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Abstract

This paper introduces the work of Maurice O'Connor Drury, in particular his text *The Danger of Words*, which is decidedly Wittgensteinian in style and content while also offering an original conception of science. Drawing on the correspondence between Drury and Rush Rhees, I examine the concurrences and dissonances between Drury's and Wittgenstein's reflections on the *unsayable*, together with the profound influence of Simone Weil on Drury's interpretation of this difficult notion. Wittgenstein's main lesson to Drury is to emphasise the urgency of warning science not to say more than it *knows*. Drury applies this insight to the official psychiatry of his time by clarifying it conceptually against the 'danger of words,' namely, the confusion among different kinds of theoretical questions. Science, he argues, should be rooted in ultimate ethical questions in order to achieve the correct self-critical attitude. I maintain that ethics is the backbone of Drury's work, but also that of Wittgenstein's: 'Ethics does not treat of the world. Ethics must be a condition of the world, like logic'.[1]

Maurice O'Connor Drury: the inheritance of Wittgenstein

The 1929 Cambridge encounter between Drury, aged 22, and Wittgenstein marked the beginning of a friendship that transformed Drury's life and lasted until the day of Wittgenstein's death.

After his philosophical studies in Cambridge, Drury was determined to become a priest. Yet Wittgenstein, who had himself thought for a while to undertake a psychiatric career, directed his Irish pupil to the study and *practice* of medicine.

Drury wrote a set of introductory essays on psychiatric subjects, collected in *The Danger of Words*:[2] a work of primary importance that is decidedly Wittgensteinian in its style and content and offers nonetheless an original conception of science and psychiatry.

Thanks to the twenty-year correspondence between Drury and Rush Rhees, largely stored in Mary Immaculate College's archive in Limerick, concurrences and

dissonances can be observed in Drury's reflections compared with those of Wittgenstein. The letters also throw light on the profound influence of Simone Weil on Drury's conception of the *unsayable*, which again does not coincide with that of Wittgenstein. The awareness of the *limits* set to knowledge by the impossibility of transcending self-consciousness is instead one of the central lessons imparted to Drury by his mentor. Indeed, Drury considers such awareness as crucial in order to secure *wonder*. Philosophy must therefore help science not to fall into the temptation of saying more than what it *knows*: as Wittgenstein remarks, 'Philosophy limits the disputable sphere of natural science', and 'Everything that can be said can be said clearly'.[3] Drury applies Wittgenstein's caveat to psychiatry in order to clarify it conceptually against the *danger of words*; namely, the confusion among different kinds of questions that are only seemingly alike. Science should be rooted in ultimate ethical questions in order to achieve the self-critical attitude needed to identify appropriate targets and to shed light onto time honoured prejudices. Drury's reflection and practice together reveal that his purpose was to overcome *epochal* tendencies: these include the widespread practice of distancing the patient by classifying him/her through diagnostic categories, and thereby excluding, in prejudicial manner, any possible validity that might be recognized to *mad* speech.

The interaction between philosophy and psychiatry allows Drury to clarify the concept of *psychology* through the distinction between the progresses of experimental science and the modes of approaching the individual as a person. He spots remarkable deficiencies within the contemporary ethico-philosophical discussion on the limits and advantages of the possible kinds of *care*. Ethics is the backbone not only of his work, but also that of Wittgenstein: '*Ethics does not treat of the world. Ethics must be a condition of the world, like logic*'.[4] His master's fundamental lesson is that ethics *founds everything, without ever being founded*; if it were founded, it would take all responsibility away from man; if it were not founding, it would make our will a dead will. The will is what vivifies

our actions, what gives a sense to the world, what makes us feel that we are acting fairly or unfairly.

Yet, in Drury's notion, our ethical will is a divinely *gratuitous* gift from a superior will that makes us free to perform right or wrong choices, rather than a basic quality that permeates the world's *givenness*. Drury's philosophical thought is constantly directed by Wittgenstein, but the differences concerning Drury's interpretation of the Mystical will prove subtle and fundamental.

Wittgenstein's Mystical and Drury's Inscrutable.

The awareness of the limits set to knowledge by the untranscendentability of self-consciousness is Drury's point of departure to investigate the nature of scientific research. His aim is to secure wonder against the danger of science's forgetfulness of the realm of the *inexplicable*, which Drury assimilates, however, to the divine mysteriousness of our present being.

From the correspondence between Drury and Rhees, we can ascertain the degree of mutual contamination between Drury's reading of the *Tractatus* and his interpretation of Simone Weil. In an undated letter written between the end of January and the beginning of February 1965, Drury, following Weil, analyzes the concept of 'philosophy'. He then puts this analysis of philosophy into relation with what is expressed in the *Tractatus* (6.521) about the meaning of life:

> The solution of the problem of life is seen in the vanishing of this problem. (Is not this the
> reason why men to whom after long doubting the sense of life became clear, could not then
> say wherein this sense consisted?).

Simone Weil maintains that it is possible to talk about philosophical novelties in a broad sense only, because each new thought introduced in philosophy characterizes with an

original accent an idea which, although in fact ancient, proves by right eternal. New conceptions of this sort, born by the reflection of a great spirit, have an inestimable value. Yet, in philosophy, it is not possible to talk about novelties the way it is in the scientific sphere, because philosophy does not know progress in the commonly acknowledged sense. For this reason, the true philosophers feel like outsiders in an age that considers progress to be more important than the comprehension of timeless thoughts. Drury compares this outlook with what Wittgenstein writes on 6th November 1930 about progress:

> Our civilization is characterized by the world progress. Progress is its form, it is not one of its properties that it makes progress. Typically it constructs. Its activity is to construct a more and more complicated structure. And even clarity is only a means to this end & not an end in itself. For me on the contrary clarity, transparency, is an end in itself. I am not interested in erecting a building but in having the foundations of possible buildings transparently before me. So I am aiming at something different than are the scientists & my thoughts move differently than do theirs.[5]

Drury associates the two thinkers through the idea that what is eternal in philosophy can have no sayable or immutable content, but can only be indirectly shown. This entails that what has proved to be a truth at a certain historical time or for a particular person will become obscure to another: every generation, in producing philosophical thoughts, has to start from nothing. Wittgenstein taught Drury that the truths that are eternal in philosophy, and whose search in books is useless, would show themselves to him only through long and painstaking doubts. An eternal truth such as *the sense of life* cannot be scientifically investigated, but it can be inwardly *grasped* through lengthy and hard reflection. The fact that other men, in other ages, were able to grasp it, proves that authentic philosophical insight does not know time or progress. It seems therefore to correspond, both for Drury and Weil, to something that can, always and again, be grasped through the synthesis that reflection perceives between contradictory truths; a synthesis which is no longer rational, but *mystical.*

In a letter dated 27th February 1965 Rhees warns Drury against finding too many parallels between the two thinkers. Simone Weil, as Rhees comments, claims that the speculations which, in the attempt to solve the contradictions of religious mystery, belittle their import can be condemned as heretical – for example, in considering the divinity of the Son as inferior to the Father in order to make it compatible with His humanity. The outcome of these speculations is to deprive mystery of its value, to the extent that holy things prove to be no longer mysteries to contemplate. Simone Weil considers the analogy with the Cantorian notion of different orders of infinity as philosophically legitimate in order to understand her experience of the Mystical.[6] Rhees remarks that Wittgenstein would have judged such use of mathematical symbolism as illegitimate in its endeavour to rationalize something that cannot be expressed by mathematical symbolism at all. But above all, as Rhees claims in a letter dated 25th January 1967, Simone Weil speaks about mysteries as genuine contradictions, as the mystery of Trinity, not resolvable by any logical study. Yet, the Mystical in the *Tractatus* does not refer to mysteries which cannot be rationalized and have to be contemplated as genuine contradictions, such as revealed truths. These can be at least partially formulated, though not resolved, whereas the Mystical in Wittgenstein cannot be formulated, nor is it contradictory, because contradiction, or opposition of contraries, can be in the flow of language only, while the Mystical lies beyond.

In the 1965 letter Rhees develops Simone Weil's notion of mystery, which she considers legitimate when the most rigorous use of reason leads to an impasse, namely when the suppression of one term deprives the other of its sense: mystery is for Simone Weil what has to be accepted once reason along its path comes to an impasse. Wittgenstein's Mystical, implied by the logic of the *Tractatus,* entails that no meaningful proposition – no description of facts – can be a pertinent answer to an ethical or meaning-of-life problem (we ourselves are climbing up a ladder – that will have to be thrown away at the end – to show what Wittgenstein means by 'unsayable'). Language is a picture of facts, and only propositions

about facts are meaningful. We can talk about the contingent only. The mystic sense of the world's (as it were, contingent) givenness is the keystone of the metaphysical I and its ethical sense: even more important is ethics in its unresolved and impossible formulation, as responsibility happens to be with no logical discourse indicating the way to good or evil. 'Good or bad willing changes the world' (*Tractatus*, 6.43), but not in the sense that it changes the facts: the will transcends them, making the world of the happy another world than that of the unhappy. The relativity of the world to the subject, however, does not depend on the subject's will, but on the world being described by language. And in this language there is, as Marino Rosso claims, an ambiguity in the *Tractatus* disguised by the insertion of the 'part regarding solipsism into the 'mathematical' account of our language (namely […] of the 'branch' leading to 5.6 on to the 'tree' leading to 5)'.[7] If in 2.1, stating 'that "we make to ourselves pictures of facts" […] "we" […] indicates empirical subjects, [in 5.641] "the philosophical I is not the man, not the human body or the human soul of which psychology treats"'[8]

Let us analyse 5.631: 'If I wrote a book *The world as I found it'*: it seems to speak about an empirical I of higher status as it is able to write on metaphysical I's behalf. Although the *Tractatus* does not make an explicit distinction, it alternates between two forms of language: the language-picture, in its factual nature, and the way of communicating of the human scribe who acts as a metaphysical subject's mouthpiece. The *Tractatus* leaves realism behind only in the solipsistic section where it is the metaphysical subject that ultimately signifies the world.[9] In the other sections of the book the ordinary language lies on the same ontological level as the states of affairs which make it true or false. On the other hand, just as solipsism cannot be explained, but can only show itself, realism leans on the reality of the ultimate objects of the world, a priori enacted (logically primitive), and it too can only be 'supposed', not described. Despite the dialectic, unresolved in the *Tractatus*, between empirical language and metaphysical language (dialectic which the *Bemerkungen* will

render explicit and resolve by means of the redefinition of an impersonal language), it is plain that already in the *Tractatus* the existence of thoughts and representations is claimed together with the non-visibility of a *subject* of such representations and thoughts:[10] the *important* 'subject', whom one cannot talk about, is the *limit* of the world. It can be *grasped* as it shows itself through thoughts and representations, and through the *mystic* sense of the world's givenness.

Thus, when Wittgenstein says that those to whom the sense of life becomes clear, cannot then talk about it, he is saying that they, within the bounds of their own empirical existence, overstep those bounds and thereby divest themselves of their factual being, within the immediacy of an experience of suspension of empirical reflection over things: 'As a thing among things, each thing is equally insignificant; as a world each one equally significant. If I have been contemplating the stove, and then am told: but now all you know is the stove, my result does indeed seem trivial. For this represents the matter as if I had studied the stove as one among the many things in the world. But if I was contemplating the stove *it* was my world, and everything else colourless by contrast with it [*the original German reads:* 'so war *er* meine Welt, und alles Andere dagegen blass': *it would be possible then to translate 'blass' with 'faded'*]. […] For it is equally possible to take the bare present image as the worthless momentary picture in the whole temporal world, and as the true world among shadows',[11] letting one's I 'fade' while putting one foot in the Mystical whose unsayable presence can be *felt*: a suspension of the subject that – mind! – is not a disappearance, as the latter ought to be death. And we will see how crucial death is for Drury in relation to the sense of life; for Wittgenstein, on the contrary, it is not death what marks man's encounter with the sense of life.[12]

From a long letter written by Drury in the spring of 1966 we can infer Drury's personal interpretations of the Mystical as 'Inscrutable'.[13] Drury appeals to Plato's myth of the cave, and the dazzling light that philosophers encounter in the brave attempt of leaving

it. Drury, reading the myth as a parable of the relation between philosophy and science, certainly approaches Wittgenstein's thought, although Simone Weil's words find an echo too. Nonetheless, according to Drury, it is necessary to 'throw away the ladder' of vainglory present in the current idea of progress – whereas for Wittgenstein the ladder to throw away is, strictly speaking, the *Tractatus*' propositional frame to be climbed up to observe the unsayble in its showing. Drury attempts, in the spring 1966 typescript, to interpret the philosophical I as *cogito*, whilst Wittgenstein 'reduces' it 'transcendentally' from the ontological level to the epistemic level (we cannot deduce the *reality* of being from the 'I think', but we can *rely* on the intentional nature of our thought, because thought is insofar it as is projected on to something which is thought). Furthermore, when Drury speaks of eternity, he means it in a temporal (Spinozian) sense as infinite temporal duration, not as *eternal* (Schopenhauerian) *present*: he *ambiguously* sets up the impersonal philosophical I against the body and the soul as corruptible in their search for wellbeing and glory. They are not presented properly as subjects who lose consciousness of the immediate totality which they are part of in the objectification of physical temporality. We read in the *Notebooks*: 'Only from the consciousness of the *uniqueness of my life* arises religion – science – and art […] And this consciousness is life itself'.[14]

We read in the *Tractatus* (6.522): 'There is indeed the inexpressible. This *shows* itself; it is the mystical'. For Drury this suggests that it is necessary to wait hopefully and patiently for the meaning of life to show itself to us, and to keep alive our desire for what lies beyond the space-time dimension: the meaning of life is its being God's gift. Drury ventures beyond the Wittgensteinian sense of the unsayable, identifying it with what lies outside the visual field, namely, God, who gives us a life which, in its being a gift, is meaningful. Yet, Wittgenstein's Mystical does not correspond to a *Res* there in the *outside* – namely, God; Wittgenstein does not talk about the *outside* (talking about it is nonsense if there is no boundary). Wittgenstein meant by 'the Mystical', rather, the inexplicable sense of

the transcendence of a reality that still seems to be immanent to consciousness; even though the world is relative to the subject, as it is described by language, we feel that it nonetheless transcends us.

Nevertheless, Drury cannot help conceiving of God in the *Tractatus* as the inspirational Being of all Wittgenstein's philosophy. Such is the claim in a letter dated 16th October 1966, according to which the occurrence of the word 'God' in the *Tractatus* is fundamental to the understanding of that text. Moreover, Drury suggests that although it is absent in the *Investigations*, the same God who is spoken of in the *Tractatus* also inspired the *Investigations*. Drury considers them as the fulfilment of the objective, indicated in the *Tractatus*, of realizing a rigorously logical investigation bound to a mystical conclusion; an investigation that, in exhibiting the speakable with the utmost clarity, meaningfully expresses the unspeakable. Wittgenstein's genius, according to Drury's spring letter, lies in the achievement of this goal. Wittgenstein performs a critique of language with mathematical accuracy, but so accomplished as to mean the unspeakable. Drury believes his master succeeds in overcoming the philosophical difficulty par excellence: the ability of combining a rigorous method with a mystical objective. The latter, Drury says, is not spoken of in the *Investigations*, where Wittgenstein opts for an 'ascetic' discipline of words; they only say what can be said.

It might be plausible to say that although the Mystical is absent in the *Investigations*, Wittgenstein would not have hinted at the irreducibility of man as a *form of life* characterized by the autotelism of the *curiosity* related to learning, which is the basis for scientific progress, if he had not wondered at the impossibility of reducing the representations of language and man who speaks it to any ultimate elements, except relative to the particular languages and forms of life that are encountered each time. For the same reason, possibly, he hinted at *seeing* a *person* in this form of life *as* man and not as a mere thing (namely, opposing the erroneous *seeing-as* which begets the deception of a mental

substance scientifically divisible from the bodily one). Even though the *Investigations* were maybe meant to exorcize this wonder through the fussy and provocatively exhausting analysis of language bewitchments; even though philosophical problems seem all *potentially* solvable, the inexplicable sense of the transcendence of a reality immanent to human consciousness remains, precisely because it is not a *problem* (but rather a *problem of life*).

In the spring letter, Drury links Wittgenstein's orientation towards life and the function of philosophy to a passage - especially valued by Wittgenstein - from the *Oratio de hominis dignitate*, where Pico della Mirandola outlines the possible choice for man between living a life based on the senses, thus remaining at animal creatures' level, or rising above them towards God: 'Poteris in inferiora quae sunt bruta degenerare, poteris in superiora quae sunt divina ex tui animi sententia regenerari'. [15] Wittgenstein appreciated Pico, mainly through what he read about him in Otto Weininger;[16] the search for elevation, perfection, moral integrity yet did not correspond, for Wittgenstein, to taking part in the 'citizenship of heaven'.[17] We read in the *Notebooks*:

> What do I know about God and the purpose of life?
>
> I know that this world exists.
>
> That I am placed in it like my eye in its visual field.[18]

Then, I do not see myself because the eye does not see itself;

> [I know that] my will penetrates the world [and, therefore] good and evil are somehow connected with the meaning of the world.
>
> The meaning of life, i.e. the meaning of the world, we can call God.
>
> And connect with this the *comparison* of God to a father.[19]
>
> To pray is to think about the meaning of life.[20]

Being the will that makes the world good or evil, good or evil are connected with the meaning of the world through the willing subject who yet, in the performing of his will, has no influence on happenings, but on his happiness or unhappiness: 'I can only make myself

independent of the world [...] by renouncing any influence on happenings',[21] and so, in a sense, by mastering it.

> If good or evil willing affects the world it can only affect the boundaries of the world, not the facts, what cannot be portrayed by language but can only be shewn in language.
>
> In short, it must make the *world* a wholly different one.[22]

Life stops, in an important sense, being problematic (and not simply problematic in a sense which can be linguistically formulated) if one succeeds in living 'in eternity and not in time'.[23]

> [And suppose] that man could not exercise his will, but had to suffer all the misery of this world, then what could make him happy?
>
> How can man be happy at all, since he cannot ward off the misery of this world?
>
> Through the life of knowledge.
>
> The good conscience is the happiness that the life of knowledge preserves.
>
> The life of knowledge is the life that is happy in spite of the misery of the world.
>
> The only life that is happy is the life that can renounce the amenities of the world.
>
> To it the amenities of the world are so many graces of fate.[24]

So, if fate (the world) is a source of my misery I make myself independent of fate (the world) in renouncing the happenings through knowledge. Here it is, then, what it means to Wittgenstein to believe in God: 'to understand the question about the meaning of life';[25] 'to see that facts of the world are not the end of the matter',[26] but not to believe that the world is a gift of a divinity present beyond space. The fact that '[t]he world is *given* me'[27] is the reason 'why we have the feeling of being dependent on an alien will'[28]; actually, 'my will enters into the world completely from outside as into something that is already there'.[29] The givenness of the world is prior to the I, but is penetrated by the I's will.

> In this sense, God would simply be fate, or, what is *the same thing*: the world – which is independent of our will.
>
> I can make myself independent of fate'[because] [t]here are two godheads: the world and my independent I.

I am either happy or unhappy, that is all. […]

Only a man who lives not in time but in the present is happy.

For life in the present there is no death. […]

If by eternity is understood not infinite temporal duration but non-temporality, then it can be said that a

man lives eternally if he lives in the present […] in agreement with the world.

[…]

I am then, *so to speak*, in agreement with that *alien will on which I appear dependent.*[30]

As a consequence, if I say 'I am doing the will of God'[31] I am using a metaphor to say that I am in agreement with the world. Alienation proves then to be so much immediacy, once I have renounced any influence on happenings.

Drury, instead, recalls the Socratic view of the body as an endless source of trouble, considering the sense of life as the liberation from the 'fetters of body' with death, for there is a divine which we come from and to which we are destined. For Wittgenstein, instead, the divine is but a *metaphor* of the unsayable; God is nothing but *the sense of my life*. Comparing what Wittgenstein defines as Greek in Drury's intellectual bent and what he defines as Hebraic in himself[32], the former could be described as the tendency (typical of Simone Weil, Aristotle, or Aquinas as well, and often criticized by Drury himself and Weil herself) to rationalize faith by transforming the analogy into a proof of the divine mystery (thus nullifying mystery), and the latter as a priority given to action and self-fulfilment to root one's self in the world and in a tradition – since the Diaspora, the Jewish people has always suffered for this want. Wittgenstein's intellectual investigation might be seen as an attempt to solve the rootlessness of this Diaspora by pruning God of dogma, almost leaving of Him a minimal frame which acts as a *memento* to action – what can solely root us in the end, to the extent that God fades (or vanishes?) in the metaphor. Wittgenstein regards the Mystical as something which is, in an *important* sense, clear, unless the questions about it are misleading. It does not coincide with the Inscrutable, namely with God, dazzling light which makes our eye inadequate to bear its splendour. Yet, the metaphysical conclusion,

both for Drury and Wittgenstein, is the same: truly scientific language is descriptive and verifiable: for instance, the one describing the anatomy of the nervous system (each statement can be verified in the laboratory); but when one wonders where the nerve impulse enters consciousness, an undue shift takes place: from being descriptive and verifiable, language becomes speculative and metaphorical.[33] It is not possible to speak of something entering consciousness, 'for consciousness has no boundary, no threshold which can be observed. If it had then there would have to be a third form of consciousness which was conscious of both what was conscious and what was not yet so. This is obvious nonsense';[34] it follows that consciousness is not something one can be conscious of (and, therefore, acquainted with). This brings us to the concurrences between the two authors, mostly present within the analysis of the concept of psychology.

Distinction between nomothetic and idiographic through the *Investigations'* language critique

Wittgenstein refutes the view of psychology as a young science:

> The confusion and barrenness of psychology is not to be explained by calling it a "young science"; its state is not comparable with that of physics, for instance, in its beginnings. (Rather with that of certain branches of mathematics. Set theory.) For in psychology there are experimental methods and *conceptual confusion*. (As in the other case conceptual confusion and methods of proof.)
>
> The existence of the experimental method makes us think we have the means of solving the problems which trouble us; though problems and methods pass one another by.[35]

The nature of method is, in fact, experimental; the problem at issue, *existential* instead. Drury wants to disentangle this confusion by providing an account of some modes of approaching psychology, specifically the *nomothetic* one (which tries to achieve a universal

understanding and classification of psychic phenomena, pertains to experimental psychology and provides for quantifications, generalizations and tests), and the *idiographic* one (which pursues the understanding of the individual in his uniqueness and requires insight and the capability of transcending the generalizations worked by experimental psychology). We commonly believe that they overlap, so that future developments within experimental psychology ought to lead to the obsolescence of psychology in the idiographic sense.[36] In ascertaining the irreducibility of the latter to the former, Drury hopes for their integration instead, and tries to clarify the conceptual misunderstanding of the two fields. He observes how it is commonly acknowledged (and, we might add, also nowadays, thirty years after the publication of Drury's work) that psychology, in its infancy for the time being, will become a productive science the moment its methods will have acquired the rigour of experimental sciences. The presence of rudimentary experiments appears to corroborate this hypothesis, and to foreshadow the coming of a methodology able to provide a solid basis for 'psychiatry, education, sociology, criminology […]. The hope is that in the future a truly scientific psychology will enable us to control the vagaries of the human mind to same extent that the physical sciences have given us such power over our material environment'.[37] Yet, according to Drury, the repeated deferral of the issue by scholars to unspecified times casts a shadow of suspicion over such a conjecture. Experimental psychology will keep growing, but it is not possible to project these ambitions on existential issues, hoping to understand them on *theoretical* bases.

The core of Drury's argument is the theme of the *irreducible mystery*, more present in the *Tractatus* than in the *Investigations* (even though the 'undercurrent' of psychological thematic is explored in the latter), and mirrored in Lichtenberg's words quoted by Drury:

> The high jumper jumps better than the farm boy, and one high jumper better than another but the height that no human can jump over is very small. Just as people find water wherever they dig, man finds the incomprehensible sooner or later.[38]

In the specific case of *psychology*, Drury means not so much to distinguish two different usages of the word, but rather two 'directions': the intuitive psychology of great writers, historians, playwrights able to read the hearts of men; and the experimental discipline studied in the universities, which concentrates on universal types instead of dwelling upon individual characters. If nomothetic and idiographic psychology followed the same direction, a deepened acquaintance with neuro-cerebral processes and the perfecting of experimental procedures and classifications would automatically lead to the comprehension of the individual with no more need for insight. The *incomprehensible* would not be such anymore because it would be *measurable*.

Yet, the analogy is all wrong, because new techniques improve measurement, while idiographic psychology is bound to the *incommensurable* which one comes in touch with according the Augustinian principle 'Cor ad cor loquitur'.[39] It is necessary to gain experience of a dialogue which transcends words, sometimes made of listening silences, actions, and exceptions to the rule; an *ante-litteram* language to be learnt in the course of a long experience, not in books or laboratory. What differentiates one's *otherness* is not measurable.

The misrecognising of the limits to the hypostatisation of human qualities posed by language leads to mistaken goals. One example: an entity, *Intelligence*, measurable by means of testing does not exist. Wittgenstein would say that the superficial grammar of the term conceals a language game implemented in the living use of the word, *intelligence*, which embraces a family of concepts related to each other, but not reducible to one another, because they are never wholly congruent. There is a fundamental difference between words and the nuanced reality which, by means of words, one attempts to demarcate. Drury does

not question the experimental benefit of the test, but he narrows its scope and meaning down
to the measurement of *some* abilities of the individual:

> Remember a remark of Janet's: he said that the most important book every written on
> psychology was a dictionary […] because [it] reminds us of the enormous vocabulary that
> mankind found necessary to express all the different facets of personality. […] Consider the
> word 'intelligence' and […] the cognate words that cluster around it. Wisdom, cleverness,
> depth, originality, genius […]. [A]lthough these are all separate words in the dictionary they
> are intimately blended together in the person.[40]

The *person* is in danger of being concealed behind the *schema*. Let us think of the media
when they *speak* of a war: their language, due to an intrinsic limit, often conceals the
tragedy because it splits it into the involved factors: strategies, weather conditions, blasted
buildings, number of deaths that occurred *over there*. The *de-scription* already contains at an
etymological level the idea of separation between what is (and can be) said and what, though
more significant, is not (and cannot be) *said*. The dictionary states: 'description: picture *in
words*…'; in the Latin '*de*scribo', the prefix *de* signals the distance, the looking at things at
distance which often, owing to human limits, is the solely practicable.

It is not possible to meet directly with a person's intelligence, but only to meet
the *other* by means of an interaction which is not merely abstract and unidirectional, but also
intuitive and *relational*.

From these preliminary remarks, Drury analyses the concept of learning: it
'has a great many *different* meanings and there is not one […] characteristic common to all
forms of learning'.[41] The influence of the *Investigations* is plain; in there we read (about the
concept of *game*):

> Consider […] the proceedings that we call "games". I mean board-games, card-games, ball-
> games, Olympic games […]. What is common to them all? – Don't say: "There *must* be
> something common, or they would not be called 'games'" – but *look and see* whether there is
> anything common to all. – For if you look at them you will not see something that is common

to *all*, but similarities, relationships [.] Look for example at board-games, with their

multifarious relationships. Now pass to card-games; here you find many correspondences with

the first group, but many common features drop out, and others appear. When we pass next to

ball-games, much that is common is retained, but much is lost. – Are they all 'amusing'?

Compare chess with noughts and crosses. Or is there always winning and losing, or

competition between players? Think of patience. In ball games there is winning and losing; but

when a child throws his ball at the wall and catches it again, this feature has disappeared. [W]e

can go through the many, many other groups of games in the same way; can see how

similarities crop up and disappear.[42]

Likewise, the attempt to unify the different *learning* theories under one theory and the

subsequent search for a scientific treatment universally valid for all neuroses is, in Drury's

opinion, the result of the non-recognition of the variety encompassed within the concept

(and, we may add, of the diversity among individuals).

Wittgenstein similarly recognizes he made this kind of mistake in the *Tractatus* when

looking for the general form of proposition: this prevented him from observing the richness

of everyday language in its different usages.

In the *Investigations* he comes to acknowledge that 'instead of producing

something common to all that we call language, I am saying that these phenomena have no

one thing in common which makes us use the same word for all, – but that they are *related*

to one another in many different ways. And it is because of this relationship […] that we call

them all "language"'.[43]

Within the cognitive-behavioural literature, the non-recognition of variety within

the concept fosters utopian hopes as to the incorporation of idiographic psychology into

nomothetic psychology. The search is then undertaken for laws of behaviour equally

applicable to neurotics and animals. Drury objects that, although there is a conditioning

mechanism at the basis of many forms of learning, there are things that are learnt 'in […]

more important ways',[44] and which cannot help kindling *wonder*, such as one's native

language. Equating learning *in toto* to a conditioning mechanism or with imitation amounts to having a primitive view of it, as naïve as the nominalistic notion of language (articulated by Augustine) that is criticized in the *Investigations*: 'Cum ipsi [majores homines] appellabant rem aliquam, et cum secundum eam vocem corpus ad aliquid movebant, videbam, et tenebam hoc ab eis vocari rem illam, quod sonabant, cum eam vellent ostendere. […] Ita verba in variis sententiis locis suis posita, et crebro audita, quarum rerum signa essent, paulatim colligebam, measque jam voluntates, edomito in eis signis ore, per haec enuntiabam'.[45] According to Wittgenstein 'these words […] give us a particular picture of the essence of human language. It is this: the individual words in language name objects – sentences are combinations of such names.____ In this picture of language we find the roots of the following idea: Every word has a meaning. This meaning is correlated with the word. It is the object for which the word stands.

Augustine does not speak of there being any difference between kinds of word. If you describe the learning of language in this way you are, I believe, thinking primarily of nouns like "table", "chair", "bread", and of people's names, and only secondarily of the names of certain actions and properties; and of the remaining kinds of words as something that will take care of itself'.[46]

This 'confusion of sign and object',[47] this 'original sin coeval with the word',[48] is the result of a reductionist and reductive view of language, only valid for primitive languages. This misled Wittgenstein himself when he was composing the *Tractatus*. Since it does not take into account the different linguistic usages, it is wanting in 'the necessary multiplicity';[49] only some languages can be learnt through ostensive definitions. You can only learn a second language if you are already able to speak, and therefore to think; I can only learn foreign definitions of an object when I know the use and the context that one object is part of. To learn a second language is not equivalent to learning how to speak, and the Augustinian view does not account for these two different

kinds of learning: 'the ostensive definition explains the use – the meaning – of the word when the overall role of the word in language is clear. Thus if I know that someone means to explain a colour-word to me the ostensive definition "That is called 'sepia'" will help me to understand the word'.[50] 'Only someone who already knows how to do something with it can significantly ask a name';[51] hence, 'the teaching of language is not explanation, but training'.[52] It is quite a different notion compared to that which retraces, as Quine puts it, the 'uncritical semantic […] myth of a museum in which the exhibits are meanings and words are labels'.[53] Drury grasps an important element: what ultimately drives the human being in the early years of his life to master a language and, later, to acquire the most abstract and diverse forms of knowledge is 'a general desire for clarity and truth',[54] where these are taken as ends in themselves, not as a means of survival. Wittgenstein criticizes the current idea of progress: 'Its <u>activity</u> is to construct a more and more complicated structure. And even clarity is only a means to this end & not an end in itself. For me on the contrary clarity, transparency, is an end in itself'.[55] And this is, for Drury, the starting point of learning, and must be the primary object of education.

According to an inverse relation, the more complex the analysis of language becomes in the *Investigations*, in getting hold of the 'necessary multiplicity', and the more the 'undercurrent' of psychological thematic is explored, the more the ultimate element of all forms of learning – the curiosity of the human being – is shrouded in silence (though never completely neglected). According to an inverse relation still, the theme of the wondrous importance of the unsayable is led to an extreme precisely where unwittingly but unavoidably (namely in the *Tractatus*) the word is relegated to be a dead sign, its signification being taken away from its *living* use.

Drury mostly had dealings with Wittgenstein in the thirties, when the master, on the one hand, was looking for a primary language different from the everyday language and able to express the unsayable; and on the other hand, when he was sharpening, in the

years between the two appalling World Wars, his critique of the common notion of progress. Man appeared to have undertaken a self-destructive track in giving up going beyond the surface of things – the level of technique – and dismissing his most genuine curiosity. In a sense, man was becoming dehumanised.

This is maybe why many psychologists tend to overextend the comparison between human and animal minds. For Drury, the main hindrance to the unlimited transposition of 'language of animal learning to the correction of human behaviour'[56] is the absence of autotelism within animal curiosity.

The experiments on animals showed how the reinforcement mechanism is enacted when the matter in hand is the satisfaction of primary needs such as that of food, but the expectations of punishment or reward often fade into the background in human beings when it is a matter of emotional conflicts. The rat is rewarded with food if it learns how to run across the maze, and punished with deprivation if it does not; but avoidance therapy proves reductive, immoral, and inefficient with human patients.

Having said that, Drury does not deny the value of experimental psychology, particularly for its great contributions to the study of neuro-physiology: 'The more rigorous experimental psychology becomes the more it will need to translate its findings into physiological terminology'.[57] Yet, Drury thwarts the idea that every form of behaviour coincide with a neural function: 'neuro-physiology is the asymptote of experimental psychology'.[58] The term 'asymptote' is nonetheless ambiguous: it expresses the idea that there are countless cerebral processes related to equally countless behaviours rather than the idea that Drury wants to convey, namely that sooner or later the 'spade' of the neuro-physiologist is turned when it has reached 'bedrock' made up of behaviours which cannot be reduced to any cerebral process. It is as if Drury were confusing, with the fine but unsuitable metaphor, the two linguistic levels that he plainly differentiates in the attempt of proving the vacuity of the searching at all costs for physiological justifications for each kind of action.

This kind of search is typical of many fields of knowing, as Wittgenstein points out in the *Investigations*. The scientist, in the attempt of finding definitions and justifications, is often led astray by the idea that the form of a thing can be thought independently of the thing itself. Let us take the case of obeying a rule:

> 'How am I able to obey a rule?' – if this is not a question about causes, then it is about the justification for my following the rule in the way I do. If I have exhausted the justifications I have reached bedrock, and my spade is turned. Then I am inclined to say: 'This is simply what I do.'
>
> (Remember that we sometimes demand definitions for the sake not of their content, but of their form. Our requirement is an architectural one; the definition a kind of ornamental coping that supports nothing.).[59]

Scientists should be able to distinguish content definitions from merely instrumental ones: it is useful, for the sake of convenience, to talk about *behaviour* both for man and for animal, but science needs to distinguish each time what can be assimilated to physiological processes and what cannot be so. It needs to comprehend the definition's primarily heuristic value: hoping to detect a substance behind it is not always legitimate. It needs to accept that there can be the *substantive* without the *substance* being there.

Drury quotes Hebb: 'behaviour and neural function are perfectly correlated, […] one is completely caused by the other. There is no separate soul or life force to stick a finger now and then into the brain and make neural cells do what they would not do otherwise'.[60] Drury denies the absolutism of this correlation and does not think it that some external force commanding the brain is necessary; he claims that, simply, there are some forms of behaviour lacking a neurological counterpart. In this respect, Drury's argument is an original reformulation in medical terms of what is said in the *Investigations*. There exists experimental evidence that the sensation of hunger is correlated to a lowered blood glucose level; probably sooner or later it will be possible to prove a link between the desire to listen to some music after eating and some particular modifications at a neuro-physiological level

(we could provide for further examples: the acceleration of heart-beat following a strong emotion, the lowered serotonin level in depressed people, the increased adrenalin level in competitive situations, and so on); however, the fact that I decide to listen to one record rather than to another cannot be correlated to any physiological process: it makes sense to ask for the *reasons* for such a choice (which can be expressed in terms of musical taste), but it is nonsense to investigate its physiological *causes*. Reasons pertain to *experience*; in Wittgenstein's manner of speaking, the question is just misleading. Drury, in placing the theme of *choice* at the centre of his thought, brings forward a non-determinist view of physiology, grounded in the idea that 'if it is not possible for us to choose between truth and error, between right and wrong, then the whole possibility of scientific discussion is reduced to an absurdity'. […] The very possibility of speech, of intelligent discourse, of well reasoned books, depends on the certainty that a very large and important part of mental life is not determined and is not correlated with specific neural function'. [61]

The argument goes on in definitely Wittgensteinian in terms: 'This certainly does not imply that a finger is thrust into the brain to compel neural cells to do what they otherwise would not. *Nothing is compelled because nothing is correlated*'.[62] Hence, it is not true that we cannot provide for the causes of a choice because we know little about the processes occurring in the brain or in the nervous system:[63] it is actually nonsense to talk about 'caused choices' (if we consider 'cause' in the strict sense of its deterministic meaning and not in the sense of reasons or motives).

Drury's conclusion is that it is not possible to 'carry on a discussion with a tape recorder where everything is correlated and compelled; you can [do that] with another human being because he is able to *choose*'.[64] In a letter dated 18th June 1970, Drury describes some experiments proving that when certain areas in the brain are electrically stimulated, involuntary movements are produced of which the patients are conscious, but they know, at the same time, that they have not willed them and cannot stop them. As

opposed to that, an area which, when electrically stimulated, gives the patient the illusion of *willingly* producing certain movements has not been found. If a patient seeks for a psychiatrist's help to get rid of, for instance, the impulse of indecent exposure towards children, a therapy of chemical nature could prove helpful. But it fails if the subject is not determined to transform his own behaviour. It is not sufficient, says Drury, to install an electrode in someone else's brain to convince them of the truthfulness of our statements. If this were so, Wittgenstein would say, it would be as if the installer spoke to himself a chimerical and impossible private language. Talking about truth would be nonsense, for I would not have any criterion of correctness.[65] It would be as my right hand gave a present to my left hand: 'Why can't my right hand give my left hand money? […] And the same could be asked if a person had given himself a private definition of a word'.[66]

The hypothesis of physiological determinism, together with that of the privacy of language, falls in face of the absence of a criterion of correctness: 'justification consists in appealing to something independent. – "But surely I can appeal from one memory to another. […]" – No; for [it would be as] if someone were to buy several copies of the morning paper to assure himself that what is said was true',[67] as Wittgenstein writes.

Unless we are subject to a transcendental delusion of freedom and someone gives us the illusion of acting according to our will, what differentiates the will from mechanical constraint is the awareness of the action that we are going to perform according to our will: 'In the laboratory, when subjected to an electric current [,] someone says with his eyes shut "I am moving my arm up and down" – though his arm is not moving. "So […] he has the special feeling of making that movement." – Move your arm to and fro with your eyes shut. And now try, while you do so, to tell yourself that your arm is staying still and that you are only having certain […] feelings':[68] it is nonsense. 'Our mistake', holds Wittgenstein, 'is to look for an explanation where we ought to look at what happens as a 'proto-phenomenon'. That is, where we ought to have said: *this language-game is played*':[69]

forms of life and language games do not need mysterious and misleading justifications, so as the will is not an entity which can be located in a specific spot of the brain, but it is the *whole of its manifestations*.

Rhees, in two fundamental letters written between 28th and 29th April 1955, enlighten us about the concept of language-game: the work of language games is not so much that of disentangling confusions such as the one attending the word 'mind' – whose superficial grammar is like that of the word 'body', which is associated with a substance – but that of expressing, while not being able to say them, philosophically fundamental ideas. What does it mean, for example, to establish a relation between reality on one hand and language on the other? Moreover: what does belonging to a language mean? Rhees invites Drury to imagine a language lacking the opposition of affirmation and denial, emphasizing how he once used to consider such an opposition as necessary to the existence of language. Talking to Wittgenstein, Rhees changed his mind. The master confronted him with the hypothesis of a language in which an interlocutor asserts that outside it is raining, and the other, instead of denying it, replies that it is dry, where the latter statement does not correspond at all to an indirect denial of the former. This would constitute a deep grammatical difference in regard to our ordinary language: a difference that would radically alter our world-view. In a language lacking denial, the perplexity about time, which is instead embedded in our ordinary language, would disappear. Our ordinary language plunges the past into *no more*, and the future into *not yet* – in short: into *non-being*. According to Rhees, Wittgenstein would have given to Parmenides (the first to decree, as the traditional exegesis states, that *being is and non being is not*) the credit for having given voice to that perplexity. However, one may oppose to this that such a perplexity is not extinguishable, and the opposition of affirmation and denial is an essential archetype of language. This archetype engenders traps; yet, there would be no philosophy without them[70]:

the desire to uncover them is as legitimate as illegitimate (and logically impossible to

satisfy) is the one of removing our ultimate questions.

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[1] A previous version of this paper has been published in Italian under the title "L'etica, l'indicibile e la cura negli scritti di Maurice O'Connor Drury [Ethics, the unsayble and the cure in the writings of Maurice O'Connor Drury]", in *Linguaggio, soggetto, e forme della filosofia* [*Language, subject and the forms of philosophy*], ed. L. Handjaras, A. Marinotti, M. Rosso, Clinamen, Firenze 2008, pp. 187-210).; the current version presents few amendments.

[2] Maurice O'Connor Drury, *The Danger of Words and other writings on Wittgenstein*, edited and introduced by David Berman, Michael Fitzgerald and John Hayes, Thoemmes Press, Bristol 1996, *The Danger of Words*, 1973 (the text indicates 1976 as date of first publication, but from Drury's *curriculum vitae*, stored in Mary Immaculate College's archive, Limerick, Eire, the year 1973 comes out).

[3] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1922 (fifth impression: 1951), sections 4.113, 4.116.

[4] L. Wittgenstein, *Notebooks 1914-1916*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1961[1], 1979[2], edited by G.H. von Wright and G.E.M. Anscombe, with an English translation by G.E.M. Anscombe, p. 77, 24 July 1916.

[5] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Vermischte Bemerkungen*, Surkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 1977, revised second edition 1994, *Culture and Value*, Blackwell Publishers Ltd, Oxford 1998, MS 109 204: 6.-7.11.1930.

[6] We record some passages from Simone Weil's *Notebooks* confirming what Rhees is stating:

'Non-Euclidean geometry. Parallel lines meet if one regards the infinite as finite. Orders of infinity. Cantor.' (Simone Weil, *First and Last Notebooks*, translated by Richard Rees, Oxford University Press, London 1970, p. 93).

'The speculations which it is legitimate to condemn as heretical are those which diminish the reality of divine things by veiling, under the appearance of reconciling them, the contradictions which are their mystery.

For example, making the Son an only half-divine being. Or modifying the divinity and the humanity in Christ so as to reconcile them. Or reducing the bread and the wine of the Eucharist to a mere symbol.

The mysteries then cease to be an object of contemplation; they are no longer of any use.' (ibid., pp. 132-133).

'If one says: show that it is possible to construct a triangle such that … - it is enough if one finds by chance a triangle which meets the conditions.

If one says: show that it is impossible to construct a triangle such that … ; this demand involves the infinite and cannot be met without passing from the domain of empiricism into the domain of necessity.

Impossibility is what limits possibilities; limit is necessity abstracted from time […]. If one says: do not do such and such a thing, it is impossible to obey without lifting the centre of the soul up to the level of the eternal.' (ibid., p. 135).

'For the part of the soul below the level of time, a finite duration is infinite. In the same way that there is an infinity of points in the length of a yard.

If the lower layer of the soul is laid bare and exposed through the destruction of the discursive part, and if in this way perpetual duration is traversed within a finite lapse of time, and if throughout that perpetuity the soul remains turned towards the eternal light, then perhaps in the end the eternal light will have pity and will envelop the entire soul with its eternity.

That part of mathematics which concerns diverse orders of infinities (theory of wholes, topology) contains a treasury of infinitely precious images which can be applied to supernatural truths.' (ibid., pp. 292-293).

[7] Marino Rosso: Introduction to L. Wittgenstein, *Osservazioni filosofiche*, Einaudi, Torino 1976[1], 1999[2], It. tr. of *Philosophische Bemerkungen*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1964, p. L ('parte sul solipsismo sulla trattazione 'matematica' del nostro linguaggio [(]del 'ramo' che fa capo a 5.6 sull''albero' che fa capo a 5)'. My translation.

[8] ('che "noi ci facciamo immagini dei fatti" […] "noi" […] indica dei soggetti empirici, in [5.641] "[l'] Io filosofico è non l'uomo, non il corpo umano o l'anima umana del quale tratta la psicologia"'), ibid..

[9] Ibid., pp. L-LI.

[10] All the above is widely exposed in Rosso, ibid., pp. L and ff..

[11] *Notebooks*, p. 83, 8 October 1916 (from here onwards, I refer to '*Notebooks*' as to Wittgenstein's *Notebooks 1914-1916*, cit.).

[12] We chose in fact to translate 'blass' with 'faded' instead of 'colourless' to outline the difference between death and the empirical suspension of the reflection enacted by a nonetheless still living subject. Our idea follows the Italian translation of the *Notebooks* by A. Conte (*Quaderni 1914-1916*, in *Tractatus logico-philosophicus e Quaderni 1914-1916*, Einaudi, Torino 1995) who translates 'blass' with 'smoriva', from the adjective 'smorto', which means 'dull, pale, colourless'. If you take the prefix away from 's-moriva', you get 'moriva', which means 'died'.

[13] Marino Rosso designated Drury's version of Wittgenstein's 'mystical' with this pregnant expression during one of our conversations in October 2002.

[14] *Notebooks*, p.79, 1-2 August 1916.

[15] G. Pico della Mirandola, *Oratio de hominis dignitate*, quoted in Drury, *The Danger of Words and other writings on Wittgenstein*, cit., *Some Notes on Conversation with Wittgenstein*, pp. 91-92; Drury's English translation, present in this letter, is reported by Rush Rhees in his notes (located between *Conversations with Wittgenstein* and *1967 Dublin Lecture on Wittgenstein,* last writing in the collection; Rhees' notes are also contained in Rush Rhees, *Recollections of Wittgenstein*, Oxford University Press, London 1984). Rhees specifies that the *Oratio* was written in 1486 or 1487, published posthumous in 1495-6, and that the text Drury draws upon

has been taken from *De hominis dignitate, Heptalus, De ente et uno*, Eugenio Garin ed., Firenze 1942, pp. 104, 106. We refer directly to Drury for the complete quotation and translation.

[16] O. Weininger, *Geschlecht und Character. Eine prinzipielle Untersuchung*, Braumüller, Wien 1904, Engl. tr. *Sex and Character*, Heinemann, London 1986, cited in Ray Monk, *Ludwig Wittgenstein. The duty of genius*, Jonatan Cape, London 1990, pp. 19-25.

[17] Cf. Rush Rhees, *Notes to pages* (…), "Note to page 98", p. 218, in Drury, *The Danger of Words and other writings on Wittgenstein*, cit..

[18] *Notebooks*, pp. 72-73, 11 June 1916.

[19] My italics.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

[22] *Notebooks*, p.73, 5 July 1916.

[23] *Notebooks*, p.74, 6 July 1916.

[24] *Notebooks*, p.81, 13 August 1916.

[25] *Notebooks*, p. 74, 8 July 1916.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid. My italics.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Cf. Drury*, Conversations with Wittgenstein*, in Drury, *The Danger of Words and other writing on Wittgenstein*: 'WITTGENSTEIN: […] If what we do now is to make no difference in the end, then all the seriousness of life is done away with. Your [*Drury's*] religious ideas have always seemed to me more Greek than biblical. Whereas my thoughts are a hundred per cent Hebraic', p. 161.

[33] Cf. *The Danger of Words*, p. 75.

[34] Ibid, pp. 75-76.

[35] L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1953¹, 1967³, Eng. tr. under the title of *Philosophical Investigations* by E. Anscombe, Part II, § xiv (I will refer to this work as *Investigations*).

[36] Cf. 'Beyond the dream of science', article contained in Mary Immaculate College's archive, dated 10/8/1973 (it is a press-cut taken from a newspaper whose name was not recorded): the locutions «'psychology in the idiographic sense'» and «'psychology in

the nomothetic sense'» are there introduced with reference to what Drury, in the second chapter of *The Danger of Words*, whose title is 'Science and psychology', calls «'psychology *A*'» and «'psychology *B*'».

[37] *The Danger of Words*, p. 29.

[38] Quoted in *The Danger of Words*, p. 30 (Drury refers to J.P. Stern, *Lichtenberg, a Doctrine of Scattered Occasions*, Thames and Hudson Publishers, Indiana University Press; the cross-reference is to Joseph Peter Stern, *Lichtenberg: a doctrine of scattered occasions: reconstructed from his aphorisms and reflections*, Thames and Hudson, London 1959).

[39] *The Danger of Words*, p. 46.

[40] Ibid., p. 35.

[41] Ibid., p. 47.

[42] *Investigations*, part I, § 66.

[43] Ibid., part I, § 65.

[44] *The Danger of Words*, cit., p. 48.

[45] Augustine, Confessions, I, 8, quoted in Latin and translated into German by Wittgenstein: cf. Investigations, cit., part I, § 1 (in footnote, the Eng. tr. by G.E.M. Anscombe: 'When they (my elders) named some object, and accordingly moved towards something, I saw this and I grasped that the thing was called by the sound they uttered when they meant to point it out. […] Thus, as I heard words repeatedly used in their proper places in various sentences, I gradually learnt to understand what objects they signified; and after I had trained my mouth to form these signs, I used them to express my own desires').

[46] Ibid.*,* part I, § 1.

[47] Willard Van Orman Quine, *Speaking of Objects*, in Id., *Ontological Relativity and Other Essays*, Columbia University Press, New York-London 1969, p. 15.

[48] Ibid.

[49] I borrowed this locution from Wittgenstein: he often uses it referring to the theory of evolution (cf., for instance, Monk, op. cit., p.537).

[50] *Investigations*, part I, § 30.

[51] Ibid., part I, § 31.

[52] Ibid., part I, § 5.

[53] Quine, *Ontological Relativity*, in Id., *Ontological Relativity and Other Essays*, cit., p. 27.

[54] *The Danger of Words*, p. 48.

[55] Cf. *supra*, note 4.

[56] *The Danger of Words*, p. 48.

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[57] Ibid., p. 53.

[58] Ibid., p. 53.

[59] *Investigations*, part I, § 217.

[60] *The Danger of Words*, pp. 53-54. Drury, at p. 26, refers to Hebb, *The Organization of Behaviour* (the cross-reference is to Donald Olding Hebb, *The organization of behaviour: a neuropsychological theory,* Chapman & Hall, London 1949).

[61] *The Danger of Words*, p. 55.

[62] Ibid., p. 55 (my italics).

[63] Cf. *Investigations*, part I, § 158.

[64] *The Danger of Words*, p. 55.

[65] Cf. *Investigations*, part I, § 258.

[66] Ibid., part I, § 268.

[67] Ibid., part I, § 265.

[68] Ibid., part I, § 624.

[69] Ibid., part I, § 654.

[70] The analogical exhibition of the various language games (this is how the perspicuous representation of language is enacted) shows indeed what cannot be said: what language is, but we, unlike Rhees (and unlike Wittgenstein when he inspires Rhee's relativistic conception of the opposition of affirmation and denial) would say: it shows that language is a flowing. Wittgenstein himself says in the *Philosophical Remarks* (Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1975, edited from his posthumous writings by Rush Rhees and translated into English by Raymond Hargreaves and Roger White, first German edition 1964, cit., 54) that language 'cannot *say* that everything flows', because I occur in this flux. This contrasts with the idea that the opposition of being and non-being is merely a linguistic one, and relative to languages (flowing *is* in its being an alternation of opposites).

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