CRITICAL NOTICE

Wittgenstein's Method
Neglected Aspects
Essays on Wittgenstein by Gordon Baker
Edited and introduced by Katherine Morris
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There are a number of important aspects to Gordon Baker's final re-orientation in his approach to Wittgenstein's later philosophy. First published in 2004, this posthumous collection of essays covering roughly the last decade of his life, reveals firstly a fundamentally different attitude of mind to that expressed during those halcyon days when, as part of the team commonly known to commentators as *B & H*, he was in no doubt at all about Wittgenstein's intentions. At that earlier point in the development of his ideas, Baker was happy - with Peter Hacker - to 'police the borders between sense and nonsense', as Katherine Morris puts it in her Introduction, 'issuing tickets to those philosophers, psychologists and linguists who transgressed the bounds of sense' (1). This change in attitude is accompanied by a noticeably different tone of voice to that often found in the *B & H* archives:

> Our primary concern here is to uncover the roots of rule-scepticism and
> to display the rot that infects them....rule-scepticism is the surface manifestation
> of deep-rooted misunderstandings characteristic of the present day. It requires
> uprooting, not by-passing. The sceptical solution is an absurd answer to an
> incoherent question. And finally, it is not only that the roots of rule-scepticism
> are infected, but also the soil which nurtures them is poisoned. Out of the
> assumptions that a language is a system of rules, which speakers tacitly know...
> and that explanations of meaning consist of model-theoretic correlations of words
> with entities in reality, nothing healthy can ever grow (2).

At stake on this assessment are matters of more than academic interest, for the standpoints apparently being subjected to devastating criticism, manifest deeply-rooted misunderstandings that

are currently affecting an entire generation of philosophers, misunderstandings that require to

to be surgically excised before philosophical health can be substantially improved. The habits of

thought infesting these individuals have the appearance of sicknesses of the understanding that

threaten to destroy the mental well-being of the academy, and only the application of what

Katherine Morris refers to as the quite general '*corrective* therapy' of *B & H's* Wittgenstein can

save the day and restore it to sanity. The tone is strident, uncompromising, occasionally acerbic,

abrasive and not a little belligerent.

Whilst this is certainly *B & H* at their *most* extreme, it provides a useful example with

which to contrast the open-ended, exploratory approach, employing for the most part a new

modus operandi - 'more a matter of raising questions than providing answers' (3) - that now

characterises Baker's method in some of these later essays. On more than one occasion he refers

to *starting again from scratch* (4), with the implication that one must abandon the kinds of existing

presuppositions that tended to govern his previous thinking during the period of *B & H*. From time

to time he makes reference to shifts of emphasis, transforming the *spirit* of the discussion, and so

allowing for a treatment that is 'more open-ended, imaginative and exploratory - less dogmatic,

regulatory and adversarial' (5). Recognising his previous self at work in his description of a form

of Wittgensteinian therapy that 'consists entirely in correcting actual mistakes in logical grammar

and in ensuring that the future use of words sticks to the rules determining their "combinatorial

possibilities" ', where the 'proper role of the philosopher is to catalogue the everyday uses of

words and to enforce strict adherence to these rules', he interestingly points towards a contrast

with two alternative - and by implication more attractive - conceptions of therapy:

> At one extreme, by considering a particular case as the prototype
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> of a disease of a certain general kind, one might seek to isolate its
>
> causes in the attempt to treat the whole range of disorders akin to
>
> it. Then one would have both theoretical and practical interests in
>
> pursuing a specific line of research, but not an interest in curing

just this specific disease or in treating this particular patient. At

the other extreme, one might bend all one's efforts to curing an

individual person who has fallen victim to a disorder (someone

who is an alcoholic or who suffers from severe depression). Here

nothing would matter apart from the efficacy of procedures in this

particular case. This too seems an intelligible point of view on

'diseases of the intellect'. (6)

The first alternative would be entirely in keeping with what Wittgenstein has to say

about the roots of philosophical confusion in a number of passages from the *Philosophy* section of

The Big Typescript. These, often cited, have now become very well-known, primarily because of

their obvious relevance to the viability of *individual*, *person-relative*, conceptions of Wittgensteinian

therapy. One particular passage is always worth quoting in full:

Human beings are profoundly enmeshed in philosophical - i.e.

grammatical - confusions. They cannot be freed without first being

extricated from the extraordinary variety of associations which hold

them prisoner. You have as it were to reconstitute their entire language.

- But this language grew up as it did because human beings had - and

have - the tendency to think in this way. So you can only succeed in

extricating people who live in an instinctive rebellion against language;

you cannot help those whose entire instinct is to live in the herd which

has created this language as its own proper mode of expression. (7)

Whilst the last sentence of this passage with its reference to the herd which has created

this language, is puzzling just because it suggests the creation of a language within an *existing*

culture, in circumstances where - if language is to be at the *root* of philosophical confusion - it ought

to be *independent of* cultural considerations, the salient point is sufficiently clear: the concern that

Wittgenstein expresses is with the general underlying roots of philosophical confusion in our

language; and this confusion is presented as having a universal significance which would seem to distance it from *any* clear connection to individual, person-relative therapeutic assessments of his entire methodology. Certainly, even in these circumstances, therapy may be thought to play an *individual* role just because the way in which each philosopher comes to uniquely appreciate the extent to which *he* is held captive by a *picture,* is going to differ from case to case. Nevertheless, the implication to be drawn from this account is that *if* our language is at the root of philosophical confusion, then far from producing *torment* and *anguish* within the individual philosopher, its effects must be quite the opposite: these must be so subtle and wide-ranging that he would be expected to be entirely *unaware* in normal circumstances of the unseen pressures, underlying his entire way of looking at things, to which he is being subjected. This emerges more clearly in a second passage:

> Language sets everyone the same traps ; it is an immense network
> of easily accessible wrong turnings. And so we watch one man after
> another walking down the same paths and we know in advance where
> he will branch off, where he will walk straight on without noticing the
> side turning etc. etc. What I have to do then is erect signposts at all the
> junctions where there are wrong turnings so as to help people past the
> danger points. (8)

The third passage highlights the universal nature of the kind of subtle effects that the very forms of our language create in disposing the philosopher to take the wrong paths that lead him, for example, towards puzzlement in his attempts to *solve* problems about the existence of an external world or about 'other minds':

> People say again and again that philosophy doesn't really progress,
> that we are all occupied with the same philosophical problems as
> were the Greeks. But the people who say this don't understand why
> it has to be so. It is because our language has remained the same and
> keeps seducing us into asking the same questions..... (9)

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The point is repeated in a later passage from 1946, quoted by Peter Hacker (10); yet here the tone is less certain with its apparent puzzlement over the question whether the real roots of philosophical confusion lie solely in the unchanging forms of our language, or are derived at least in part from cultural considerations after all:

> Have we to do with mistakes and difficulties that are as old as language ? Are they, so to speak, diseases that are bound up with the use of a language, or are they of a more special nature, characteristic of our civilisation ? Or also: Is the pre-occupation with the medium of language that runs through all our philosophizing // of all philosophy //, an ancient struggle ? Or is it new, like our science ? Or also thus: does philosophy always waver between metaphysics and critique of language ?

After providing his reference to two points of view on 'diseases of the intellect', Gordon Baker remarks that on his second conception, every philosophical problem is *someone's* problem, and this requires isolation of the source of confusion for this *individual* patient, 'perhaps by calling to his attention certain pictures or similies which have led *him* astray.' (*Ibid.*):

> In aiming at therapy, Wittgenstein might be concerned with treatment of a particular patient rather than with a kind of campaign to improve public health. The *Investigations* might be, as it were, a set of case histories of a general practitioner, not the execution of a campaign to rid the world of smallpox ('Cartesianism') (11)

Remarking that the 'text of the PLA certainly exhibits this point of view, even though this is seldom noted' (*Ibid.*) Baker then instances *Investigations* § 305 as an example where the philosopher is misled by the idea of an 'inner process', just as in § 308 he is misled because we have a definite concept of what it means to know a process better. The point the reader *may* be invited to deduce from this is that although we are being misled here by *general* features of

our language that lead to philosophical misunderstanding, these 'remarks offer diagnoses which demand the patient's *acknowledgement* if they are to be recognised as correct.' (*Ibid*.)

The point to note about this passage is the clearly tentative presentation captured in what Wittgenstein *might* be doing, so that the accompanying reference Baker makes to achieving a correct diagnosis requires a *confession* from the patient. Consequently, a cure effected with his full co-operation reveals 'an analogy with the procedures of psychoanalysis' (*Ibid*.). But this is really no more than window-dressing: in *this* context the psychoanalytic flourish adds very little to an account in which the wayward philosopher, realising with or without help that he is party to a misleading *picture*, manages either to free himself - or to be freed with help - from the effects of a false analogy, rooted in the forms of our language. Either way, freed of the misleading *picture*, he can see the world anew. Baker lays stress on a passage from *The Big Typescript* (410) which is worth quoting as he presents it, for he uses it on several occasions as a basis for the claim that, at least during the early 1930's, Wittgenstein explicitly compared his methods to those of Freudian psychotherapy:

....we can only convict somebody else of a mistake if he acknowledges

that this really is the expression of his thinking.

For only if he acknowledges it as such, *is* it the correct expression

(Psychoanalysis.)

What the other person **acknowledges** is the analogy I am proposing

to him as the source of his thought. (12)

The fact that the philosophical difficulties have a general significance because they are, say, rooted in the forms of our language, can be allowed on this reading to be compatible with at least a *comparison* with psychoanalysis because this approach is relevant *only* to the method by which the 'patient' comes to *acknowledge* that he is indeed the victim of a *picture* that is leading him astray. But for this to be so, the *patient* does not need to be in *torment*. Once again, it is essential to our understanding of the roles played by those *pictures* holding us captive, that they are so ingrained in our language and in our thinking that we are quite *unaware* of the function they are - behind the scenes -

actually performing in determining the direction of our (philosophical) thinking. Furthermore, when Baker does draw our attention to *unrest*, *torment*, *disquiet*, *discomfort*, *obsessions*, *cravings*, *revulsion*, etc. it is an open question whether, whilst these terms may have some bearing upon Wittgenstein's *personal* angst, they need not be taken to be relevant to the general role that pictures play behind the scenes - perhaps ironically suggesting the *unconscious* in Freudian terms after all - in the thinking of the majority of other philosophers. (13)

This view gains support from the fact that Gordon Baker himself freely admits that the 'analogy with psychoanalysis is not developed very far or at all systematically in these or other texts, and this makes it impossible to establish exactly what Wittgenstein had in view in drawing it. But it seems to have struck Waismann as holding the key to unlocking Wittgenstein's distinctive method of conducting philosophical investigations.' But this appears to place the onus on Waismann rather than on Wittgenstein himself to provide adequate proof of the relevance of the psychoanalytic model 'which Waismann elaborated much later':

> This may well be more extensive and more definite than
>
> anything that Wittgenstein himself had in mind. But this
>
> may make it all the more valuable for highlighting some
>
> commonly neglected aspects of Wittgenstein's later philosophy.
>
> Of course, this model is to be understood as an *object of comparison*,
>
> not as a first approximation to describing Wittgenstein's account
>
> of the *nature* of philosophy. In this role, it may serve to exhibit
>
> unfamiliar aspects of his actual practice of treating problems as
>
> well as unnoticed implications of his methodological remarks,
>
> not only in his dictations to Waismann, but also throughout his
>
> later philosophical investigations. (14)

Once again, in Waismann's hands the psychoanalytic model *may* be more extensive than anything Wittgenstein envisaged himself, but even if it is not, its value lies in its role as an *object*

of comparison which *may* throw light on aspects of his method. It is *not* intended to say anything about Wittgenstein's assessment of the *nature* of philosophy itself. But if these remarks are taken at face-value, they entirely downgrade the role played by this comparison of Wittgenstein's method to that of a form of psychotherapy: on this view it becomes at best a useful way of pointing to an aspect of Wittgenstein's way of working that helps to throw light on his overall methodology; and at worst it becomes a red-herring diverting attention from the clearly-stated claim that the *pictures* holding us captive ultimately result from the very nature of the forms of the language we inherit from our forebears, even if cultural considerations do have some subsidiary role to play. But this claim *is* at face-value incompatible with any idea that individual philosophers require to be *suffering* from intellectual *torment* in order to feel the *relief* that Wittgensteinian /Freudian therapy brings to the *philosopher-patient*.

The problem, however, is that when Baker continues in his paper 'Thinking about "Thinking" ' to use 'Waismann's model as an object of comparison' (*Ibid*. 150), the paper in which the psychoanalytic model is initially made to appear rather lack-lustre, and also - and especially - in his paper 'A Vision of Philosophy', in which he assesses the significance of Waismann's 'How I see Philosophy' from 1956, the psychoanalytic model is described in much more glowing terms, terms which would appear to present it as rather more than a mere *object of comparison*:

> Psychoanalysis is in fact meant as a model for developing a
> distinctive form of intellectual therapy ('**our method**'). In many
> respects, this therapeutic method is radically different from
> established procedures of conceptual analysis in analytic philosophy.
> Waismann outlined not an analogy, but a revolutionary programme.
> It is a **description** of a very distinctive method which appears to have
> dominated Wittgenstein's work at this period. (15)

We are also informed in a footnote to this passage that this method also continued to

dominate Wittgenstein's later work. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that in what became on its appearance a rather long-awaited reply by Peter Hacker to Gordon Baker's criticisms of what has been generally regarded as the 'standard approach' to Wittgenstein's later writings expressed through the former *B & H* partnership, Hacker should spend what may be considered to be a rather disproportionate amount of his paper - 'Baker's Late Interpretation of Wittgenstein' - (16) on attempting to demolish this psychoanalytic reading. For if we see it aright, it does not deserve the kind of emphasis that both Baker, and Hacker in his criticisms would appear to be attributing to it. In that respect, it really is a red-herring, and we should take Baker's comments - in thinking of it as no more than an *object of comparison* - at face-value after all. Indeed, to spend an unjustified amount of time investigating the relevance of a *person-relative* individual *angst* reading of Wittgensteinian therapy is to draw attention away from other aspects of Baker's approach to Wittgenstein that are of far more fundamental importance to an understanding of both Witgenstein's work and his method.

The issue is made more complex, as Hacker reveals, by the rather extraordinary fact that the psychoanalytic method is not even mentioned at all by Waismann in 'How I See Philosophy', so that anyone who actually comes to read the paper is given to wonder where the emphasis placed by Baker on this supposed aspect of it actually originates. Indeed, when Karl Popper in his own 'How I See Philosophy' comments on 'Waismann's brilliant essay', his main criticism of it is not that it erroneously compares philosophy to a form of psychoanalysis, but that it perpetuates the mistaken idea of an intellectual and philosophical elite, an idea one would be hard put ever to attribute to Wittgensteian himself. (17)

The simple answer to these difficulties is that what Baker evidently believed about 'our method', based on other available evidence he had to hand, he was given to attribute to 'How I See Philosophy' because he took it for granted that Waismann's view of Philosophy, even when not explicitly stated, was a close pointer to Wittgenstein's own. As Hacker points out, Baker freely admits in another paper that neither Freud nor psychoanalysis appear in

'How I See Philosophy', though this method is mentioned in Waismann's famous *The Principles of Linguistic Philosophy* where it is claimed that 'Our method is in certain respects similar to psychoanalysis' in bringing unconscious analogies to consciousness (*Hacker*, Footnote 12 *Ibid*. 118). But this *is* to make it no more than an *object of comparison*; and this takes us round in a circle: it returns us to the point that it is only too easy to over-emphasise the importance of this method as anything more than a rough guide to certain aspects of his methodology which we are free to see as fruitful if we so wish. Yet, it has already been shown that Baker at the beginning of his essay on 'Thinking about "Thinking" ' does attribute to it no more importance than this.

  If we take this point together with Hacker's claim that Wittgenstein actually denied that in the 1940's psychoanalysis had any genuine relevance to his thinking, then it suggests that we can be only too easily prone to attribute to the person-relative, individual-orientated idea of Wittgenstein's therapy, more importance in assessing his methodology than it actually warrants. Certainly, the historical evidence is on this issue once again wholly on Hacker's side. Here is Ayer, commenting on the content of the 1946 radio broadcast to which Wittgenstein objected:

> Having undertaken to give this broadcast, I was uncertain what to
>
> do about Wittgenstein. It seemed ridiculous not to refer to him in
>
> giving even a superficial account of contemporary British philosophy,
>
> yet I knew from the experiences of others that one had to be very careful
>
> in what one said about him if he was not to take offence. In particular,
>
> he had displayed a tendency to denounce any reference to his current
>
> views either as plagiarism or as mis-representation. I knew something
>
> about the development of his thought in the nineteen-thirties through
>
> the copies of the notes taken from his lectures which had found their
>
> way to Oxford, but I did not think that this was a sufficient basis for
>
> me to risk making any detailed comment on work he had not yet brought
>
> himself to publish. I therefore decided to quote only from the *Tractatus*

and to content myself with just a vague reference to Wittgenstein's later teaching. Unfortunately, my comment on the *Tractatus* was not entirely respectful. Having quoted one of its concluding sentences..... I remarked, rather facetiously, that the philosopher was thereby 'reduced, or elevated, to the position of a park keeper whose business it is to see that no one commits an intellectual nuisance: the nuisance in question being that of lapsing into metaphysics.' I then went on to say that I did not know whether Wittgenstein was still of this opinion, though if he were I thought that he would express it rather differently, but that what I did know 'was that the effect on his more articulate disciples has been that they tend to treat philosophy as a department of psychoanalysis. ' I had in mind principally John Wisdom, whose work I described as 'of fascinating subtlety', while again expressing a doubt whether the curing of intellectual cramps was all that the philosopher was fitted to achieve. (18)

It is hardly surprising that this brought a rebuke from Wittgenstein principally 'because of my comment that John Wisdom's view of philosophy could be taken as a pointer to his own. In particular, he did not admit any kinship between the practice of psychoanalysis and his own method of dealing with philosophical confusions.' (Ayer, *Ibid*.)

It is a characteristic and revealing feature of Baker's presentation in the relevant essays of this volume that he combines what would be regarded as a fairly conventional and acceptable description of the *source* of pictures in our philosophical thinking - one compatible with the three major quotations from *The Big Typescript* - with his more radical psychoanalytic Waismannesque account of how - as largely *unconscious* analogies - they are therapeutically brought to the attention of the 'tormented' soul who is suffering from them. Indeed, in more extreme moments, we are told that *suffering* is a presupposition of 'our method', and that *relief* from this angst is the *primary* motive for the patient's finding his way out of the flybottle.

It is even described as a condition of the applicability of 'our method' that it has no role to play for someone *unaffected* by intellectual torment, 'or who suffers (as it were) from a *lack* of problems !' (19) This combination of the conventional and the rather more unconventional reading is illustrated in the following passage:

> ...Wittgenstein stressed two general themes that are prominent in Freud's thought. First, he practiced a *genetic* method by tracing problems to their sources in pictures, analogies, and similies which are embedded in our language and our thinking; he tried to show that many philosophical prejudices have *deep roots*, and he suggested that they can be eliminated only by clarifying their sources........ Of course, the nature of the origins of the problems differs in the two cases: in psychoanalyis problems are traced to experiences or events, in philosophy to analogies or pictures. Second, Wittgenstein aimed at removing puzzlement by promoting *self-awareness* (rather than the discovery of something new); he sought to secure confessions or acknowledgements of prejudice, bias, compulsion or superstition and to make visible patterns in or aspects of what is already familiar to his interlocutor.... Of course, the items exemplifying the patterns are different in the two cases: in psychoanalysis we are concerned with patterns of behaviour (e.g., manifestations of an Oedipus complex), in philosophy with patterns in the uses of our words (e.g., connections of mental states with their expressions). (20)

This is combined with a depiction of Waismann's stress on freedom that makes the wayward philosopher personally responsible for his confusions, and for his wilfully motivated misconceptions. For those like Hacker, concerned to show that Wittgenstein, like Ryle, was involved in drawing our attention to category mistakes and categorial confusions,

this will inevitably be seen as the last straw, as an account so far removed from Wittgenstein's

real intentions that it becomes a travesty of his philosophy. But here it ought to be remembered

that Baker recognises the two conceptions of therapy that may pertain to 'diseases of the

intellect' - neither of which is at least theoretically identical to the *corrective-therapy* of *B & H*

which they replace - and that whilst admitting that they both may have applicability, his

tendency - based on his appraisal of 'our method' - is to at least *appear* to favour one rather

than the other. An important footnote referring to a *person-relative* conception of therapy

discussed in the main text, illustrates this point:

> Wittgenstein's notion of therapy is generally taken to be less radical
>
> than this. He is thought to address philosophical positions (say,
>
> Cartesian dualism) and to demonstrate that they are indefensible or
>
> untenable (as it were, in the abstract). This is comparable not to the
>
> treatment of individuals by a general practitioner, but to a sustained
>
> effort to improve public health (say, by eradicating smallpox from
>
> the world). (Baker, *Ibid.* 173 Footnote 13).

The distinction between those two recognisably different conceptions of therapy is

repeated in another footnote elaborating on the same point:

> Wittgenstein's conception of philosophy is commonly recognized to
>
> be therapeutic (cf. *PI* § 133). But this idea is seldom connected with a
>
> recognition that there are many different conceptions of therapy.
>
> Different models of administering therapy; especially of the 'objects'
>
> of treatment (both its subjects and its goals , e.g. *Z* § 382). There is,
>
> for example, a tendency to see the 'private language argument' as a
>
> *reductio ad absurdum* of Cartesian dualism; i.e. as a strategy for delivering
>
> checkmate to the 'inner/outer' picture of the mind. This kind of therapy
>
> seems comparable to a campaign aimed at the global eradication of a

disease (say, smallpox). But this is not the conception of therapy that

informs HISP ! (Baker, *Ibid.* 201 Footnote 9).

In spite of the fact that he does distinguish between them, it is never entirely clear

whether Baker *sufficiently* differentiates between his objections to the view of describing

grammar as a form of *corrective* therapy in which Wittgenstein, like Ryle, is said to police

'the bounds of sense, sharply reprimanding philosophers who commit offences by uttering

nonsense', (*Ibid*. 94), and his objections to the claim that Wittgenstein is in the business of

providing *reductio* arguments against traditional philosophical standpoints like so-called

Cartesian dualism. He repudiates both of these approaches, even although he has already

presented the latter in a way which may make it seem part of a global eradication of disease

which remains a *legitimate* alternative to the *person-relative* assessment of individual therapy -

capturing the philosopher's adherence to a *picture* - that he ultimately seems to prefer.

Whilst this is relevant *solely* to Baker's presentation, good reasons have been supplied

for reaching the conclusion that the psychoanalytic *person-relative* approach to therapy is

not directly mentioned in the *Investigations* because, ultimately, it is adding little or nothing

to Wittgenstein's assessment of the roots of those *pictures* he take to provide the source of

our fundamental philosophical problems. This, however, should not blind us to the many

positive aspects of Baker's various readings: he justifiably pokes fun at the thought, for

example, that *Investigations* § 116 'is taken to signify the standard speech-patterns of the

English-speaking peoples.' This is a direct criticism of the 'policing the bound of sense'

approach, and Baker has no hesitation in choosing a quotation from the days of his former

B & H partnership as the main example of something he now takes to be highly misleading:

'The therapy for the illusions generated by this "metaphysical

use of words" is to examine, with unbiased vision, the **ordinary**

use of these words. It will then be evident that we have been

misusing them.' (Baker, *Ibid.* 104 Footnote 10).

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Baker is ultimately objecting to the assimilation of Wittgenstein's method to that of what he refers to as 'the *genre* called "ordinary language philosophy" ', and his main objection to the 'standard interpretation' of § 116 - though he does *not* express it in this way - is that it *can* be regarded as providing a view of Wittgensteinian therapy that reflects the worst aspects of an argument from the paradigm case in appearing, for example, even to *attempt* to justify the *philosophical* claims that *metaphysical use* may on occasion be taken to (sceptically) deny, merely by pointing to the fact that there are circumstances in which our terms are 'correctly used' according to ordinary criteria:

> The prevalent view of Wittgenstein's philosophical therapy offers
>
> definite answers to these questions without bothering to marshall
>
> much textual evidence. 'Everyday use' is taken, so to speak, as the
>
> centre of gravity....Describing everyday use is a matter of establishing
>
> facts about a public normative practice, and it is presumed to be
>
> relatively uncontentious (objective ?) what these facts are. It is datum
>
> that one *can* say '.....' or that one *cannot* say '......'. 'Everyday use' is
>
> treated as synonymous with 'ordinary speech (language)'. (Baker, *Ibid*. 94).

On this view, the object of therapy on Baker's view is to 'police the bounds of sense' by exposing the nonsense central to major philosophical positions; yet as an example of this supposed exposure he mentions the private language argument as a *reductio ad absurdum* of the Cartesian view of the mind, an example it will be remembered that he has already allowed in another context to at least appear within his 'global eradication of disease' concept of therapy as a *legitimate* alternative to his *person-relative* approach. Whether or not we are prepared to treat this anomaly as anything more than a minor lack of attention to detail, there are still plenty of other instances where the real force of Baker's methodological approach shines through:

> 'There **must** be qualia.' 'There **must** be a what's-its-like to being a
>
> child.' 'There **must** be experiences over and above human behaviour.'
>
> 'Understanding a sentence **must** be a form of information-processing.'

'The brain **must** be a computer, the mind **must** be its software.' -

How is somebody (somebody else, or even oneself ?) to be

liberated from today's *idees fixes* ? From those captivating

metaphysical uses of words ? By (incontestable ?) arguments

demonstrating deviation from the standard practices of speakers

of English ? Mightn't it be more promising to reflect on the materials

from which these pictures are derived and on the subtle thought-

transitions by which they become hardened into dogmas ? How may

we best arrive at a different attitude towards the problems that have

come to be obsessive ? Perhaps if we could surrender the preconception

that Wittgenstein was practising 'conceptual analysis' as this phrase

is *now* understood, we might find that his work had more to teach us

than we ever dreamt of. (Baker, *Ibid*. 85).

Severed from any connection with the psychoanalytic approach to Wittgensteinian therapy, Baker points directly in this passage to the origin of the pictures which, innocent in themselves, can come to 'hold us captive' within a philosophical context. Baker's most detailed study of Wittgenstein's pictures, however, occurs in ' Wittgenstein: Concepts or Conceptions' from 2001, the paper in which the exploratory approach with his *modus operandi* of asking more questions rather than of providing answers is most evident, and here he offers what he refers to as a 'first sketch' of Wittgenstein's use of the term 'picture':

'Picture' is quite naturally associated with facticity-disclaimers.

Hence a picture might be called a 'conception' ('*Auffasung*'), 'Way

of seeing things', 'way of looking at or regarding things', or 'aspect'.

And it might be marked with qualifiers, for example, 'in a certain sense',

'One might say', 'I want to say.' (Perhaps too with 'scare-quotes' and

italics !)

Wittgenstein emphasises this point; he refrains from disputing

the **correctness** of pictures (§ 424).

'The mind seems able to give a word meaning' (p. 184). This is

not something that **seems to be so**; it is a **picture**. Thus we see

that a picture is **not suggested** to us by **experience** (§ 59). (Baker, *Ibid*., 266).

Baker has a great many other things to say about *pictures* in this paper: that they

cannot be *misdescriptions* of, or *mistakes* about the grammar of our language, but are rather in

the nature of superstitions, that they are independent of our *practices* of using words - like

the *picture* of thinking as a mental process, for example - that in this respect they are 'free-

wheeling' (what we can refer to as *incidental* to our practices), that we are intellectually free

to accept or reject them, that there are no conclusive proofs or refutations in respect of them,

although we may reason or argue about them in a rather informal way. An adherence to

pictures is the source of many of our philosophical problems, although a picture can be both

empty and *pernicious*, its emptiness making it irrefutable and so channeling 'intellectual activity

into the perverse activity of explaining away apparent counterexamples' (*Ibid*. 268). Pictures

are compared with the different *aspects* familiar from Wittgenstein's discussion of visual

perception - see also Baker's final paper 'The Grammar of Aspects and Aspects of Grammar'-

although in other contexts different pictures can be useful in discussing different ways of

regarding language. We may, for example see language from the aspect of a stimulus-response

model, as a calculus of rules, or as a game with signs.

The conclusion Baker draws from this is that it should encourage us to surrender

the desire to establish 'the only possibility', and so to confute philosophical adversaries: this is

perhaps for analytical philosophers in general 'a very *difficult* renunciation'. Again, this is more

than likely to go against the grain for many *soi-disant* analytical philosophers - a phrase he uses

throughout the book - those 'who relish the clash of steel on steel; the adverserial model of

argument, the possibility of proving something, especially the possibility of proving other

philosophers to be *wrong*.' (*Ibid*. 269). For those philosophers - and there can be little doubt that he would see at least an aspect of his former *B & H* self as falling into this category - eliminating the tyranny of a picture by gaining acceptance for other pictures, 'swapping pictures or possible ways of seeing things would be useless and repugnant, perhaps to be condemned as a form of "relativism" '. (*Ibid*.)

Whilst this is precisely how Peter Hacker is prepared to view Gordon Baker's new approach to the notion of a *picture* - and his approach to Wittgenstein in general - and whilst Hacker fails to see the significance of certain aspects of Baker's new way of looking at things which does throw light on Wittgenstein's *oeuvre*, there is a minor drawback to Baker's fairly comprehensive overview of the notion of a *picture*. This lies in his attempt to provide a general survey of its use in the absence of any genuinely detailed engagement with the individual passages in which Wittgenstein directly uses this notion in order to reveal, in any particular case, the respects in which philosophers *are* being held captive, and therefore how philosophers *are* being led astray. But if they are being led astray, then there is after all on Wittgenstein's assessment something *wrong* or *misleading* about the picture. To reveal those circumstances in which a picture may be an innocent *accompaniment* of our practice in talking, say, about the mental, as distinct from those in which, when doing *philosophy* we can be tempted to give a picture an *application* in which we take our *understanding* of the practice to consist, is one of the philosopher's main tasks. But this task is not helped in any way by comparing Wittgenstein's treatment of a picture with that of the dawning of an aspect, where the question of whether one aspect is more or less 'correct' than another simply does not arise. This comparison only succeeds in helping to promote the 'homeopathic' view, to which Baker adheres, in which pictures replace pictures, and which neglects the *role* Wittgenstein claims we attribute to those pictures, innocent in themselves, when we *misapply* them in a *philosophical* context.

This is particularly relevant to the thirty pages or so devoted to three important papers in which Baker discusses the reception and treatment of the private language argument

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by his *soi-disant* analytic philosophers. But before discussing Baker's presentation in more detail, it is worthwhile reminding ourselves of an important aspect of the assessment of Wittgenstein's philosophy that does occasionally obtain prominence in his book:

> ....I suggest scrupulous attention to Wittgenstein's overall therapeutic conception of his philosophical investigations: far from advocating any general positive position (whether anti-realism, conventionalism, anthropological idealism, or whatever) and far from undertaking to give any general outline of the logical geography of our language (or even of the narrower domain of 'mentalistic' or 'psychological' concepts), he always sought to address specific philosophical problems of definite individuals and to bring to light conceptual confusions which these individuals would acknowledge as a form of entanglement in their own rules. He did not make direct assaults on various standard 'isms' (whether Cartesian dualism in philosophy of mind or Intuitionism in philosophy of mathematics); nor did he attempt to overwhelm these positions by an accumulated series of indirect attacks....He did not see himself in the role of a public health official whose brief was to eradicate smallpox from the face of the earth (e.g. to eliminate Cartesian dualism once for all by means of the Private Language Argument). Rather he operated as a general practitioner who treated the bumps that various individual patients had got by running their heads up against the limits of language (§ 119)... (Baker, *Ibid*. 67 *et seq.*)

There follows, in a context which is not directly related to Waismann, the psychoanalytic description of therapy in which the patient is given to acknowledge his captivity by a picture. In contrast to this presentation, here is Peter Hacker at the end of his reply to Baker's new approach, expressing the opposing viewpoint as *B & H* themselves would undoubtedly have done prior to their break-up:

...Wittgenstein resolved many of the deep problems that have dogged

our subject for centuries, sometimes indeed for more than two millennia,

problems about the nature of linguistic representation, about the relationship

between thought and language, about solipsism and idealism, self-knowledge

and knowledge of other minds, and about the nature of mathematical truth

and of mathematical propositions. He ploughed up the soil of European

philosophy of logic and language. He gave us a novel and immensely fruitful

array of insights into philosophy of psychology. He attempted to overturn

centuries of reflection on the nature of mathematics and mathematical truth.

He undermined foundationalist epistemology. And he bequeathed us a vision

of philosophy as a contribution not to human knowledge, but to human

understanding - understanding of the forms of our thought and of the

conceptual confusions into which we are liable to fall. (21)

In order to obtain a much clearer view of the role allocated by Wittgenstein to a

picture in his philosophy, it will be worthwhile choosing two examples in which this concept

has a significant role to play. The first example is seldom quoted or referred to, in spite of

the fact that it not only points to an important feature of Wittgenstein's philosophical thinking,

but also serves to express a methodological principle that (therapeutically) illuminates the

source of the *liberation* encountered in the escape from philosophical confusion. The second

example is directly related to Gordon Baker's discussion of the 'private language argument'.

Baker has a great many interesting things to say about the reception and use of this famous

'argument' by his *soi-disant* analytic philosophers, even if he does not provide - a failure common

to promoters of radically therapeutic versions of Wittgenstein's methodology - the detailed

assessment of the individual passages in §§ 243 - 315 that most readers would normally expect to

see. The point of providing both examples is to show that Baker and Hacker as *adversaries* fail to

give due importance to features of their opponent's approach that when taken into account can allow for a much more balanced treatment of Wittgenstein's methodology. The first example is:

> The evolution of the higher animals and of man, and the awakening of consciousness at a particular level. The picture is something like this: Though the ether is filled with vibrations the world is dark. But one day man opens his seeing eye, and there is light.
>
> What this language primarily describes is a picture. What is to be done with the picture, how it is to be used, is still obscure. Quite clearly, however, it must be explored if we want to understand the sense of what we are saying. But the picture seems to spare us this work: it already points to a particular use. This is how it takes us in. (*Philosophical Investigations*, Part II, vii, 184)

To describe this merely as a brilliant example illustrating the high point of Wittgenstein's art would be to fail to do it justice. It manages to capture within two short paragraphs a vision of the central role a *picture* can come to play in our philosophical thinking even when the picture is patently doing no real work. In any *ordinary* kind of context in which this reflection on the evolution of the higher animals and of man would take place, the passage would be referring to the evolution of *thought* in the higher animals and in man, *thought* as we understand it to be expressed in more and more complex patterns of *behaviour*, to include, of course, linguistic behaviour. Since there can be no sharp dividing line on this conception between behaviour which is mechanical - without *thought* - and purposive behaviour as the natural expression of thought, there can be no more than a difference of *degree* between the purely instinctual reactions of a primitive organism and the full-blown 'conceptual repertoire' - as philosophers often refer to it - of the human being who has acquired a (public) language within a social context. This is consistent with an extraordinarily wide conception of what

we might take within this kind of approach to count as a *language*, from a use of primitive signals,

for example, to written, spoken, sign and gesture languages which as appropriate may be understood

to have some application to animals within their varying kinds of social groups. Certainly, for

other purposes, we may wish to think of differences here which are more than differences *merely*

of degree, although methodologically the initial principle remains sound.

But this concept of the human being in a public context expresses a *methodological*

principle underlying Wittgenstein's therapeutic conception of philosophy. *Beginning* from a

conception of the human being who talks, say, about J.L. Austin's middle range dry goods, about

both the macroscopic and the microscopic - with appropriate aids - and about other human beings

with their thoughts, feelings and intentions, Wittgenstein can be said to be asking the (philosophical)

question *how is this possible ?* Or, for those who would prefer to avoid the Kantian resonance, he can

be said to be pointing out how easily, when doing philosophy, it is to misrepresent to ourselves what

it is that we *are* doing, *and* the nature of what we are reflecting upon when discoursing about the

mind and about our relation to an 'external world'. The force of his treatment of 'the evolution

of the higher animals and of man and the awakening of *consciousness*' is that we have this vivid *picture*

in which we are too easily prone to encapsulate our *understanding* (when doing philosophy) of what

is here importantly accompanying 'the evolution of the higher animals and of man' ; but this is

not captured by 'the awakening of consciousness' : this picture is not contributing anything to our

understanding of the evolution of increasingly purposive *behaviour.* But this behaviour is always *already*

describable at a level where this *philosophical* idea of *consciousness* has no application. This explains the

ambivalence at the end of Wittgenstein's passage: '..the picture seems to spare us this work: it already

points to a particular use.' This use may *appear* to be a use for the idea of *consciousness*. Yet this is

a *bogus* application. The distinct, *genuine* (and quite ordinary) use to which it *actually* points is one

in which the evolution of the higher animals of man *is* an evolution of *thought* as we find it expressed

in behaviour. The picture 'takes us in' because in *accompanying* the description of human and animal

evolution as (properly) an evolution of *thought* as *expressive behaviour,* it comes to overshadow the only

genuine application that a statement of this kind can actually have.

This is a characteristic feature of Wittgenstein's use of the term 'picture': it points more often than not to what is no more than an incidental *accompaniment* to our talk within a particular realm of discourse; yet when doing philosophy this incidental feature becomes the primary element dictating our *philosophical* understanding of what we are *really* doing in talking, say, about 'other minds'. There could not be scepticism about 'other minds' without the philosophical conception of 'other minds' - captured for some through our natural *intuitions* - which we understand to dictate what it *means* to talk about the feelings and sensations of others. Fundamentally, Wittgenstein's proposal to rest our everyday understanding of this realm of discourse within our participation in the *practice,* thus downgrading the philosopher's desire to locate it in the pictures *accompanying* the practice, is a methodological principle. It gains its significance from the way in which it can be seen to illuminate the (philosophical) landscape. It is not a *reductio* of the idea that there *really* are or are not thoughts and feelings going on in him in the way they go on in me, an idea that leads to an *interminable* philosophical doubt about their existence. It is instead an invitation to review the roots of the philosophical problem and to see that, if viewed from the proper perspective, the picture lying behind it is doing no *real* work relative to our understanding of the *practice* of attributing mental states to persons other than one's self.

The notion of therapy in this context therefore gains what significance it has from the methodology; and although we may draw the conclusion that someone who persistently claimed that he would rather adhere to his philosophical *intuitions,* would not be amenable to the therapy - so *round one* to Baker - the therapy nevertheless does not exist in a vacuum. It gains its very *raison d'etre* from the way in which, by drawing our attention to the role we give to the *misleading* picture when doing philosophy, it can help to render surveyable - metaphorically speaking - the geography of the surrounding landscape in an illuminating way by providing us with a much clearer view of what can lead us astray - *round two* to Hacker.

The second example, unlike the first, is only too well-known, but for the present purposes, in which the aim is to illuminate the application being given to the notion of a *picture*, it is still worth quoting in full:

> It is - we should like to say - not merely the picture of the behaviour
> that plays a part in the language-game with the words 'he is in pain',
> but also the picture of the pain. Or, not merely the paradigm of the
> behaviour, but also that of the pain. - It is a misunderstanding to say
> 'The picture of pain enters into the language-game with the word "pain".'
> The image of pain is not a picture and *this* image is not replaceable in the
> language-game by anything that we should call a picture. - The image of
> pain certainly enters into the language game in a sense ; only not as a
> picture. (*Philosophical Investigations* Part I, § 300.)

Paradoxical as it may seem, Saul Kripke actually provides a powerful presentation of this passage (22), one which, were it not for his anti-realist underpinnings, actually points in the direction of Wittgenstein's intentions, captured in Kripke's claim that 'To use the image of pain as a picture is to attempt to imagine the pain of another on the model of my own, and to assume that my statement that the other person is in pain is true precisely because it "corresponds" to this picture.' But this picture of truth conditions derived from the *Tractatus* has no place in Kripke's *Investigations*, where truth conditions are replaced by conditions of warranted assertion grounded in the circumstances in which people do in fact attribute sensations to themselves and to others:

> To use the image of pain as a picture is to suppose that by an appropriate
> use of this image, I can give determinate truth conditions for the other
> person's being in pain, and that one need only ask whether these truth
> conditions 'correspond with reality' to determine whether my statement
> that he is in pain is true or false. (23)

Whilst Peter Hacker's exegesis of § 300 is much more detailed than Kripke's and whilst he is only too conscious of the fact that 'there is in English, unlike German, no corresponding expression for "imagination" and its cognates', making 'the accurate translation of Wittgenstein's remark here and in related texts almost impossible' (24) Kripke's interpretation has the advantage of brevity and succinctness were it not once again for the fact that it leaves the reader with the lasting impression that Wittgenstein is *denying* the truth of something which ordinarily we would not even consider to be up for assessment:

> Wittgenstein would reject any attempt to 'explain' my attitude
> and behavior towards a sufferer by a 'belief' about his 'inner state'.
> Rather, once again the order is to be inverted: I can be said to think
> of him as having a mind, and in particular as suffering from pain,
> in virtue of my attitude and behavior towards him, not the reverse. (25)

The irony, of course, is that Wittgenstein's order is not really inverted at all: our *understanding* of the application of the concept of pain *does* rest in our participation in the practice in which we do attribute pain both to ourselves and to others; and it *is* governed by the criteria determining whether the sufferer does or does not have a certain inner state. But his being in fact in a certain inner state does not consist in our ability (when doing philosophy) to conjure up (imagine) a *picture* of his pain, a depiction of something going on in him (an 'inner state') which corresponds in *his* case to what goes on in me when *I* am in pain. Understood properly, the picture is no more than an innocent *accompaniment* to the practice of attributing pain both to ourselves and to others. The real difficulties we perceive here arise *only* when doing philosophy, for we are then prone to take our *understanding* of the practice of attributing pain to others to rest in our attempt to apply the picture (§§ 422 - 426). Our apparent *inability* to apply the picture in *these* circumstances, together with the *intuitive* conviction that only through its *application* do we acquire our *understanding* of what it is to attribute pain to others, is what gives rise to the *interminable* (sceptical) doubt whether someone is *really* suffering pain irrespective of whether our ordinary criteria are, or are not, actually satisfied.

On this reading, the position of Kripke's Wittgenstein would be, not that we are debarred from having *knowledge* about the sensations of others, and for that reason are almost bound to be sceptical about attributing inner states to them, but that because we cannot after all entertain the *conception* which, our intuitions inform us, constitutes our sole ground for believing in 'other minds', we must find an alternative justification for our 'belief', a 'sceptical solution' to our doubts resting in the circumstances in which we warrantably assert certain propositions about their contents.

Yet Wittgenstein's final answer to this conundrum is once again methodological: because there *are* circumstances in which we do participate in the practice of talking about an external world and about 'other minds', the philosophical problem *can* arise only because the philosopher is guilty of being party to a *picture*, innocent in itself, which harmlessly accompanies our practice yet which appears according to the dictates of his philosophical *intuitions* to encapsulate what it *means* to make the attributions in question. Insofar as Wittgenstein is not providing a *reductio ad absurdum* of the philosopher's 'realistic' assessment of what is at stake, the argument lies with Baker; yet insofar as he is providing a revolutionary reappraisal of what underlies the *philosophical* problem, the argument rests with Hacker.

In his treatment of the Private Language Argument, Gordon Baker regularly repeats his anti-*reductio* stance. On the assumption to which Baker refers, one to which we are naturally driven when doing philosophy, that any difference of word-meaning *must* be explained by a difference in the objects named - an assumption that importantly refers back to the beginning of the *Investigations* as a pointer to Wittgenstein's methodology - he characteristically continues:

> Mustn't we then admit that pain and pain-behaviour are
>
> two different things ? (They are surely not the same thing !)
>
> Mustn't we further admit than pain-behaviour accompanied
>
> by pain is something *more* than pain-behaviour without pain
>
> (§ 304 ?) In the background may lie the natural idea that any

two distinct objects must be independent of one another.

If so, we have already embraced the conclusion that pain

is something logically independent of human behaviour

(LPE 290). Although we are free to deny the principle that

any two objects must be independent, we tend to accept it

unreflectively (or unconsciously), and we then find ourselves

sliding down a slope into a form of dualism. It isn't the picture

by itself that brings about this philosophical Fall; rather the

unreflective application of a picture which is itself innocent

enough (§§ 422 - 6) (Baker, *Ibid*., 136)

Again, implicitly mocking the 'standard view' that Wittgenstein is in the business of attacking the common proposal that 'each person gives himself a kind of private ostensive definition by concentrating his attention on a particular experience, and afterwards he makes use of the word which he just defined in order to describe his own inner life', Baker continues to elaborate upon the ideas to which he is objecting:

The *reductio* consists of the demonstration that the very idea of

a private ostensive definition is meaningless because the person

who speaks a private language (the privephone) lacks a genuine

pattern for distinguishing the correct use of the word from its

incorrect use (§§ 258, 265, 270). As a consequence, *no one* can either

understand or misunderstand any word of a private language;

it is an illusion to think that one can succeed in explaining something

to oneself in this manner.

Since it is held that Cartesian dualism as well as classical empiricism,

idealism and solipsism presuppose the possibility of a private language,

it is also supposed that the *reductio* entails the refutation of the

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fundamental ideas supported by a multitude of great philosophers.

It is often taken as the antithesis of Cartesian dualism and is

accordingly labelled 'anti-Cartesian' (Baker, *Ibid.*, 119 *et seq.*)

In order to show how near the mark Baker really is here, both in his assessment of how the argument has generally been interpreted, and in his appraisal of its supposed historical implications - which will require further elaboration - one need refer only to the kind of response to *Investigations* § 258 which is still common today in the secondary literature:

Suppose I were to introduce some word to refer to a momentary sensation

that was private to me - i.e., a particular sensation that others could not have

or observe (though they could, perhaps, have similar sensations of the same

type). Suppose, further, that in the future I wanted to use the word to refer

to other sensations of mine that were of the same type. In such a situation,

neither I nor anyone else would be able to conclusively determine whether

I was using the word correctly......Without such an ability, there could be no

content to the claim that I was using the word correctly.....Thus, Wittgenstein

concludes, no one can meaningfully use a term purely privately. (26)

It is a significant feature of Scott Soames's approach in this passage that what he actually considers to be an adequate response to the argument he is finding in § 258, is already conditioned by a fundamental assumption which Wittgenstein would forcefully repudiate:

Nothing in the *Investigations* rules out the possibility that perception provides

the agent with representational content. We know that pre-linguistic agents can

distinguish different colors.......But if the agent already has something - a part

of his visual system - that represents things as being red - then it doesn't seem

to be a huge step to suppose that he could introduce something else - a word -

with that same content. (27)

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Consequently, the argument Wittgenstein is supposedly presenting in § 258 is already undermined if the very notion of a sensation *type* is taken to presuppose the consistent application of a meaning-rule. But this presupposition is integral to Soames's presentation of The Private Language Argument, with the consequence that his exposition does nothing to expose the real point § 258 is being used to express. Indeed, as Soames presents his case, the language which he presents as 'private' would not really *be* private for Wittgenstein in any interesting sense. It is a sound Wittgensteinian point that what Soames is doing here is to view those ordinary circumstances in which we do indeed have new and exciting sensations which we may or may not wish to 'baptise' in a perfectly ordinary way, in *isolation* from the mastery of the public language that grants Soames's procedure with the significance it appears to have. In this specific context, Wittgenstein's thrust is again methodological rather than logical, not a *reductio* of the argument that Soames presents, but a pointer to the fact that what Soames proposes as an important metaphysical revelation - one demonstrating that the inherently *representational content* of our immediate sensations allows us to 'invent' a language to describe them - is a consequence of staring at the criterionless aspect of first person sensation ascription in isolation from the normal circumstances in which we do in fact talk about and 'name' - when appropriate - our private sensations within a public context.

Fundamental to Baker's presentation is his understanding that, generally speaking, Wittgenstein is not normally directing *reductio ad absurdum* arguments at traditional empiricists. If we actually study what most philosophers of a roughly empiricist persuasion have had to say about privacy, they tend to follow Soames in their assumption that our sensations are *intrinsically* meaningful; and to that assumption Wittgenstein does not provide an argument of a *reductio ad absurdum* kind : he instead asks the 20th century empiricist to reconsider whether what he *thinks* he is doing by providing a radical foundation for his epistemology resting upon the content of his 'private' experiences, is not really a sleight of hand which serves to mask the undoubted fact that this procedure only makes *sense* against the background of his prior mastery of a public language.

Yet if we come to study the *kind* of presentation provided by Wittgenstein in § 258,

it turns out to be fundamentally *different* in character from this : it consists in asking how the so-called private linguist could possible confer meaning on his own *private* world, a world in which his private terms would have a meaning only for himself ; and the answer he provides to this question - in the most *general* terms - is effectively that *either* the notion of *privacy* being used here is one with which we are already familiar, in which case its application is subject to all the normal checks and balances which accompany our ordinary talk within a public forum; *or* it is so esoteric that we can have no *genuine* conception of what we are even considering by referring to this *super-privacy.* (28) Again, this appears to provide the real argument in § 258 with a methodological character; although there are in fact a number of elements to it which, by contributing to its complexity, can make it appear to be of a more intricate and logical nature.

Central to Wittgenstein's thinking in those passages in which he discusses a private language, is the thought that we do not recognise or identify sensations in the first person according to criteria - the point captured succinctly in *Investigations* § 381 and in § 384 where knowing that this is red or acquiring the *concept* of pain goes with learning the (English) language - and *associated* with this by Wittgenstein is the notion that sensations are expressed in human behaviour (§ 288), which supplies third person criteria for talking about them. That this is other than a mere association *in fact* is integral to the *public* nature of the language-game for the appropriate kind of sensation, so that sensations which do not have obvious behavioural manifestations are nevertheless expressed within this *public* context. The second and crucial point is that Wittgenstein *defines* his radical notion of *super-privacy* in terms of its *disassociation* from the normal public language-game - in which first person sensation ascription is criterionless - with the consequence that the sensation then becomes a private *object* requiring *individual* criteria of identity. But *if* the possibility of *identifying* the sensation therefore implies the possibility of identifying it *wrongly*, and *if* the only viable notion of a sensation implies that the question of identifying it rightly or wrongly has no application, it follows that any attempt to confer meaning on a sign *as* the sign for a certain *individual* sensation of a certain *kind* will inevitably imply that 'whatever seems right is right'. This is in effect to attempt to make a

sensation conform simultaneously to two different paradigms, only one of which applies. Remembering the connection *right* in the future where there can be no criteria for correctly identifying an *individual* sensation of a given kind so *defined*, implies that there is nothing that could *count* as conferring meaning on a sign that could be understood wholly 'privately'. One can always abandon the requirement that the sensation have *individual* criteria of identity, but that is no longer to be identifying the sensation 'privately' because it is no longer to be identifying it at all, so that the sensation will re-acquire its 'public' character.

The question at stake for Baker, as much as for Hacker, is whether this 'argument' as it stands - and it can of course be elaborated upon in various ways, all of which can give rise to further seemingly imponderable questions - is enough to count as a *reductio ad absurdum* of the presuppositions underlying what Hacker refers to as (traditional) foundationalist epistemology; and here we are to presume that he intends it, or something akin to it, to have an historical application to more than those few modern empiricists to whom Baker would prefer to restrict its application because Wittgenstein was at least familiar with their work. In particular, Baker mentions Russell with his causal theory of reference; and on this construal, we would have to think of Russell as failing to recognise certain obvious consequences of the 'argument' when it is not at all clear whether these consequences follow from Russell's claim - at least as presented by Baker - that the meaning of 'red' is nothing other than the *habit* of reacting to the reappearance of the 'private' sensation on production of the word. (Baker *Ibid.*,117).

This interpretational problem arises because philosophers have tended to follow Soames, rather than Wittgenstein, in their reliance on a rather loose application for the term 'private' which is actually parasitic on its *ordinary* use; and, together with the assumption that our sensations are intrinsically meaningful, this has tended to dictate a procedure without any of the implications surrounding Wittgenstein's concept of *super-privacy*. To then assume that the concept of *super-privacy* underlies the arguments supporting the 'foundationalist epistemologies' of philosophers from Locke to Russell is clearly very difficult to substantiate. Baker argues forceably, for example, that 'Most interpreters of Wittgenstein think that images of sensations play an indispensable role in formulating the hypothesis of a private language, as well as in expressing the *reductio* which Wittgenstein is trying to construct', an assumption which he correctly shows to have little bearing upon the relevant texts; just as he

argues that it would be quite wrong to think that Wittgenstein takes his 'Private Language Argument' to encompass 'all the Cartesian *Cogitationes*' when he is explicit that insofar as expectations, thoughts, and intentions are *articulate*, they are excluded from the range of purely phenomenological phenomena that come under its scope. (Baker, *Ibid.*,114 et seq.)

In the course of considering the historical literature, it can certainly be much easier to think in terms of the kind of philosopher who is prone to fantasise in a Cartesian fashion about suddenly finding himself as a disembodied soul, unable to communicate with others, one who has the task of finding *anew* a way of talking to himself 'privately' about his sensations. Yet daydreams of this kind are from Wittgenstein's perspective far from something to be *denied* using a *reductio* form of argument: they often do no more than exploit the idea of someone who is *already* master of a public language, no matter what imaginary misadventures might befall him. Consequently, Wittgenstein's complaint is not that we cannot readily indulge in fantasies of this kind, but that in a *philosophical* context we can so easily misconstrue their significance. This is an entirely *different* method of approach to that of attributing to many famous philosophers a concept of *super-privacy* to which it is far from certain, historically, that any of them were ever committed. This partly explains the lack of any uniform consensus even today in the secondary literature on the *interpretation* of the private language argument.

On balance, then, Wittgenstein's methodology does often consist in issuing *reminders* of the kind he can be seen to be providing to Scott Soames: what the philosopher is tempted to say about the *representational content* of his perceptual experiences only too often results from staring at the criterionless aspect of first person sensation ascription in isolation from the normal surroundings in which our prior mastery of a public language grants these *metaphysical* revelations with their seemingly overwhelming force. In its own way, this *is* an immensely powerful form of *argument.* By turning the axis of the investigation *around*, it does serve, metaphorically speaking, to illuminate the geography of the philosophical landscape as Hacker would propose ; yet that it is not part of a typical cut and thrust adverserial attack, illustrates the importance we should rightly attribute to Baker's re-orientation in his approach to, amongst other things, Wittgenstein's private language argument.

ENDNOTES

(1) Baker, 1.

(2) G.P. Baker & P.M.S. Hacker: *Scepticism, Rules and Language* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1984) Preface xi *et seq*.

(3) Baker, 261.

(4) Baker, *e.g.*, 66.

(5) Baker, 85.

(6) Baker, 131.

(7) MS 213, 423 as quoted & translated by Anthony Kenny *The Legacy of Wittgenstein* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1984) 51.

(8) Ludwig Wittgenstein: *Culture and Value* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1980) ed. G.H. Von Wright translated by Peter Winch, 19.

(9) *Culture and Value Op. cit.* 16.

(10) Peter Hacker ' Gordon Baker's Late Interpretation of Wittgenstein' in *Wittgenstein and His Interpreters* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing 2007) 99, quoting MS 132, 7.

(11) Baker, 132.

(12) Baker, 145.

(13) Baker, 182.

(14) Baker, 145 *et seq*.

(15) Baker, 179.

(16) Hacker, *Ibid.*, 99.

(17) Karl Popper: 'How I See Philosophy' *In Search of a Better World* (London: Routledge 1996) 173.

(18) A.J. Ayer: *Part of My Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1977) 304.

(19) Baker, 152 and Footnote 12.

(20) Baker, 160.

(21) Hacker, *Ibid.*, 116 *et seq*.

(22) Saul Kripke: *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell,1982) 139.

(23) Kripke, *Ibid.*, 139.

(24) P.M.S. Hacker: *Wittgenstein Meaning and Mind* (Oxford: 1993) PART II Exegesis, 118.

(25) Kripke, *Ibid.*, 138.

(26) Scott Soames: *Philosophical Analysis in The Twentieth Century*, Vol. 2, 44 *et seq*.

(27) Soames *Ibid.*, 37.

(28) *Cf*. David Stern: *Wittgenstein's* Philosophical Investigations, *An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2006) 175 *et seq*. This is echoed in Baker's claim that quite apart from considerations about private ostensive definition *etc*. the notion of a private language is evidently absurd because signs enter into teaching and explaining meaning in ordinary life.

As do most philosophers, Derek McDougall fondly remembers the publication of his very first paper. This was in MIND in 1972. He has, however, continued to worry whether Gilbert Ryle's comment that "the matter is stated well and almost interestingly" referred more to the quality of its treatment rather than to Ryle's aversion to the nature of its subject (religious belief). Other papers have appeared in organs including PHILOSOPHY AND PHENOMENOLOGICAL RESEARCH and PHILOSOPHIA. His latest, on Wittgenstein, appears in the 2008 edition of JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH, with a further (forthcoming) in PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS.