wittgenstein wrote his works in a way that is mindful of the turmoil and uncertainty in the time and culture he found himself in. And so, it makes sense to say that his thoughts, including those from his early philosophy, were not about "pure questions" about the logic of language and the general form of the proposition. As obscure as his written works may appear to be, they were in fact thoughts that address "the burning questions [and issues] of his time".[197] So for Nyíri, Wittgenstein was also affected by this neo-conservative dilemma between "conserving and destroying", and his philosophical work can be understood more vividly as having more social relevance in terms of how it addresses the logical and existential crisis that his fellow neo-conservatives also faced.

[197] This is a term that Hans Sluga used in his closing remarks for the 32nd Wittgenstein Symposium at Kirchberg in 2012. As I remember his speech, he used the term to admonish a certain way of studying Wittgenstein which challenges the so-called dichotomy between analytical and continental approach to understanding Wittgenstein's work. See Sluga's "Beyond the 'New' Wittgenstein" (2013).

4.4.4 Wittgenstein's solution: a "conservative" and "existential" approach

My preceding discussion has so far explained what the problem of neo-conservatism is and how it is distinct from old conservatism. I have pointed out how clarifying this neo-conservative character also somehow clarifies the socio-historical and even existential aspect of Wittgenstein's interest in the philosophical clarification of language. The depth of this existential aspect is something that is absent in traditional conservatism. What I shall now discuss is how Wittgenstein contributes to solving the problem of neo-conservatism in a way that is, according to Nyíri, "far deeper and more rigorous" (ibid.: 45) than the neo-conservatives of his time, and how this solution can be understood as a continuity in Wittgenstein's thinking. Let me start by discussing this continuity.

According to Nyíri, conservatism is a continuity in Wittgenstein's philosophy. He says that this neoconservative character can already be found in his early philosophy in the *Tractatus*. It only became "more direct [and] more pronounced" in his later work because of how it was fostered by the "homelessness" Wittgenstein experienced after the war (ibid.: 49). Thus, Nyíri finds Wittgenstein's work as "conservative" because of how it also becomes a way of seeking and re-erecting his "homeland"[198] through his philosophical work.

In so far as Wittgenstein's early work is concerned, Nyíri (ibid.: 52) points out how this conservative character is already found in terms of how the *Tractatus* was searching for a "logic of language" whose connection with the changes of language is "organic". According to Nyíri, the influence from this conservatism can be traced as part of the influence of the neo-conservative thinker Paul Ernst who seemed to have inspired Wittgenstein in a variety of ways.[199] Nyíri hints that among these ways is how Ernst responded to the disintegration in European society by means of an appeal to the "organic mode of life" of the peasant and how it gives rise to a "peasant poetry" (ibid.: 52-53). This organic mode of life can be contrasted with the "unorganic forms of life" of the "bourgeois" (ibid.: 53). Nyíri describes Ernst as critical of this form of life by the bourgeois because of how it is characterized by a certain instability and disconnection. It involves "unorganic forms of life" which "imbue not the whole man but

[198] The word "Heimat" as my German friends would say is a strong and evocative word that the English term "homeland" is unable to convey. It implies a very deep connection (and maybe also a kind of longing) that Germans have for their homeland and its particular culture which they are unable to feel in any other place. This is presumably because of some kind of displacement they experienced or because of a sense of loss for the society or culture that they once new. I presume that Nyíri is also using this term "Heimat" as he describes Wittgenstein as someone like Musil who was seeking to re-erect his homeland in his work (ibid.:49).

[199] See Nyíri (ibid.: 51-3, 66-7, endnote 34-39 and endnote 35). There two works by Ernst which Nyíri uses to draw attention to the neoconservative parallel in Wittgenstein's philosophy are his 1) Foreword or postscript to the 3rd edition of Grimm's Fairy Tales and 2) "What Now" (1926). Nyíri extends the drawing of this parallelism to the kind of preference to organic language in Ernst's latter work.

merely some part of him" and it is where the life of the individual is not settled in a natural way (Ernst as cited in Nyíri ibid.: 53). In a tone similar to Wittgenstein's earlier critical remark about the state of "European and American civilization", Ernst says that the artificial form of life of the bourgeois leads to a condition in society where each individual is forced to create himself and his work "anew at every occasion" in a solitary way. In both cases (i.e., the remark from *CV* and the remark admonishing the form of life found in peasant poetry), Nyíri takes Wittgenstein's philosophy to be appealing to a mode of understanding that comes with the use of a language that has developed naturally or "organically".[200]

There are various routes under which Nyíri explains how Wittgenstein criticizes artificial forms of language in a way that parallels that of Ernst. Some relate to Wittgenstein's direct acknowledgement of Ernst in his writings from the early 1930s like "Remarks on Frazer's Golden Bough" (1931) and the "Big Typescript" (1933).[201] In my discussion, I would like to focus more specifically on how Nyíri describes Wittgenstein's critical attitude to artificial forms of language through attention to a case of Rudolf Carnap's personal encounter with Wittgenstein. I take it that this approach is how Nyíri uses the genetic reading to clarify the existential character of Wittgenstein's so-called neo-conservative solution, i.e., it is an instance where Nyíri takes liberal approach in using personal accounts from Wittgenstein's students as guides for understanding Wittgenstein's own remarks about philosophy's peculiar interest in language. This account of Carnap can be found in Nyíri's 12th endnote:

> 'I sometimes had the impression', writes Rudolf Carnap in his intellectual autobiography, 'that the deliberately rational and unemotional attitude of the scientist and likewise any ideas which had the flavour of enlightenment were repugnant to Wittgenstein. At our very first meeting with Wittgenstein, (in 1927) Schlick unfortunately mentioned that I was interested in the problem of an international language like Esperanto. As I had expected, Wittgenstein was definitely opposed to this idea. But I was surprised by the vehemence of his emotions. A language which had not 'grown organically' seemed to him not only useless but despicable… As late as 1946 Wittgenstein still speaks of "a feeling of disgust" that he experiences when thinking of Esperanto. (Nyíri 1982: 65)

We can find that Nyíri, in his use of the above remark, makes a connection between, one the one hand, Carnap's personal impression of Wittgenstein's way of criticizing artificial languages and, on the other hand, Wittgenstein's actual critical remark about artificial languages. Nyíri connects the remark by Carnap with what Wittgenstein wrote in 1946 in *CV*:

[200] See (ibid.: 65)
[201] See Nyíri (ibid.: 51-52)

> Esperanto. Our feeling of disgust, when we utter an invented word with invented derivative syllables. The word is cold, has no associations & yet plays at "language".
> A system of purely written signs would not disgust us like this. [202]

We can find that the quoted remarks above supports my earlier discussion of Nyíri's views on how Wittgenstein's manner of philosophical criticism does not separate the "logical" from the "emotional". This feature can be understood as a parallel to the logical and emotional character of the crisis in foundations that neo-conservatives faced. When this kind of crisis is connected with the remarks above, we can come to some insights about the neo-conservative character of Wittgenstein's interest in the analysis of language. This insight can be understood as saying something similar to what Wittgenstein says in *PI* 108; the grammatical descriptions philosophy aims at "gets its light" from the problems it seeks to dissolve. In the particular case of Nyíri, we might say that he is treating Wittgenstein's grammatical descriptions as something that is formed and guided by the existential concerns coming from the neoconservative dilemma that it seeks to "solve" (ibid.: 64, endnote 42). Here, it seems to me that there is a kind of romanticism in Nyíri's account of Wittgenstein's neo-conservative attitude in relation to the logical clarification of language. It take it that this romanticism does not separate concern about issues on clarifying the logic of language with concern about existential aspect of how one is able to manifest a certain kind of life through that linguistic analysis. And this view is indicated in the above remark in terms of how Nyíri took Wittgenstein's own claim as that which does *not* separate the "logical" from the "emotional". Nyíri pays attention to how Wittgenstein describes the artificially constructed language of Esperanto as something that is not just "useless" but also "despicable". Artificial languages, says Nyíri (ibid.: 65), is something that Wittgenstein persistently thought about it "with disgust".

Indeed, we can find that Nyíri's portrayal of Wittgenstein's critical attitude towards artificial forms of language becomes manifested "more directly" in Wittgenstein's later philosophy through the idea of a form of life and through how appeal to that notion becomes a solution to the paradox of rule-following. It is in the context of these insights that we can find a link between what I have previously mentioned as the neoconservative idea of "ceremoniousness" and Wittgenstein's unique contribution to neo-conservatism. As I mentioned earlier, Nyíri points out how Grabowski found both religion and neo-conservatism similar in making the idea of reverence central, but that they are also different because of how

[202] I have quoted this remark from the revised edition of *Culture and Value* (*CV*, 1998:60). That edition involves a "revised edition of the text" by Alois Pichler, and it has a different pagination from that of Nyíri (who seems to quote from the old edition where the remark is found in *CV* p.52.

conservatism uses the idea of ceremoniousness in lieu of religion's "fixed truths".[203] For Nyíri (ibid.: 57), Wittgenstein provided the deeper conceptual analysis that is necessary to respond to the logical and anthropological problems that underlie the neo-conservative thinkers emphasis on ceremonious behaviour. It is that deep conceptual analysis which has saved neo-conservatism from becoming a "theoretical catastrophe" (ibid.). So let me discuss how Nyíri defined ceremonious behaviour and how he linked its discussion to Wittgenstein's analyses of rule-following.

Ceremonious behaviour, according to Nyíri (ibid.: 56-7), is a "[type of] behaviour directed by unalterable rules which could, at the same time, have been different" (ibid.). Here, we might understand Nyíri's descriptive remark as following up on Grabowki's claim that the idea of ceremoniousness is "insufficiently discussed" because it seems to imply a kind of arbitrariness that undermines the concern for "the enduring" and "the constant" which constitutes the very idea of conservatism. Without a deeper analysis of ceremonious behaviour, it leads to the very "anarchistic conclusion" that conservatism aims to overcome. Before I elaborate on this point, let me quote Nyíri's own remark on that subject:

> Wittgenstein's philosophical achievement was that he supplanted **the conceptual framework within which this so to speak anarchistic conclusion** can occur, by elaborating another, essentially different one. **The basic concepts of the new framework are: training and behaviour, use, custom, institution, practice technique, agreement**. The following of a rule is a custom, an institution, embedded in the agreements, in the correspondences of behaviour within society. The question concerning the interpretation of any rule can be raised – though it need not be – and it should be answered by referring to **agreements in behaviour**. (ibid.: 58, emphasis added)

The arguments embedded in the remark above, I believe, can be reconstructed and clarified by giving attention to the sense in which Nyíri ends up with a connected reading of Wittgenstein's remarks in *PI* 143 and *PI* 206.[204] What the remark above refers to as "the conceptual framework" that leads to "anarchistic conclusion" relates to Nyíri's discussion of how the idea of ceremonious behaviour may end up with something like the case of the confused learner of the arithmetical sequence in *PI* 143 and the paradox of rule following in *PI* 198. For Nyíri, that "paradox" or "confusion" is in the end "solved" by the idea of what is referred above as "agreements in behaviour" that are expressed by the idea of a human form of life. [205] As I see

[203] See Nyíri (ibid.: 56) which I quoted in the earlier section.
[204] I am here simplifying my citation given the many remarks that Nyíri (ibid.: 58) mentions from Wittgenstein's various works. (See endnote 54- 56).
[205] See ibid.: 58 and endnote 55, 59, 64. There are many passages that Nyíri mentions to clarify this supposed paradox of rule following (see endnote 54 and 56). I limit my discussion to his use and mention of *PI* 143 and relate it to *PI* 206 which I take Nyíri to also refer to by idea of "agreements of behavior" that responds to skeptical

it, the main point expressed by those remarks and the passage above is that Nyíri portrays Wittgenstein to be articulating the height of the arbitrariness of our judgments about what it means to have a "ceremonious behaviour" or a "rule governed behaviour". Then, he lets the articulation of that arbitrariness lead to the idea of a practice or human form of life which is "not merely an agreement in beliefs" (ibid.: 58). We can find Nyíri trying to put effort to explain the sense in which Wittgenstein should not be understood as simply endorsing practices or "fixed truths" from a particular group of people. We can find this in the kind of transcendental reasoning that the early Wittgenstein is likely to have endorsed in his supposed sympathy with Ernst's emphasis on organic forms of life and language use. And we can also find that same reasoning operative in the later Wittgenstein in terms of the basic concepts of "custom" and "practice" that make up the "new framework" that prevents an "anarchistic conclusion" on rule-following (see the remark above). I take it that these basic concepts in Wittgenstein's "new framework" in his later philosophy are what he uses to clarify the idea of human form of life.

There seems to be a kind of transcendental reasoning which Nyíri employed to clarify Wittgenstein's idea of a human custom, practice and form of life, and this reasoning is similar to the one I have earlier described in my previous section on Crary's reading of Nyíri as someone who uses a kind of transcendental negation. What now emerges more clearly is the context of a continuity in Wittgenstein's philosophy through which this transcendental reasoning becomes manifested. This continuity consists in how Wittgenstein, both in his early and later work, becomes concerned with a language that is both "logical" and "organically drawn". Nyíri's describes this transcendental reading in the early Wittgenstein in terms of how the neoconservatism in the *Tractatus* can be seen in its concern for a "formulae" where " 'changes in language' [are] accompanied by [corresponding] changes in the 'logic of our language'".[206] But I have found these references as too loose and meagre, so let me simply focus on the transcendental reading and reasoning that Nyíri attributes to the later Wittgenstein.

4.4.5 Neo-conservatism in the later Wittgenstein

As I mentioned earlier, I take Nyíri's portrayal of Wittgenstein's neoconservative solution to be involving a reading that makes implicit use of *PI* 143 in relation to *PI* 206. Both are remarks that Nyíri mentions in his discussion of how Wittgenstein contributed to solving

questions about interpretation of rules. I further draw on these passages as I clarify what I take to be Nyíri's view about the continuity in Wittgenstein's conservative solution as expressed by his interest in a language that is "organic" and a "theory" that has a dialectical function.

[206] See Nyíri (ibid: 52-53) as Nyíri draws from parallelisms between Wittgenstein and Paul Ernst. Nyíri describes how Ernst concern with an "organically drawn peasant poetry" inspired Wittgenstein's special interest for "conflicts" and "changes" that lead to an "organic" form of language.

the neoconservative paradox found in his discussion of rule following.[207] I take Nyíri's use of *PI* 143 to be particularly relevant because it seems to be the more elaborate version of how he articulates the problem of rule following expressed in *PI* 198, "Then, can whatever I do be brought into accord with the rule?". This "paradox"[208] also seems to be the problem with the conservative idea of ceremonious behaviour that I earlier mentioned. That idea is in danger of "theoretical catastrophe" because it involves a rule governed behaviour whose acceptance of varied applications becomes prone to the danger of arbitrariness as it comes to include conflicting behaviour. According to Nyíri (ibid.: 49), Wittgenstein's solution, which I also take to be having an organic character, is to take "the possibility of other orders" as a phenomena that "does not weaken the inexorable binding force of our own". This is one of the remarks that Crary (2000b: 122) cites to convict Nyíri for being an inviolability interpreter of Wittgenstein who endorses a problematic view of the limits of sense and criticism. Yet, it seems to me that Crary's interpretation can also be contrasted with Nyíri's own claims about Wittgenstein's critical attitude to artificial language and of how instances of organic language use like those of "peasant poetry" or "master-poetry" do not necessarily emerge from the particular order or group in society where they appear to be immediately associated (ibid.: 53). "Peasant poetry" does not necessarily come from the peasants. It comes about as people who are not necessarily peasants question the status quo which Nyíri refers to in Ernst as the "life of the master". This kind of questioning combined with certain aspects of "obedience" and "reverence" allows for an understanding of the organic nature of the forms of life and language use employed in what Ernst calls "master-poetry" (ibid.). [209]

I give an interpretation here that is not necessarily found in Nyíri's discussion as I claim that such an emergence of organic language is something that comes about as a product of criticism among and within various groups of people as they attempt to question what is most

[207] See the explicit citation of these remarks in Nyíri (ibid.: 68, endnote 59 and endnote 64). The discussion that follows re-articulates Nyíri's position on Wittgenstein's solution to the "paradox" of rule-following.

[208] This is not really a paradox for resolute readers because of how they understand Wittgenstein to be clarifying a conception of competence in language that makes no dichotomy between a rule and the skillful judgments used in its varied application. I use the term "paradox" to make a connection with Nyíri's terminological uses. This applies, for example, to his use of the term "neo-conservative paradox" which relates well with the so-called paradox of rule following that was raised by writers such as Kripke.

[209] I believe it is important note that Nyíri presents the organic character of the language and form of life of peasant poetry not so much as if it were a "given". In fact, he presents it as a product of free flowing criticism among various parties or groups. Nyíri, for example, points out that the language that manifests "peasant poetry" is something that does not just come from peasants or even from the bourgeois. This can be inferred from Nyíri's citation of this passage from Ernst: "This [peasant poetry or master poetry] does not … emanate from the peasantry, but from members of the other orders.' [Like that of form of life of the peasant], so also is the form of life of the master an organic one … And only when the life of the master becomes questionable as other forms of life have come to appear possible … does there arise a master-poetry" (Ernst "What Now" 1926 as cited in Nyiri ibid.: 53).

fundamental in their understanding of rules and ways of life. This interpretation might initially conflict with Nyíri's own claims on how "traditions cannot be judged" and of how "any given form of life cannot actually be criticized" (ibid.: 58-59). The fact that Nyíri puts forward these strong claims (among many others) is the reason why some concession has to be given to Crary's portrayal of Nyíri as an inviolability interpreter who tries to set a limit to criticism. And yet, we can also bring our attention to how Nyíri's depicts the idea form of life in connection with *PI* 206: it involves reference to "the common behaviour of mankind" through which we interpret any unknown language.[210] As I see it, this conception of practice and form of life in terms of the "common behaviour of mankind" occurs in Nyíri in relation to how it constitutes an organic language that is not independent of our particular debates on what those commonalities might be. Thus, it seems important to understand that in Nyíri's emphasis on Wittgenstein's view about the "inexorability" of our practices, we can also find that such claims to inexorability occur in the context of training and "endless practice" that allow for new ways of understanding rules to emerge "organically".[211] I take this connection to imply that the inexorability of forms of life that Nyíri refers to is not really something that he intends to be understood as a limit to understanding others with different practices. On the contrary, it seems to imply reference to the kind of starting points that we may have to acknowledge and be receptive of as we strive for common understanding in our use of language. Thus, this is perhaps also a way of understanding Nyíri as someone who was aiming to reclaim a metaphysical use of "form of life" and bring it back to its everyday use.

Another support for this charitable manner of interpreting Nyíri is his discussion of what he calls "Wittgenstein's sketch of a *theory of mental illness*" (Nyíri ibid.: 59). Nyíri links this so-called "sketch of a *theory of mental illness"* with Wittgenstein's analyses of following mathematical rules as found in *Zettel* 393, *PI* 217, and *PI* 143. Let me here focus simply on *PI* 143 and on the kind of "mental illness" which Nyíri takes Wittgenstein to describe in relation to that passage. This supposed mental illness becomes expressed in the imaginative activity of having to distinguish between a "random mistake" and a "systematic mistake" in following an arithmetical rule.[212] In Wittgenstein's analyses of how a learner gets to understand and continue a mathematical sequence, Nyíri describes Wittgenstein's concern for being able to distinguish between what is "just plain error" and what is "a case of mental disorder" (ibid.: 59). The case of the mental disorder seems to be what *PI* 143 refers to as the case of someone who makes

[210] See ibid.:58 endnote 59 for Nyíri's explicit citation of *PI* 206.
[211] See ibid.:61, and how Nyíri cites 1-4 of *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics* in endnote 69
[212] See ibid.: 60 and endnote 64 for Nyíri's citation of *PI* 143.

random mistakes in continuing the series which we cannot correct at all; the responses to a series become so random that we are unable to discern any form of regularity. And it seems to me that the case of having only random mistakes brings forth the significance of how *PI* 143 also talks about cases where there might in fact be a "wrong understanding". That wrong understanding becomes useful in developing an appropriate instruction and use of language that might help someone newly acquainted with a rule; it can be used to wean him from that "wrong understanding" as if it were a "bad habit". Now, as I understand it, one of the important distinctions between the substantial reading and resolute reading of Wittgenstein concerns when the so-called "random mistake" mentioned in *PI* 143 becomes a kind of impossibility and permanent failure of understanding. This perception of impossibility can be distinguished from that attitude of simply being firm in treating a "random mistake" as a case of language use that we might later on be able to understand (like in the case of "a wrong understanding" that needs to be clarified in relation to a possible context of use). In the case of the substantial reading, the appeal to a stretch of discourse or contexts of use that can guide our understanding of variant responses to a series becomes prematurely cut or terminated. In the case of the resolute reading, the relevant stretch of discourse from which we can identify an expressions context of use becomes longer and, in a way, open ended. Because of this openness, we might say that the resolute reading (as opposed to the substantial reading) becomes less likely to consider a variant application of a rule as a genuine case of mental illness.[213]

I believe there are indications that Nyíri might have intended his reading of Wittgenstein to belong to this resolute case. This applies, for example, with regards to his view of Wittgenstein as someone who defines an "unalterable anthropological fact" about human nature in terms of its relation to "some network of tradition" (ibid.: 59). He does in fact say that this network "constrains" human nature, but we may consider this simply as a case of poor language choice for describing what is a natural difficulty that any language user deals with in relation to being able to articulate thoughts to those having a different way of life. The fact that Nyíri describes the traditions and agreements that make up our form of life as a "network" which allows for the "organic" formation of new rules (ibid.: 61) is also an indication that his reading of Wittgenstein cannot be conflated with that of relativist trapped in his own "conceptual cocoon".

[213] See, for example, Cavell's claims on how the learning of language also involves being able to use metaphors. "All language" Cavell, says, "is metaphorical". Learning it involves the ability to project and use a word to new cases. These projections may initially appear to be "unnatural" but they may later show themselves as the uses of words we need for the particular instance (Cavell, 1972: 190). It is in this context that I emphasize the importance of new and creative uses of words which I associate with Wittgenstein's "resolute transcendentalism".

This has been an ambiguous criticism on the part of Crary (2000b: 122) given that she takes Nyíri to be in a similar position to Gellner; i.e., both read Wittgenstein as someone who does not allow for external criticism. For Nyíri, there is indeed no criticism outside our human form of life. But this is not really a claim on our inherent limitation for developing critical concepts that might also apply to others with variant practices. Here, it seems to me that Nyíri is in fact talking about something that is leaning towards Crary's claims about the illusion of an external perspective on language. Except that this time, Nyíri construes "language" in terms of the "common behaviour of mankind" within which we are able to address sceptical questions about the arbitrary application of our concepts or rules. That "common behaviour" seems to be a kind of transcendental language that we discover and constitute by acknowledging the various contexts under which we are able to apply our critical concepts. This might be inferred, for example, from how Nyíri (1982: 63) takes Wittgenstein to be showing in his rule following considerations that "there is no [one] point" where we can say that we have begun to learn and understand a mathematical rule, and how "all knowledge is, fundamentally, practical knowledge".

Again, there seems to be a significant analogy here that can be made in Nyíri's concern for being able to distinguish the case of the "mentally feeble" from the case of the "mentally insane". When we talk about a criticism that is external to this "common behaviour" or to the "network of traditions" that makes up this "common behaviour", then the idea of external criticism dissolves into incoherence which is somewhat similar to the case of the mentally insane. Here, there is a kind of *reductio* that Nyíri seems to associate with this "mental insanity" as he subsequently mentions Wittgenstein remark "What would a society be like that never played many of our customary language-games?" (*Zettel* 372, as cited in Nyíri: 60). I am doubtful that Nyíri's use of this remark was intended to elicit a conception of substantial nonsense that turns a "nothing" into a "something", say, for example, a nonsense that leads to a thesis on the inexorability of our customary language-games. In his use of that remark, it seems to me that Nyíri is pointing to a conception of nonsense that is also austere. Our linguistic expressions and rules have no meaning at all outside our attempts to understand them in relevant context of use, and it is our understanding of these contexts which give our techniques for applying an expression the "inexorability" that we take it to have (ibid.: 61). Thus, the sense in which we can find Nyíri rejecting external criticism seems similar to the sense in which Crary criticizes the external perspective on language. In both cases, there is no understanding outside the forms of life we use to debate and learn about our expressions' context of use. These insights now brings me to the question of whether Nyíri's conception of limits is in fact theoretical or

whether it is in fact a conception of limits whose meaning can be found in our everyday use of language.

4.4.6 Nyíri's conception of limits: theoretical or natural?

I am currently inclined to believe that Nyíri intended his claims about the limits of sense to be a natural limit of our understanding as we fail to understand linguistic expressions outside contexts of use or language-games we are familiar with. It does not mean that expressions in language-games we are not familiar with become "meanings" that are impossible for us to understand; hence; it is not a "coherent nonsense" that becomes useful in turning the very idea of context of use and form of life as a thesis on the limitations of our thought and language. As I mentioned in my preceding discussion, Nyíri took Wittgenstein to be emphasizing the organic nature of language as it allows us to identify a certain order or regularity despite change or despite varying interpretations on how to apply a rule. This regularity which I have associated with his portrayal of the idea of form of life involves a stability that permits of "new rules" and that acutely sensitive to possibilities for understanding variant modes of understanding (ibid.: 61). It becomes a limit in the sense of making us acknowledge provisional bedrocks of meaning through which we can understand variant concepts. But it seems that this way of acknowledging bedrocks is something that is made from within the actual process of learning a relevant language (e.g., by means of metaphors and transitional remarks) through which we can speak clearly to others.

In this context, the sense in which Nyíri's Wittgenstein does not present a theory for answering the problem of rule-following might be noticed by giving attention to how he replaces the anarchistic conclusions of neo-conservatism not just with the term "form of life", but also with "a framework of notions related to training, practice, and agreements in behaviour" (ibid.: 58). Nyíri (ibid.: 61) mentions Wittgenstein's discussion of how important techniques in counting a rule come with an inexorability in application that is organically acquired through endless practice in our life activities. Nyíri (ibid.: 63) also mentions Wittgenstein's parallelism with Oakeshott's view on how knowledge cannot be imparted unless the learner makes his own connections with rules he has already been acquainted with in some practice. These important qualifications provide a basis for saying that Nyíri understands Wittgenstein's form of life not as an object or theory of abstract self-perception that can be directly expressed by means of language but as an instinctive pattern of regularity in judgment

that is taken for granted by our various ways of going about in a practice.[214] Hence, Nyíri's remarks on acknowledging the givenness of our forms of life and the framework of notions associated with it *may* be viewed as a counterpart of Crary's claims on acknowledging the linguistic sensitivities we develop as participants in a practice.

On the one hand, we can indeed interpret Nyíri as referring to a thesis on the presence of anthropological facts applicable to all human beings that settles once and for all how we distinguish a totally insane and unintelligible behaviour from a behaviour that is merely different due to our inability to conceive of a clear picture of the conventions to which they belong (ibid.: 60). However, Nyíri's indefiniteness on what these anthropological facts are as opposed to just saying that they exist may be understood as part of the neoconservative silence and respect for the limits of what philosophy can do (as opposed to intruding in the actual work of anthropologists).

I believe Crary is right in attributing to Nyíri, along with inviolability readers, the distinction between internal and external criticism and how Nyíri endorses the former. But I have my doubts on her reading that Nyíri's neoconservative Wittgenstein presents a theory of meaning that distinguishes internal and external criticism from outside a linguistic practice. A closer examination of a neo-conservative inclination against "theory" and its conception of theory as something that transiently emerges from within a conflict seems to point to a different direction.[215] As Nyíri explains early on in his article, neo-conservatism presents no theory, and its claims are best understood as contingent responses that show our ability to find some meaningful balance between the dogmatic preservation of tradition and its nihilistic destruction (Klemplerer as cited in Nyiri 1982: 48). As I see it, these claims indicate that Nyíri's neoconservative understanding of Wittgenstein does not come in the form of a substantive thesis on anthropological facts. Nyíri, indeed, claims that there are such facts, and some of them take the form of conventions that we simply acknowledge to make some progress in our understanding. But I find it significant that Nyíri does not assert or deny a specific

[214] See "Wittgenstein's New Traditionalism" where Nyíri (1976: 58) discusses how the notion of form of life is meant to be distinguished from the training that provides a mere causal explanation for what counts as the same behavioural expression on the application of a rule. He says it should instead be understood the other way around: *the regularity in form of life is what makes those training meaningful and possible*. Hence, sharing a form of life constitutes a certain type of agreement in judgment that leads to the blind/inexorable application of a rule.

[215] See (ibid.: 47) specifically Nyíri's quotation from Mohler on how "conservatism .. congeals into a theory only when a point is reached where it must defend itself against some opposing theory" and how this rejection of theory turns into a preference for "silence". I believe, in the case of Nyíri, that this "silence" becomes a gesture to engage in the actual investigation of language use and from there acquire the relevant competencies for understanding forms of language that are often shown rather than explained. This might be inferred from the way he connects the idea of form of life with training and practice (ibid.: 58) and with his concluding remarks on how "all knowledge is, fundamentally, practical knowledge" (ibid.: 63)

anthropological fact or convention. In place of such explicit affirmation and denials, he presents Wittgenstein's neo-conservative description of how such conventions, e.g. counting, become constituted along with techniques we acquire through practice in various life activities.

> Counting … is a technique that is employed daily in the most various operations of our lives. And that is why we learn to count as we do: with endless practice, with merciless exactitude; that is why it is inexorably insisted that we shall all say 'two' after 'one', 'three' after 'two' and so on". (Wittgenstein, *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics* 1-4 as cited in Nyíri: 61)

Admittedly, Nyíri does not have a sophisticated treatment of nonsense in the way Crary does. This lack of sophistication and specification, however, should not be taken as an endorsement of a theory. On the contrary, it may be considered as a form of silence consistent with how resolute readings of Wittgenstein emphasize the importance of acknowledging and developing judgments coming from native competencies in language use. This lack of specification can be viewed as allowing room for quietist readings of Wittgenstein where the silent obedience to a rule is internal to an evolving human practice that we cannot fix prior to our investigation. Similarly, I also express doubts as to whether Nyíri can be viewed as blocking criticism prior to our investigation of linguistic use. Nyíri even concludes by noting how Wittgenstein's view is similar to Oakeshott's view on how our words' meaning are learned *in* use: "We do not begin to learn our native language by learning the alphabet, or by learning its grammar; we do not begin by learning words, but words in use" (Oakeshott as cited in Nyiri 1982: 63).

Does this idea of learning "words in use" turn Nyíri's views on the limits of sense into a theory that allows for coherent nonsense? This makes us go back again to the question of whether there is such a thing as neoconservative thesis, and I believe Nyíri would say there is none. What Nyíri's neoconservative analysis allows for is a conception of human agreement or convention that stands fast for us, and is inexorable, at a given moment, i.e. a certainty.

Put in a more modest manner, I believe that Nyíri's treatment of this idea of certainty may be taken as similar to what I have described in Part 2 Chapter 2 as the resolute reading's acknowledgment of what is "logically basic". When dealing with these logically basic concepts, the resolute reading employ a method of elucidation that aims at the same procedure as the remark that Nyíri (ibid.: 47) draws from Karl Mannheim; i.e., one engages in a linguistic clarification that aims to "raise to the level of reflection and conscious manipulation those forms of experience [or uses of language] which can no longer be had in authentic way". The context of neo-conservatism under which Nyíri presents Wittgenstein as critical of forms of language use that are inauthentic or inorganic seems to be compatible with the same kind of naturalism

that can be found in Crary's resolute reading. As I discussed early on in this chapter, Crary's resolute reading also draws from how Wittgenstein endorsed a permissive conception of clarifying the nonsensicality of our critical expression by bringing those expressions back to their everyday use. In that context, we might say that her resolute reading does not really involve a denial of Nyíri's claims on how our "form of life" becomes a limit to the meaningful language use and criticism. As I understand Nyíri in relation the Crary's resolute reading, if we are in fact able to explore our contexts of use in our linguistic expressions and draw from the sensitivities acquired in that exploration, then those sensitivities become the natural condition through which we are able to understand a particular expression to be meaningful or nonsensical. Hence, the idea of limits of sense in Nyíri may in fact be linked to the idea of sensitivities in Crary, and this seems to apply in relation to Nyíri's discussion of how prior conceptions of "mental illness" in following a rule might be overcome by a "common behavior of mankind" that expresses practical knowledge. [216]

However, I would not want to go as far as to say that Nyíri is in fact a resolute reader like Crary. What I mean to say is that there are aspects of Nyíri's reading of Wittgenstein that is in fact very friendly to the resolute reading she endorses. As I mentioned in my last chapter, the resolute transcendentalism in Wittgenstein proceeds in such a way that the interlocutor, such as Nyíri, should be able to say "Yes, that is exactly what I mean".[217] Crary's reading of Wittgenstein, in its textual focus, is arguably more sophisticated in presenting the idea of a resolute reading. She is able to clarify the idea of a form life in terms of its connection with relevant sensitivities we acquire from learning a language. In this sense, there is sense in which her resolute reading is in fact friendly to the transcendental reading. It helps in the further clarification of Wittgenstein's concept of form of life by transforming that idea as a way of evoking an investigation of relevant contexts of use and as a way of discovering agreements in meaning that naturally emerge in such an investigation. In this sense, the idea of form of life as "common behavior of mankind" becomes capable of being understood as a concept we can

[216] Here again, one might make a point of connection between the idea of rule following in Nyíri's use of *PI* 143 and *PI* 206 and the idea of private language raised in *PI* 243. The idea of "mental illness" associated with variant cases of following a rule which is impossible to understand (in PI 143) translates to a substantial reading of nonsensical cases of following a rule. It also translates to that kind of impossibility in understanding supposedly conveyed by the idea of a private language associated with the substantial reading of *PI* 243. When Nyíri's position is reconstrued in a manner that has affinities with that of Crary, we may say that Nyíri's conception of the "mental illness" implied by variant cases of following a rule becomes cured or dissolved by clarifying them under the contexts of use where we rediscover the brute commonalities in action in our uses of language.
[217] This is a paraphrase of remark in *CV* p.18, which previously discussed in 3.4.2.

debate about while not undermining its role as a "natural limit" or framework of our judgment.[218]

4.5 Does Wittgenstein's later philosophy imply liberalism or conservatism?

To conclude, I believe it is important to note that Wittgenstein does not have an explicit political philosophy in his life and in his work, and that the route towards identifying the political implications of his later philosophy is different from the route of identifying the political implications of the socio-historical background of his later philosophy. The latter route, which Nyíri takes through his genetic reading, is more difficult since it covers a greater unity, i.e., a unity between the historical influences on Wittgenstein, his philosophy, and the actual political insights drawn from his philosophy. Indeed, at least in the case of the reading employed by Nyíri, I find that there is truth to Crary's claim: a genetic approach to understanding Wittgenstein's philosophy becomes prone to the danger of ending up with discussions that are too "mixed up".[219] And so, though Nyíri's genetic reading might be understood as a useful complement to the immanent reading, I am inclined to choose a more manageable unity by limiting this drawing of political implications to Wittgenstein's later philosophy and by beginning with a focus on Wittgenstein's remark in *PI* 128 on how philosophy does not advance any theses or theories.

If we take Wittgenstein's remark on not having advanced any thesis seriously, then it will be misguided to make any direct assertion or denial that his philosophy supports liberalism or conservatism. In the *Remarks on Frazer's Golden Bough* (1993), Wittgenstein says that philosophy is not concerned with truth or falsity, but with the different paths that lead to them. Oftentimes, it is more useful to begin with error and upon seeing the path let the agent judge for himself how he is led to such a belief.[220] Similarly, substantive claims that affirm or deny liberalism or conservatism may be likened to truth and falsity. They are not Wittgenstein's

[218] Because the idea of form of life involves reference to concepts are logically basic, it is indeed deep and it would have to be communicated by means of some kind of indirection or gesture. However, the resolute transcendentalism I have described becomes a kind of check for when the depth of that idea becomes metaphysical. That so-called depth simply becomes connected with the task of being able to investigate various contexts of use where such gestures become intelligible. See my previous discussion of this in Part 3 (Section 3.4.2), where I connect the idea of "form of life" with Wittgenstein's therapeutic understanding of the tip of the tongue experience.

[219] See Crary's 1st endnote (2000b:142) which I earlier cited in this chapter. Crary specifically refers to the genetic reading of Nyíri as an approach to understanding Wittgenstein that tends to "complicate matters".

[220] These methodological remarks are important because they are considered as Wittgenstein's first attempts to present and develop his philosophical method in the *Philosophical Investigations* . I also interpret it as very similar to what the later Wittgenstein describes as his approach of isolating questions of meaning from questions of truth and to what Conant (2002) has described as a method of "exploding an illusion from within".

concern. What I take to be Wittgenstein's concern is in the understanding of paths that lead to any position so people can discover for themselves the need to respect certain *limits* if those paths are to become a coherent picture of the world. I take it that this acknowledgment of limits must be something that comes about *naturally* in our clarification of an expression's context of use.

Wittgensteinian insights about political philosophy, I believe, are best understood as a way of understanding *paths,* and this contributes more to our understanding of the process of understanding rather than the content of whatever we understand. This method of paying more attention to our process of understanding seems to me to be *indirectly* supportive of certain forms of critical liberalism rather than of forms of totalitarian political conservatism. Nyíri's position, however, does not really fit this totalitarian form of conservatism. Nyíri can indeed be presented as a conservative, but we can find that this type of conservatism may very well be consistent with liberal conservatism or socialist conservatism, and that he is merely referring to the importance of being able to acknowledge what is "logically basic" when it comes to understanding and communicating normative concepts used in politics. Nyíri (1982: 46), for example, claims that the conservative ideas of today may correspond to the liberal ideas of yesterday in so far as conservative politics does not have specific content at all. In this sense, if the default political order of a society is liberalism, then the conservative politics Nyíri speaks of would be referring to some kind of preservation of liberal values in our mode of thinking. Thus, the conservative ideas of today's society might be those of valuing the equality between the sexes, but such a liberal value, in Nyíri's view, is not intrinsically liberal. That liberal value may very well be functioning as one of the conservative ideas of today in so far as it has become an established mode of thinking for many "modern" societies. I take it that this is what Nyíri meant when he said that conservative ideas of today may very well be the liberal ideas of yesterday.[221] There is thus a kind of neutrality in Nyíri's discussion of the conservatism found in Wittgenstein in that it refers to a certain kind of preservation of established ways of thinking which may be found in any form of political order.

An important aspect of Nyíri's conservatism, however, is that they include facts of human agreement that no society would consider insane. These facts may refer to the very same "universal" values that liberalism endorses, but I am inclined to interpret this not as a

[221] The converse of this kind of thinking also applies in that the liberal ideas of today may in fact be conservative ideas of yesterday. It may be a liberal idea, for example, to encourage forms of spirituality or religion which might in fact be a conservative idea of yesterday. This is because as a liberal society progresses it may become more open and encouraging of forms of divergence that respond to more particular needs for human solidarity.

substantive claim drawn from outside specific cultural and political practices. Given that Nyíri often emphasize the organic nature of the forms of life and language that Wittgenstein endorses, it seems to me that Nyíri's point in making such claims is not really to support some absolute standard about liberalism or even communism. What I understand Nyíri to be supporting is a gradualist form of political order where people are able to make sense of political norms in a way that they can be authentic parts of their life or culture. To find support for this idea, we may look into how the idea of neo-conservatism that Nyíri outlined in Wittgenstein is not just about fixed stability. On the contrary, it is about being able to deal with changes in a way that one can still have reasonable form of self-understanding and identity as those changes become slowly integrated as meaningful occurrences in the flow our everyday life. This is opposed, for example, to the kind of schizophrenia or dissonance that might occur when a certain political order (even if that order were democracy) becomes suddenly imposed to peoples living under a different historical and political situation.[222]

Because of the above insights, I find Nyíri in some kind of unexpected agreement with Crary and her view of the kind of support that Wittgenstein's philosophy gives to liberalism. According to Crary (2000b: 141), Wittgenstein's conception of the practice of philosophy indirectly supports liberalism in so far as it involves ample exercise on how we can understand different forms of language use in politics. Those philosophical exercises stretches our imagination and increases our sensitivity to variant modes of understanding in a way that makes us more open to meanings we may have previously considered nonsensical or insane. Hence, we can interpret Crary as saying that Wittgenstein's contribution to liberalism is not to liberalism per se but to the discovery of conditions under which we can understand the meaningful application of liberal ideals. This approach is critical of views like that of Rorty and Russell whose employment of liberal ideals exists within a vacuum of stipulated meanings or whose meanings become a justification for a kind of top-down approach to understanding with regards to political issues. I take it that in Crary's view, if the application of liberal ideals is to make sense, we have to accept that those ideals imply different things in different societies with specific traditions and established practices for going about. Otherwise, those ideals they will not be understood at all. And that is what it means to investigate the meaning of an expression

[222] This applies, for example, to debates on giving greater autonomy to regions of a democratic country by shifting to a federalist form of government. At least in the case of the Philippines, there are many cases where the authoritarian culture will turn this federalism into a kind of political wardlordism where the "elected" leader of a region can commit more injustice in light of a weakened accountability to a central government. This means that given certain historical and political situations, naïve encouragement of certain liberal ideals (e.g., autonomy) may backfire. The same can be said, for example, on issues of child labor where the whole of the family and community is so poor that the child ends up having to work with the whole family as a means for their survival as a whole.

in relation to the language-games and forms of life which is their original home, i.e., it is to find those specific practices which might show how our utterances come to have significant use.

In this sense, I find Crary to be endorsing the same kind of gradualist approach to social and political understanding that is found in Nyíri's neo-conservative reading. Crary applies the gradualist approach in relation to the so-called liberal ideals that Rorty also supports with much haste. But in both Crary and Nyíri, it seems that Wittgenstein's philosophy is taken to imply a way of understanding political concepts that frees us from an attachment to an abstract understanding of their normative character and which fosters an understanding of their normative character as something that is a part of our life's activities.

We can find Nyíri's continuing to emphasize a similar gradualist approach to political understanding as he takes Wittgenstein to be taking the same position as Michael Oakeshott in being critical of the view that "Human society can, and ought to be planned and guided by an authority" independent of the different actions and institutions within those societies themselves (Oakeshott as cited in Nyiri 1982: 62). For Nyíri, Wittgenstein conceived of criticism and the advancement of ideals as a linguistic activity that is always embedded in a social and cultural context, and it is the constant reminder and reflective awareness of the differences in these evolving contexts that Wittgenstein's later philosophy contributes to political thought. Crary's resolute reading of Wittgenstein, I believe, also agrees with this line of thought.

To conclude: it seems to me that Crary's "gradualist form liberalism" has a certain degree of compatibility with the supposed conservatism that Nyíri reads into Wittgenstein. Both take Wittgenstein to be critical of "imposing" political concepts on societies with different ways of life. [223]

[223] I acknowledge Kevin Cahill's contribution in pointing out these distinctions between different types of liberalism, specifically the gradualist type of liberalism that Crary endorses in comparison with the atomistic conception of Russell and Rorty.

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