

Ludwig Wittgenstein

CULTURE AND VALUE

Translated by Peter Winch



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Ludwig Wittgenstein

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PREFACE

In the manuscript material left by Wittgenstein there are numerous notes which do not belong directly with his philosophical works although they are scattered amongst the philosophical texts. Some of these notes are autobiographical, some are about the nature of philosophical activity, and some concern subjects of a general sort, such as questions about art or about religion. It is not always possible to separate them sharply from the philosophical text; in many cases, however, Wittgenstein himself hinted at such a separation – by the use of brackets or in other ways.

Some of these notes are ephemeral; others on the other hand – the majority – are of great interest. Sometimes they are strikingly beautiful and profound. It was evident to the literary executors that a number of these notes would have to be published. G. H. von Wright was commissioned to make a selection and arrange it.

It was a decidedly difficult task; at various times I had different ideas about how best to accomplish it. To begin with, for example, I imagined that the remarks could be arranged according to the topics of which they treated – such as “music”, “architecture”, “Shakespeare”, “aphorisms of practical wisdom”, “philosophy”, and the like. Sometimes the remarks can be arranged into such groupings without strain, but by and large, splitting up the material in this way would probably give an impression of artificiality. At one time moreover I had thought of including already published material. For many of Wittgenstein’s most impressive “aphorisms” are to be found in his philosophical works – in the *Notebooks* from the First World War, in the *Tractatus*, and in the *Investigations* too. I should like to say that it is when they are embedded in such contexts that Wittgenstein’s aphorisms really have their most powerful effect. But for that very reason it did not seem to me right to tear them from their surroundings.

At one time too I played with the idea of not making a very extensive selection, but including only the “best” remarks. The impression made by the good remarks would, I thought, only be weakened by a great mass of material. *That*, presumably, is true – but it was not my job to be an arbiter of taste. Furthermore, I did not trust myself to choose between repeated formulations of the same, or nearly the same, thought. Often the repetitions themselves seem to me to have a substantial point.

In the end I decided on the only principle of selection that seemed to me unconditionally right. I excluded from the collection notes of a purely “personal” sort – i.e. notes in which Wittgenstein is commenting on the external circumstances of his life, his state of mind and relations with other people – some of whom are still living. Generally speaking these notes were easy to separate from the rest and they are on a *different* level of interest from

those which are printed here. Only in a few cases where these two conditions seemed not to be met did I include notes of an autobiographical nature as well.

The remarks are published here in chronological order with an indication of their year of origin. It is conspicuous that nearly half the remarks stem from the period after the completion (in 1945) of Part One of *Philosophical Investigations*.

In the absence of further explanation some of the remarks will be obscure or enigmatic to a reader who is not familiar with the circumstances of Wittgenstein's life or with what he was reading. In many cases it would have been possible to provide explanatory comments in footnotes. I have nevertheless, with very few exceptions, refrained from adding comments. I ought to add that all the footnotes are the editor's.¹

It is unavoidable that a book of this sort will reach the hands of readers to whom otherwise Wittgenstein's philosophical work is, and will remain, unknown. This need not necessarily be harmful or useless. I am all the same convinced that these notes can be properly understood and appreciated only against the background of Wittgenstein's philosophy and, furthermore, that they make a contribution to our understanding of that philosophy.

I began making my selection from the manuscripts in the years 1965–1966. I then laid the work aside until 1974. Mr. Heikki Nyman helped me with the final selection and arrangement of the collection. He also checked that the text agreed exactly with the manuscripts and removed many errors and gaps from my typescript. I am very grateful to him for his work, which he carried out with great care and good taste. Without his help I should probably not have been able to bring myself to complete the collection for the press. I am also deeply indebted to Mr. Rush Rhees for making corrections in the text which I produced and for giving me valuable advice on matters of selection.

Helsinki, January 1977

Georg Henrik von Wright

¹ A few footnotes have been added by the translator. These are indicated, like this one: (Tr.).

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

This new edition of "*Vermischte Bemerkungen*"¹ contains additional material, mainly from a notebook which probably dates from 1944.

Helsinki, June 1978

G. H. v. W.

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Many people have given me generous help with this translation. I want especially to mention Miss Marina Barabas, Messrs. S. Ellis and Heikki Nyman, Professors Steven Burns, Stephan Körner, Norman Malcolm and G. H. von Wright, Miss Helen Widdess and Mrs. Erika Winch.

But I most particularly want to thank Mr. Rush Rhees whose help and advice, on many different matters, have been quite extraordinarily valuable.

King's College, London,
November 1979

Peter Winch

¹ "*Vermischte Bemerkungen*", literally translated as "Miscellaneous Remarks", is here published in English translation under the title "*Culture and Value*". (Tr.)

CULTURE AND VALUE

1914

We tend to take the speech of a Chinese for inarticulate gurgling. Someone who understands Chinese will recognize *language* in what he hears. Similarly I often cannot discern the *humanity* in a man.

1929

I still find my own way of philosophizing new, and it keeps striking me so afresh; that is why I need to repeat myself so often. It will have become second nature to a new generation, to whom the repetitions will be boring. I find them necessary.

It's a good thing I don't allow myself to be influenced!

A good simile refreshes the intellect.

It is difficult to tell a short-sighted man how to get somewhere. Because you cannot say to him: "Look at that church tower ten miles away and go in that direction."

There is no religious denomination in which the misuse of metaphysical expressions has been responsible for so much sin as it has in mathematics.

The human gaze has a power of conferring value on things; but it makes them cost more too.

Just let nature speak and acknowledge only *one* thing as higher than nature, but not what others may think.

You get tragedy where the tree, instead of bending, breaks. Tragedy is something un-Jewish. Mendelssohn is, I suppose, the most untragic of composers.

Each morning you have to break through the dead rubble afresh so as to reach the living warm seed.

A new word is like a fresh seed sown on the ground of the discussion.

With my full philosophical rucksack I can only climb slowly up the mountain of mathematics.

Mendelssohn is not a peak, but a plateau. His Englishness.

No one can think a thought for me in the way no one can don my hat for me.

Anyone who listens to a child's crying and understands what he hears will know that it harbours dormant psychic forces, terrible forces different from anything commonly assumed. Profound rage, pain and lust for destruction.

Mendelssohn is like a man who is only jolly when the people he is with are all jolly anyway, or like one who is only good when he is surrounded by good men; he does not have the integrity of a tree which stands firmly in its place whatever may be going on around it. I too am like that and am attracted to being so.

My ideal is a certain coolness. A temple providing a setting for the passions without meddling with them.

I often wonder whether my cultural ideal is a new one, i.e. contemporary, or whether it derives from Schumann's time. It does at least strike me as continuing that ideal, though not in the way it was actually continued at the time. That is to say, the second half of the Nineteenth Century has been left out. This, I ought to say, has been a purely instinctive development and not the result of reflection.

When we think of the world's future, we always mean the destination it will reach if it keeps going in the direction we can see it going in now; it does not occur to us that its path is not a straight line but a curve, constantly changing direction.

I think good Austrian work (Grillparzer, Lenau, Bruckner, Labor) is particularly hard to understand. There is a sense in which it is *subtler* than anything else and the truth it expresses never leans towards plausibility.

What is good is also divine. Queer as it sounds, that sums up my ethics. Only something supernatural can express the Supernatural.

You cannot lead people to what is good; you can only lead them to some place or other. The good is outside the space of facts.

1930

I recently said to Arvid,¹ after I had been watching a very old film with him in the cinema: A modern film is to an old one as a present-day motor car is to one built 25 years ago. The impression it makes is just as ridiculous and clumsy and the way film-making has improved is comparable to the sort of technical improvement we see in cars. It is not to be compared with the improvement – if it's right to call it that – of an artistic style. It must be much the same with modern dance music too. A jazz dance, like a film, must be something that can be improved. What distinguishes all these developments from the formation of a *style* is that spirit plays no part in them.

I once said, perhaps rightly: The earlier culture will become a heap of rubble and finally a heap of ashes, but spirits will hover over the ashes.

Today the difference between a good and a poor architect is that the poor architect succumbs to every temptation and the good one resists it.

¹ Arvid Sjögren, a friend and relation of L. W.

A crack is showing in the work of art's organic unity and one tries to stuff it with straw, but to quieten one's conscience one uses only the *best* straw.

If anyone should think he has solved the problem of life and feel like telling himself that everything is quite easy now, he can see that he is wrong just by recalling that there was a time when this "solution" had not been discovered; but it must have been possible to live *then* too and the solution which has now been discovered seems fortuitous in relation to how things were then. And it is the same in the study of logic. If there were a "solution" to the problems of logic (philosophy) we should only need to caution ourselves that there was a time when they had not been solved (and even at that time people must have known how to live and think).

Engelmann told me that when he rummages round at home in a drawer full of his own manuscripts, they strike him as so splendid that he thinks it would be worth making them available to other people. (He says it's the same when he is reading through letters from his dead relations.) But when he imagines publishing a selection of them the whole business loses its charm and value and becomes impossible. I said that was like the following case: Nothing could be more remarkable than seeing a man who thinks he is unobserved performing some quite simple everyday activity. Let us imagine a theatre; the curtain goes up and we see a man alone in a room, walking up and down, lighting a cigarette, sitting down, etc. so that suddenly we are observing a human being from outside in a way that ordinarily we can never observe ourselves; it would be like watching a chapter of biography with our own eyes, — surely this would be uncanny and wonderful at the same time. We should be observing something more wonderful than anything a playwright could arrange to be acted or spoken on the stage: life itself. — But then we do see this every day without its making the slightest impression on us! True enough, but we do not see it from *that* point of view. — Well, when E. looks at what he has written and finds it marvellous (even though he would not care to publish any of the pieces individually), he is seeing his life as a work of art created by God and, as such, it is certainly worth contemplating, as is every life and everything whatever. But only an artist can so represent an individual thing as to make it appear to us like a work of art; it is *right* that those manuscripts should lose their value when looked at singly and especially when regarded *disinterestedly*, i.e. by someone who doesn't feel enthusiastic about them in advance. A work of art forces us — as one might say — to see it in the right perspective but, in the absence of art, the object is just a fragment of nature like any other; *we* may exalt it through our enthusiasm but that does not give anyone else the right to confront us with it. (I keep thinking of one of those insipid snapshots of a piece of scenery which is of interest for the man who

took it because he was there himself and experienced something; but someone else will quite justifiably look at it coldly, in so far as it is ever justifiable to look at something coldly.)

But it seems to me too that there is a way of capturing the world *sub specie aeterni* other than through the work of the artist. Thought has such a way – so I believe – it is as though it flies above the world and leaves it as it is – observing it from above, in flight.

In Renan's 'Peuple d'Israël' I read: "Birth, sickness, death, madness, catalepsy, sleep, dreams, all made an immense impression and, even nowadays, only a few have the gift of seeing clearly that these phenomena have causes within our constitution."¹

On the contrary there is absolutely no reason to wonder at these things, because they are such everyday occurrences. If primitive men can't help but wonder at them, how much more so dogs and monkeys. Or is it being assumed that men, as it were, suddenly woke up and, noticing for the first time these things that had always been there, were understandably amazed? – Well, as a matter of fact we might assume something like this; though not that they become aware of these things for the first time but that they do suddenly start to wonder at them. But this again has nothing to do with their being primitive. Unless it is called primitive not to wonder at things, in which case the people of today are really the primitive ones, and Renan himself too if he supposes that scientific explanation could intensify wonderment.

As though lightning were more commonplace or less astounding today than 2000 years ago.

Man has to awaken to wonder – and so perhaps do peoples. Science is a way of sending him to sleep again.

In other words it's just false to say: Of course, these primitive peoples couldn't help wondering at everything. Though perhaps it is true that these peoples *did* wonder at all the things around them. – To suppose they couldn't help wondering at them is a primitive superstition. (It is like supposing that they *had* to be afraid of all the forces of nature, whereas we of course have no need to be afraid. On the other hand we may learn from experience that certain primitive tribes are very strongly inclined to fear natural phenomena. – But we cannot exclude the possibility that *highly* civilized peoples will become liable to this very same fear once again; neither their civilization nor scientific knowledge can protect them against this. All the same it's true enough that the *spirit* in which science is carried on nowadays is not compatible with fear of this kind.)

¹ Ernest Renan: *History of the People of Israel*, Vol. I, Chapter III.

What Renan calls the 'bon sens précoce' of the semitic races (an idea which had occurred to me too a long time ago) is their *unpoetic* mentality, which heads straight for what is concrete. This is characteristic of my philosophy.

Things are placed right in front of our eyes, not covered by any veil. – This is where religion and art part company.

Sketch for a Foreword¹

This book is written for those who are in sympathy with the spirit in which it is written. This is not, I believe, the spirit of the main current of European and American civilization. The spirit of this civilization makes itself manifest in the industry, architecture and music of our time, in its fascism and socialism, and it is alien and uncongenial to the author. This is not a value judgement. It is not, it is true, as though he accepted what nowadays passes for architecture as architecture or did not approach what is called modern music with the greatest suspicion (though without understanding its language), but still, the disappearance of the arts does not justify judging disparagingly the human beings who make up this civilization. For in times like these, genuine strong characters simply leave the arts aside and turn to other things and somehow the worth of the individual man finds expression. Not, to be sure, in the way it would at a time of high culture. A culture is like a big organization which assigns each of its members a place where he can work in the spirit of the whole; and it is perfectly fair for his power to be measured by the contribution he succeeds in making to the whole enterprise. In an age without culture on the other hand forces become fragmented and the power of an individual man is used up in overcoming opposing forces and frictional resistances; it does not show in the distance he travels but perhaps only in the heat he generates in overcoming friction. But energy is still energy and even if the spectacle which our age affords us is not the formation of a great cultural work, with the best men contributing to the same great end, so much as the unimpressive spectacle of a crowd whose best members work for purely private ends, still we must not forget that the spectacle is not what matters.

I realize then that the disappearance of a culture does not signify the disappearance of human value, but simply of certain means of expressing this value, yet the fact remains that I have no sympathy for the current of European civilization and do not understand its goals, if it has any. So I am really writing for friends who are scattered throughout the corners of the globe.

¹ An early draft of the printed foreword to *Philosophical Remarks*, edited by Rush Rhees and translated by Raymond Hargreaves and Roger White (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1975).

It is all one to me whether or not the typical western scientist understands or appreciates my work, since he will not in any case understand the spirit in which I write. Our civilization is characterized by the word 'progress'. Progress is its form rather than making progress being one of its features. Typically it constructs. It is occupied with building an ever more complicated structure. And even clarity is sought only as a means to this end, not as an end in itself. For me on the contrary clarity, perspicuity are valuable in themselves.

I am not interested in constructing a building, so much as in having a perspicuous view of the foundations of possible buildings.

So I am not aiming at the same target as the scientists and my way of thinking is different from theirs.

Each of the sentences I write is trying to say the whole thing, i.e. the same thing over and over again; it is as though they were all simply views of one object seen from different angles.

I might say: if the place I want to get to could only be reached by way of a ladder, I would give up trying to get there. For the place I really have to get to is a place I must already be at now.

Anything that I might reach by climbing a ladder does not interest me.

One movement links thoughts with one another in a series, the other keeps aiming at the same spot.

One is constructive and picks up one stone after another, the other keeps taking hold of the same thing.

The danger in a long foreword¹ is that the spirit of a book has to be evident in the book itself and cannot be described. For if a book has been written for just a few readers that will be clear just from the fact that only a few people understand it. The book must automatically separate those who understand it from those who do not. Even the foreword is written just for those who understand the book.

Telling someone something he does not understand is pointless, even if you add that he will not be able to understand it. (That so often happens with someone you love.)

If you have a room which you do not want certain people to get into, put a lock on it for which they do not have the key. But there is no point in talking to them about it, unless of course you want them to admire the room from outside!

¹ See the previous remark.

The honourable thing to do is to put a lock on the door which will be noticed only by those who can open it, not by the rest.

But it's proper to say that I think the book has nothing to do with the progressive civilization of Europe and America.

And that while its spirit may be possible only in the surroundings of this civilization, they have different objectives.

Everything ritualistic (everything that, as it were, smacks of the high priest) must be strictly avoided, because it immediately turns rotten.

Of course a kiss is a ritual too and it isn't rotten, but ritual is permissible only to the extent that it is as genuine as a kiss.

It is a great temptation to try to make the spirit explicit.

When you bump against the limits of your own honesty it is as though your thoughts get into a whirlpool, an infinite regress: You can *say* what you like, it takes you no further.

I have been reading Lessing (on the Bible):¹ "Add to this the verbal clothing and the style . . ., absolutely full of tautologies, but of a kind to exercise one's wits by seeming sometimes to say something different while really saying the same thing and at other times seeming to say the same thing while at bottom meaning, or being capable of meaning, something different."

If I am not quite sure how I should start a book, this is because I am still unclear about something. For I should like to start with the original data of philosophy, written and spoken sentences, with books as it were.

And here we come on the difficulty of "all is in flux". Perhaps that is the very point at which to start.

If someone is merely ahead of his time, it will catch him up one day.

1931

Some people think music a primitive art because it has only a few notes and rhythms. But it is only simple on the surface; its substance on the other hand, which makes it possible to interpret this manifest content, has all the infinite

¹ G. E. Lessing: *The Education of the Human Race*, §§ 48–49.

complexity that's suggested in the external forms of other arts and that music conceals. There is a sense in which it is the most sophisticated art of all.

There are problems I never get anywhere near, which do not lie in my path or are not part of my world. Problems of the intellectual world of the West that Beethoven (and perhaps Goethe to a certain extent) tackled and wrestled with, but which no philosopher has ever confronted (perhaps Nietzsche passed by them). And perhaps they are lost as far as western philosophy is concerned, i.e. no one will be there capable of experiencing, and hence describing, the progress of this culture as an epic. Or more precisely, it just no longer is an epic, or is so only for someone looking at it from outside, which is perhaps what Beethoven did with prevision (as Spengler hints somewhere). It might be said that civilization can only have its epic poets in advance. Just as a man cannot report his own death when it happens, but only foresee it and describe it as something lying in the future. So it might be said: If you want to see an epic description of a whole culture, you will have to look at the works of its greatest figures, hence at works composed when the end of this culture could only be *foreseen*, because later on there will be nobody left to describe it. So it's not to be wondered at that it should only be written in the obscure language of prophecy, comprehensible to very few indeed.

But I do not come near these problems. When I "have done with the world" I shall have created an amorphous (transparent) mass and the world in all its variety will be left on one side like an uninteresting lumber room.

Or perhaps more precisely: the whole outcome of this entire work is for the world to be set on one side. (A throwing-into-the-lumber-room of the whole world.)

In this world (mine) there is no tragedy, nor is there that infinite variety of circumstance which gives rise to tragedy (as its result).

It is as though everything were soluble in the aether of the world; there are no hard surfaces.

What that means is that hardness and conflict do not become something splendid, but a *defect*.

Conflict is dissipated in much the same way as is the tension of a spring when you melt the mechanism (or dissolve it in nitric acid). This dissolution eliminates all tensions.

If I say that my book is meant for only a small circle of people (if it can be called a circle), I do not mean that I believe this circle to be the *élite* of mankind; but it does comprise those to whom I turn (not because they are better or worse than others but) because they form my cultural milieu, my fellow citizens as it were, in contrast to the rest who are *foreign* to me.

The limit of language is shown by its being impossible to describe the fact which corresponds to (is the translation of) a sentence, without simply repeating the sentence.

(This has to do with the Kantian solution of the problem of philosophy.)

Can I say that a play has a time of its own, which is not a segment of historical time? I.e. I can distinguish earlier and later within it but there is *no sense* to the question whether the events in it take place, say, before or after Caesar's death.

By the way, the old idea – roughly that of the (great) western philosophers – was that there were two kinds of problem in the scientific sense: essential, big, universal problems and inessential, as it were accidental, ones. According to our conception on the other hand we cannot speak in science of a *great*, essential problem.

Structure and feeling in music. Feelings accompany our apprehension of a piece of music in the way they accompany the events of our life.

Labor's is a very late seriousness.

Talent is a spring from which fresh water is constantly flowing. But this spring loses its value if it is not used in the right way.

"What an intelligent man knows is hard to know." Does Goethe's contempt for laboratory experiment and his exhortation to us to go out and learn from

untrammelled nature have anything to do with the idea that a hypothesis (interpreted in the wrong way) already falsifies the truth? And is it connected with the way I am now thinking of starting my book – with a description of nature?

Flowers or animals that people find ugly always strike them like artefacts. “It looks like a . . .”, they say. This illuminates the meaning of the words “ugly” and “beautiful”.

The delightful way the various parts of a human body differ in temperature.

It is humiliating to have to appear like an empty tube which is simply inflated by a mind.

No one likes having offended another person; hence everyone feels so much better if the other person doesn't show he's been offended. Nobody likes being confronted by a wounded spaniel. Remember that. It is much easier patiently – and tolerantly¹ – to avoid the person you have injured than to approach him as a friend. You need courage for that.

To treat somebody well when he does not like you, you need to be not only very good natured, but very *tactful* too.

We are struggling with language.
We are engaged in a struggle with language.

The solution of philosophical problems can be compared with a gift in a fairy tale: in the magic castle it appears enchanted and if you look at it outside in daylight it is nothing but an ordinary bit of iron (or something of the sort).

¹ In the German there is a play on the words *geduldig* and *duldend*, which intensifies the irony and which I have been unable to catch in English. (Tr.)

A thinker is very much like a draughtsman whose aim it is to represent all the interrelations between things.

Pieces of music composed at the piano, on the keyboard, those thought out with pen on paper and those just composed with imagined sounds in the head must all be quite different in character and make quite different kinds of impression.

I am sure Bruckner composed just by imagining the sound of the orchestra in his head, Brahms with pen on paper. Of course this is an oversimplification. But it does highlight *one* feature.

Every tragedy could really start with the words: "Nothing would have happened had it not been that. . . ."

(Had he not got caught in the machine by the tip of his clothing?)

But surely that is a one-sided view of tragedy, to think of it merely as showing that an encounter can decide one's whole life.

I think it would be possible now to have a form of theatre played in masks. The characters would simply be stylized human types. You can see this clearly in Kraus's writings. His pieces could be, or should be, performed in masks. Of course this goes with a certain abstractness, typical of these works. And as I see it, masked theatre is anyway the expression of an intellectualistic character. And for the same reason perhaps it is a theatrical form that will attract only Jews.

Frida Schanz:

Foggy day. Grey autumn haunts us.
 Laughter seems tainted;
 the world is as silent today
 as though it had died last night.
 In the red-gold hedge
 fog monsters are brewing;
 and the day lies asleep.
 The day will not awaken.

I took this poem from a "*Rösselsprung*"¹ in which of course the punctuation was not shown. So I do not know if the word "*Nebeltag*" ["Foggy day"] is the title, or belongs rather to the first line, as I have written it. And it is queer how trivial the poem sounds if it does not begin with the word "*Nebeltag*", but with "*Der graue*" ["Grey"]. This changes the rhythm of the whole poem.²

What you have achieved cannot mean more to others than it does to you.
Whatever it has cost you, that's what they will pay.

The Jew is a desert region, but underneath its thin layer of rock lies the molten lava of spirit and intellect.

Grillparzer: "It's so easy to wander about amongst great objects in distant regions, so hard to grasp the solitary thing that's right in front of you. . . ."

What would it feel like not to have heard of Christ?

Should we feel left alone in the dark?

Do we escape such a feeling simply in the way a child escapes it when he knows there is someone in the room with him?

Religion as madness is a madness springing from irreligiousness.

I look at the photograph of Corsican brigands and reflect: these faces are too hard and mine too soft for Christianity to be able to make a mark on them. The brigands' faces are terrible to look at and yet they are certainly no farther than I am from a good life; it is just that they and I find our salvation on different sides of such a life.

Labor in his good music is completely unromantic. That is a very remarkable and significant characteristic.

¹ This is something like a crossword puzzle. Each space is occupied by a separate syllable. These are joined together to form a meaningful passage by making transpositions according to the rules for the knight's move (*—Rösselsprung*) in chess.
(Tr.)

² Variant reading in MS: "the whole rhythm of the poem".

Reading the Socratic dialogues one has the feeling: what a frightful waste of time! What's the point of these arguments that prove nothing and clarify nothing?

It seems to me that the story of Peter Schlemihl¹ should read like this: He makes his soul over to the Devil for money. Then he repents it and the Devil demands his shadow as a ransom. But Peter Schlemihl still has a choice between giving the Devil his soul and sacrificing, along with his shadow, life in community with other men.

Within Christianity it's as though God says to men: Don't act a tragedy, that's to say, don't enact heaven and hell on earth. Heaven and hell are *my* affair.

Spengler could be better understood if he said: I am *comparing* different cultural epochs with the lives of families; within a family there is a family resemblance, though you will also find a resemblance between members of different families; family resemblance differs from the other sort of resemblance in such and such ways, etc. What I mean is: we have to be told the object of comparison, the object from which this way of viewing things is derived, otherwise the discussion will constantly be affected by distortions. Because willy-nilly we shall ascribe the properties of the prototype to the object we are viewing in its light; and we claim "*it must always be . . .*".

This is because we want to give the prototype's characteristics a purchase on our way of representing things. But since we confuse prototype and object we find ourselves dogmatically conferring on the object properties which only the prototype necessarily possesses. On the other hand we think our view will not have the generality we want it to have if it is really true only of the one case. But the prototype ought to be clearly presented for what it is; so that it characterizes the whole discussion and determines its form. This makes it the focal point, so that its general validity will depend on the fact that it determines the form of discussion rather than on the claim that everything which is true only of it holds too for all the things that are being discussed.

Similarly the question always to ask when exaggerated, dogmatic assertions are made is: What is actually true in this? Or again: In what case is that actually true?

¹ Adelbert von Chamisso, "The Strange Tale of Peter Schlemihl".

From *Simplicissimus*: Riddles of technology. (A picture of two professors in front of a bridge under construction.) Voice from above: "Fotch it dahn – coom on fotch it dahn A tell tha – we'll turn it t'other rooad sooin."¹ – "It really is quite incomprehensible, my dear colleague, how anyone can carry out such complicated and precise work in such language."

People say again and again that philosophy doesn't really progress, that we are still 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. As long as there continues to be a verb 'to be' that looks as if it functions in the same way as 'to eat' and 'to drink', as long as we still have the adjectives 'identical', 'true', 'false', 'possible', as long as we continue to talk of a river of time, of an expanse of space, etc. etc., people will keep stumbling over the same puzzling difficulties and find themselves staring at something which no explanation seems capable of clearing up.

And what's more, this satisfies a longing for the transcendent, because in so far as people think they can see the "limits of human understanding", they believe of course that they can see beyond these.

I read: "... philosophers are no nearer to the meaning of 'Reality' than Plato got. . . .". What a strange situation. How extraordinary that Plato could have got even as far as he did! Or that we could not get any further! Was it because Plato was so *extremely* clever?

Kleist wrote somewhere² that what the poet would most of all like to be able to do would be to convey thoughts by themselves without words. (What a strange admission.)

It is often said that a new religion brands the gods of the old one as devils. But in reality they have probably already become devils by that time.

The works of great masters are suns which rise and set around us. The time will come for every great work that is now in the descendent to rise again.

¹ I am grateful for this rendering to Mr. S. Ellis of the Institute of Dialect and Folk Life Studies at the University of Leeds. (Tr.)

² Heinrich von Kleist: "Letter from One Poet to Another", 5th January, 1811.

When it is at its best Mendelssohn's music consists of musical arabesques. That is why we are disconcerted when his work is lacking in rigour.

In western civilization the Jew is always measured on scales which do not fit him. Many people can see clearly enough that the Greek thinkers were neither philosophers in the western sense nor scientists in the western sense, that the participants in the Olympian Games were not sportsmen and do not fit in to any western occupation. But it is the same with the Jews. And by taking the words of our <language>¹ as the only possible standards we constantly fail to do them justice. So at one time they are overestimated, at another underestimated. Spengler is right in this connection not to classify Weininger with the philosophers [thinkers] of the West.

Nothing we do can be defended absolutely and finally. But only by reference to something else that is not questioned. I.e. no reason can be given why you should act (or should have acted) *like this*, except that by doing so you bring about such and such a situation, which again has to be an aim you *accept*.

Perhaps what is inexpressible (what I find mysterious and am not able to express) is the background against which whatever I could express has its meaning.

Working in philosophy – like work in architecture in many respects – is really more a working on oneself. On one's own interpretation. On one's way of seeing things. (And what one expects of them.)

A philosopher easily gets into the position of an incompetent manager who, instead of getting on with his *own* work and just keeping an eye on his employees to make sure they do theirs properly, takes over their work until one day he finds himself overloaded with other people's work, while his employees look on and criticize him.

The idea is worn out by now and no longer usable. (I once heard Labor make a similar remark about musical ideas.) Like silver paper, which can never quite be smoothed out again once it has been crumpled. Nearly all my ideas are a bit crumpled.

¹ Editor's conjecture.

I really do think with my pen, because my head often knows nothing about what my hand is writing.

Philosophers often behave like little children who scribble some marks on a piece of paper at random and then ask the grown-up "What's that?" – It happened like this: the grown-up had drawn pictures for the child several times and said: "this is a man", "this is a house", etc. And then the child makes some marks too and asks: what's *this* then?

Ramsey was a bourgeois thinker. I.e. he thought with the aim of clearing up the affairs of some particular community. He did not reflect on the essence of the state – or at least he did not like doing so – but on how *this* state might reasonably be organized. The idea that this state might not be the only possible one in part disquieted him and in part bored him. He wanted to get down as quickly as possible to reflecting on the foundations – of *this* state. This was what he was good at and what really interested him; whereas real philosophical reflection disturbed him until he put its result (if it had one) to one side and declared it trivial.

A curious analogy could be based on the fact that even the hugest telescope has to have¹ an eye-piece no larger than the human eye.

Tolstoy: a thing's significance (importance) lies in its being something everyone can understand. – That is both true and false. What makes a subject hard to understand – if it's something significant and important – is not that before you can understand it you need to be specially trained in abstruse matters, but the contrast between understanding the subject and what most people *want* to see. Because of this the very things which are most obvious may become the hardest of all to understand. What has to be overcome is a difficulty having to do with the will, rather than with the intellect.

A present-day teacher of philosophy doesn't select food for his pupil with the aim of flattering his taste, but with the aim of changing it.

¹ Variant reading in MS for "has to have": "has".

I ought to be no more than a mirror, in which my reader can see his own thinking with all its deformities so that, helped in this way, he can put it right.

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 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.

What Eddington says about 'the direction of time' and the law of entropy comes to this: time would change its direction if men should start walking backwards one day. Of course you can call it that if you like; but then you should be clear in your mind that you have said no more than that people have changed the direction they walk in.

Someone divides mankind into buyers and sellers and forgets that buyers are sellers too. If I remind him of this is his grammar changed??

What a Copernicus or a Darwin really achieved was not the discovery of a true theory but of a fertile new point of view.

What Goethe was really seeking, I believe, was not a physiological, but a psychological theory of colours.

A confession has to be a part of your new life.

I never more than half succeed in expressing what I want to express. Actually not as much as that, but by no more than a tenth. That is still worth something. Often my writing is nothing but "stuttering".

Amongst Jews "genius" is found only in the holy man. Even the greatest of Jewish thinkers is no more than talented. (Myself for instance.)

I think there is some truth in my idea that I really only think reproductively.

I don't believe I have ever *invented* a line of thinking, I have always taken one over from someone else. I have simply straightaway seized on it with enthusiasm for my work of clarification. That is how Boltzmann, Hertz, Schopenhauer, Frege, Russell, Kraus, Loos, Weininger, Spengler, Sraffa have influenced me. Can one take the case of Breuer and Freud as an example of Jewish reproductiveness? – What I invent are new *similes*.

At the time I modelled the head for Drobil too the stimulus was essentially a work of Drobil's and my contribution once again was really clarification. What I do think essential is carrying out the work of clarification with COURAGE: otherwise it becomes just a clever game.

The Jew must see to it that, in a literal sense, "all things are as nothing to him".¹ But this is particularly hard for him, since in a sense he has nothing that is peculiarly his. It is much harder to accept poverty willingly when you *have* to be poor than when you might also be rich.

It might be said (rightly or wrongly) that the Jewish mind does not have the power to produce even the tiniest flower or blade of grass; its way is rather to make a drawing of the flower or blade of grass that has grown in the soil of another's mind and to put it into a comprehensive picture. We aren't pointing to a fault when we say this and everything is all right as long as what is being done is quite clear. It is only when the nature of a Jewish work is confused with that of a non-Jewish work that there is any danger, especially when the author of the Jewish work falls into the confusion himself, as he so easily may. (Doesn't he look as proud as though he had produced the milk himself?)²

It is typical for a Jewish mind to understand someone else's work better than he understands it himself.

Often, when I have had a picture well framed or have hung it in the right surroundings, I have caught myself feeling as proud as if I had painted the picture myself. That is not quite right: not "as proud as if I had painted it", but as proud as if I had helped to paint it, as if I had, so to speak, painted a little bit of it. It is as though an exceptionally gifted arranger of grasses should eventually come to think that he had produced at least a tiny blade of grass himself. Whereas it ought to be clear to him that his work lies in a different

¹ The line in quotation marks is adapted from the first line of Goethe's poem, "Vanitas! Vanitatum vanitas", which in its turn is the title of the first chapter of Max Stirner's *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum*. Wittgenstein is probably alluding more directly here to Stirner than to Goethe, the sense of whose poem hardly fits the present context. I am indebted to Rush Rhees for drawing my attention to these allusions. (Tr.)

² The sentence in brackets is from Wilhelm Busch's prose poem "Edward's Dream".

The editor is indebted to Mr. Robert Löffler for this information.

region altogether. The process through which even the tiniest and meanest blade of grass comes into being is something he has nothing to do with and knows nothing about.

A picture of a complete apple tree, however accurate, is in a certain sense much less like the tree itself than is a little daisy. And in the same sense a symphony by Bruckner is infinitely closer to a symphony from the heroic period than is one by Mahler. If the latter is a work of art it is one of a *totally* different sort. (But this is actually itself a Spenglerian observation.)

Incidentally, when I was in Norway during the year 1913–14 I had some thoughts of my own, or so at least it seems to me now. I mean I have the impression that at that time I brought to life new movements in thinking (but perhaps I am mistaken). Whereas now I seem just to apply old ones.

Rousseau's character has something Jewish about it.

It is sometimes said that a man's philosophy is a matter of temperament, and there is something in this. A preference for certain similes could be called a matter of temperament and it underlies far more disagreements than you might think.

"Look on this tumour as a perfectly normal part of your body!" Can one do that, to order? Do I have the power to decide at will to have, or not to have, an ideal conception of my body?

Within the history of the peoples of Europe the history of the Jews is not treated as circumstantially as their intervention in European affairs would actually merit, because within this history they are experienced as a sort of disease, and anomaly, and no one wants to put a disease on the same level as normal life [and no one wants to speak of a disease as if it had the same rights as healthy bodily processes (even painful ones)].

We may say: people can only regard this tumour as a natural part of the body if their whole feeling for the body changes (if the whole national feeling for the body changes). Otherwise the best they can do is *put up with* it.

You can expect an individual man to display this sort of tolerance, or else to disregard such things; but you cannot expect this of a nation, because it is precisely not disregarding such things that makes it a nation. I.e. there is a

contradiction in expecting someone *both* to retain his former aesthetic feeling for the body and *also* to make the tumour welcome.

Power and possession aren't the *same* thing. Even though possessions also bring us power. If Jews are said not to have any sense of property, that may be compatible with their liking to be rich since for them money is a particular sort of power, not property. (For instance I should not like my people to become poor, since I wish them to have a certain amount of power. Naturally I wish them to use this power properly too.)

There is definitely a certain sort of kinship between Brahms and Mendelssohn; but I do not mean that shown by the individual passages in Brahms's works which are reminiscent of passages by Mendelssohn, — the kinship I am speaking of could be better expressed by saying that Brahms does with complete rigour what Mendelssohn did only half-rigorously. Or: often Brahms is Mendelssohn without the flaws.



That must be the end of a theme which I cannot place. It came into my head today as I was thinking about my philosophical work and saying to myself: "I destroy, I destroy, I destroy —".

* The time signature is not in the MS. The editor is very grateful to Mr. Fabian Dahlström for professional help in interpreting the written music, which was very hard to read.

It has sometimes been said that the Jews' secretive and cunning nature is a result of their long persecution. That is certainly untrue; on the other hand it is certain that they continue to exist despite this persecution only because they have an inclination towards such secretiveness. As we may say that this or that animal has escaped extinction only because of its capacity or ability to conceal itself. Of course I do not mean that as a reason for commending such a capacity, not by any means.

In Bruckner's music nothing is left of the long, slender (nordic?) face of Nestroy, Grillparzer, Haydn, etc.; instead its face is completely round and full (alpine?), even purer than Schubert's.

The power language has to make everything look the same, which is most glaringly evident in the *dictionary* and which makes the personification of *time* possible: something no less remarkable than would have been making divinities of the logical constants.

A beautiful garment that is transformed (coagulates, as it were) into worms and serpents if its wearer looks smugly at himself in the mirror.

The delight I take in my thoughts is delight in my own strange life. Is this joy of living?

1932

Philosophers who say: "after death a timeless state will begin", or: "at death a timeless state begins", and do not notice that they have used the words "after" and "at" and "begins" in a temporal sense, and that temporality is embedded in their grammar.

Circa 1932–1934

Remember the impression one gets from good architecture, that it expresses a thought. It makes one want to respond with a gesture.

Don't play with what lies deep in another person!

The face is the soul of the body.

It is as impossible to view one's own character from outside as it is *one's own handwriting*. I have a one-sided relation to my handwriting which prevents me from seeing it on the same footing as others' writing and comparing it with theirs.

In art it is hard to say anything as good as: saying nothing.

My thinking, like everyone's, has sticking to it the shrivelled remains of my earlier (withered) ideas.

The *strength of the thoughts* in Brahms's music.

The human character of various plants: rose, ivy, grass, oak, appletree, corn, palm. Compared with the different characters words have.

If one wanted to characterize the essence of Mendelssohn's music, one could do it by saying that perhaps Mendelssohn wrote no music that is hard to understand.

Every artist has been influenced by others and shows traces of that influence in his works; but his significance for us is nothing but *his* personality. What he inherits from others can be nothing but egg-shells. We should treat their presence with indulgence, but they won't provide us with spiritual nourishment.

It sometimes seems to me as though I were already philosophizing with toothless gums and as though I took speaking without teeth for the right way, the more worthwhile way. I can detect something similar in Kraus. Instead of my recognizing that it's a deterioration.

1933

If someone says, let's suppose, "A's eyes have a more beautiful expression than B's", then I should say that he is certainly not using the word "beautiful" to mean what is common to everything we call beautiful. On the contrary, he is playing a game with the word that has quite narrow bounds. But what shows this? Did I have in mind some particular, restricted explanation of the word "beautiful"? Certainly not. — But perhaps I shall not even feel like comparing the beauty of expression in a pair of eyes with the beauty in the shape of a nose.

So perhaps we might say: if there were a language with two words so that there were no reference to anything common to such cases, I should have no trouble about using one of these two special words for my case and my meaning would not be impoverished.

If I say A has beautiful eyes someone may ask me: what do you find beautiful about his eyes, and perhaps I shall reply: the almond shape, long eye-lashes, delicate lids. What do these eyes have in common with a gothic church that I find beautiful too? Should I say they make a similar impression on me? What if I were to say that in both cases my hand feels tempted to draw them? That at any rate would be a *narrow definition* of the beautiful.

It will often be possible to say: seek your reasons for calling something good or beautiful and then the peculiar grammar of the word 'good' in this instance will be evident.

1933–1934

I think I summed up my attitude to philosophy when I said: philosophy ought really to be written only as a *poetic composition*. It must, as it seems to me, be possible to gather from this how far my thinking belongs to the present, future or past. For I was thereby revealing myself as someone who cannot quite do what he would like to be able to do.

If you use a trick in logic, whom can you be tricking other than yourself?

Composers' names. Sometimes we treat the method of projection as given. When we ask for instance: What name would fit this man's character? But sometimes we project the character into the name and treat this as given. In

that case we get the impression that the great masters we know so well have just the names which suit their work,

1934

When someone prophesies that the next generation will take up these problems and solve them, that is usually a sort of wishful thinking, a way of excusing himself for what he should have accomplished and hasn't. A father would like his son to succeed where he has not succeeded, so that the problem he has left unsolved shall find its solution after all. But his son will face a *new* problem. What I mean is: a wish for the task not to remain uncompleted wears the disguise of a prediction that the next generation will make progress with it.

Brahms's overwhelming *ability*.

If someone in a hurry is sitting in a car he will push involuntarily, however much he may tell himself that he is not pushing the car at all.

In my artistic activities I really have nothing but *good manners*.

1936

The queer resemblance between a philosophical investigation (perhaps especially in mathematics) and an aesthetic one. (E.g. what is bad about this garment, how it should be, etc.)

1934 or 1937

In the days of silent films all kinds of classical works were played as accompaniments, but not Brahms or Wagner.

Not Brahms, because he is too abstract. I can imagine an exciting scene in a film accompanied by Beethoven's or Schubert's music and might gain some sort of understanding of the music from the film. But this would not help me to understand Brahms's music. Bruckner on the other hand would go with a film.

1937

If you offer a sacrifice and are pleased with yourself about it, both you and your sacrifice will be cursed.

The *edifice of your pride* has to be dismantled. And that is terribly hard work.

The horrors of hell can be experienced within a single day; that's plenty of time.

A script you can read fluently works on you very differently from one that you can write, but not decipher *easily*. You lock your thoughts up in this as though in a casket.

The greater 'purity' of objects which don't affect the senses, numbers for instance.

The light work sheds is a beautiful light, which, however, only shines with real beauty if it is illuminated by yet another light.

"Yes, that's how it is," you say, "because that's how it *must* be!" (Schopenhauer: man's real life span is 100 years.)

"Of course, that's how it must be!" It is just as though you have understood a creator's *purpose*. You have grasped the *system*.

You do not ask 'But how long do men actually live?' which strikes you now as a superficial matter; whereas you have understood something more profound.

The¹ only way for us to guard our assertions against distortion – or avoid vacuity in our assertions, is to have a clear view in our reflections of what the ideal is, namely an object of comparison – a yardstick, as it were – instead of making a prejudice of it to which everything *has to* conform. For this is what produces the dogmatism into which philosophy so easily degenerates.

¹ Cf. *Philosophical Investigations*, I, § 131.

But then how is a view like Spengler's related to mine? Distortion in Spengler: The ideal doesn't lose any of its dignity if it's presented as the principle determining the form of one's reflections. A sound measure. —

Macaulay's essays contain many excellent things; but his *value judgements* about people are tiresome and superfluous. One feels like saying to him: stop gesticulating! and just say what you have to say.

Earlier physicists are said to have found suddenly that they had too little mathematical understanding to cope with physics; and in almost the same way young people today can be said to be in a situation where ordinary common sense no longer suffices to meet the strange demands life makes. Everything has become so intricate that mastering it would require an exceptional intellect. Because skill at playing the game is no longer enough; the question that keeps coming up is: can this game be played at all now and what would be the right game to play?

The way to solve the problem you see in life is to live in a way that will make what is problematic disappear.

The fact that life is problematic shows that the shape of your life does not fit into life's mould. So you must change the way you live and, once your life does fit into the mould, what is problematic will disappear.

But don't we have the feeling that someone who sees no problem in life is blind to something important, even to the most important thing of all? Don't I feel like saying that a man like that is just living aimlessly — blindly, like a mole, and that if only he could see, he would see the problem?

Or shouldn't I say rather: a man who lives rightly won't experience the problem as *sorrow*, so for him it will not be a problem, but a joy rather; in other words for him it will be a bright halo round his life, not a dubious background.

Ideas too sometimes fall from the tree before they are ripe.

I find it important in philosophizing to keep changing my posture, not to stand for too long on *one* leg, so as not to get stiff.

Like someone on a long up-hill climb who walks backwards for a while so as to revive himself and stretch some different muscles.

Christianity is not a doctrine, not, I mean, a theory about what has happened and will happen to the human soul, but a description of something that actually takes place in human life. For 'consciousness of sin' is a real event and so are despair and salvation through faith. Those who speak of such things (Bunyan for instance) are simply describing what has happened to them, whatever gloss anyone may want to put on it.

When I imagine a piece of music, as I do often every day, I always, so I believe, grind my upper and lower teeth together rhythmically. I have noticed this before though I usually do it quite unconsciously. What's more, it's as though the notes I am imagining are produced by this movement. I believe this may be a very common way of imagining music internally. Of course I can imagine music without moving my teeth too, but in that case the notes are much ghostlier, more blurred and less pronounced.

Thinking too has a time for ploughing and a time for gathering the harvest.

The effect of making men think in accordance with dogmas, perhaps in the form of certain graphic propositions, will be very peculiar: I am not thinking of these dogmas as determining men's opinions but rather as completely controlling the *expression* of all opinions. People will live under an absolute, palpable tyranny, though without being able to say they are not free. I think the Catholic Church does something rather like this. For dogma is expressed in the form of an assertion, and is unshakable, but at the same time any practical opinion *can* be made to harmonize with it; admittedly more easily in some cases than in others. It is not a *wall* setting limits to what can be believed, but more like a *brake* which, however, practically serves the same purpose; it's almost as though someone were to attach a weight to your foot to restrict your freedom of movement. This is how dogma becomes irrefutable and beyond the reach of attack.

If I am thinking about a topic just for myself and not with a view to writing a book, I jump about all round it; that is the only way of thinking that comes naturally to me. Forcing my thoughts into an ordered sequence is a torment for me. Is it even worth attempting now?

I *squander* an unspeakable amount of effort making an arrangement of my thoughts which may have no value at all.

People sometimes say they cannot make any judgement about this or that because they have not studied philosophy. This is irritating nonsense, because the pretence is that philosophy is some sort of science. People speak of it almost as they might speak of medicine. – On the other hand we may say that people who have never carried out an investigation of a philosophical kind, like, for instance, most mathematicians, are not equipped with the right visual organs for this type of investigation or scrutiny. Almost in the way a man who is not used to searching in the forest for flowers, berries, or plants will not find any because his eyes are not trained to see them and he does not know where you have to be particularly on the lookout for them. Similarly, someone unpractised in philosophy passes by all the spots where difficulties are hidden in the grass, whereas someone who has had practice will pause and sense that there is a difficulty close by even though he cannot see it yet. – And this is no wonder for someone who knows how long even the man with practice, who realizes there is a difficulty, will have to search before he finds it.

When something is well hidden it is hard to find.

Religious similes can be said to move on the edge of an abyss. B<unyan>'s for example. For what if we simply add: "and all these traps, quicksands, wrong turnings, were planned by the Lord of the Road and the monsters, thieves and robbers were created by him"? Certainly, that is not the sense of the simile! But such a continuation is all too obvious! For many people, including me, this robs the simile of its power.

But more especially if this is – as it were – suppressed. It would be different if at every turn it were said quite honestly: 'I am using this as a simile, but look: it doesn't fit here.' Then you wouldn't feel you were being cheated, that someone was trying to convince you by trickery. Someone can be told for instance: "Thank God for the good you receive but don't complain about the evil: as you would of course do if a human being were to do you good and evil by turns." Rules of life are dressed up in pictures. And these pictures can only serve to *describe* what we are to do, not *justify* it. Because they could provide a justification only if they held good in other respects as well. I can say: "Thank these bees for their honey as though they were kind people who have prepared it for you"; that is *intelligible* and describes how I should like you to conduct yourself. But I cannot say: "Thank them because, look, how kind they are!" – since the next moment they may sting you.

Religion says: *Do this! – Think like that!* – but it cannot justify this and once it even tries to, it becomes repellent; because for every reason it offers there is a valid counter-reason. It is more convincing to say: "Think like this! however strangely it may strike you." Or: "Won't you do this? – however repugnant you find it."

Predestination: It is only permissible to write like this out of the most dreadful suffering – and then it means something quite different. But for the same reason it is not permissible for someone to assert it as a truth, unless he himself says it in torment. – It simply isn't a theory. – Or, to put it another way: If this is truth, it is not the truth that seems at first sight to be expressed by these words. It's less a theory than a sigh, or a cry.

In the course of our conversations Russell would often exclaim: "Logic's hell!" – And this *perfectly* expresses the feeling we had when we were thinking about the problems of logic; that is to say, their immense difficulty, their hard and *slippery* texture.

I believe our main reason for feeling like this was the following fact: that every time some new linguistic phenomenon occurred to us, it could retrospectively show that our previous explanation was unworkable. (We felt that language could always make new, and impossible, demands; and that this made all explanation futile.)

But that is the difficulty Socrates gets into in trying to give the definition of a concept. Again and again a use of the word emerges that seems not to be compatible with the concept that other uses have led us to form. We say: but that *isn't* how it is! – it *is* like that though! and all we can do is keep repeating these antitheses.

The spring which flows gently and limpidly in the Gospels seems to have *froth* on it in Paul's Epistles. Or that is how it seems *to me*. Perhaps it is just my own impurity which reads turbidness into it; for why shouldn't this impurity be able to pollute what is limpid? But to me it's as though I saw human passion here, something like pride or anger, which is not in tune with the humility of the *Gospels*. It's as though he *is* insisting here on his own person, *and doing so moreover as a religious gesture*, something which is foreign to the Gospel. I want to ask – and may this be no blasphemy –: "What might Christ have said to Paul?" But a fair rejoinder to that would be: What business is that of yours? Attend to making *yourself* more honourable! In your present state you are quite incapable of understanding what may be the truth here.

In the Gospels – as it seems to me – everything is *less pretentious*, humbler, simpler. There you find huts; in Paul a church. There all men are equal and God himself is a man; in Paul there is already something like a hierarchy; honours and official positions. – That, as it were, is what my NOSE tells me.

Let us be human. –

<I> just took some apples out of a paper bag where they had been lying for a long time. I had to cut half off many of them and throw it away. Afterwards when I was copying out a sentence I had written, the second half of which was bad, I at once saw it as a half-rotten apple. And that's how it always is with me. Everything that comes my way becomes a picture for me of what I am thinking about at the time. (Is there something feminine about this way of thinking?)

In doing this work I find myself in a position like that of a man who is unsuccessfully struggling to recall a name; in such a case we say: "think of something else, then it will come to you" – and similarly I had constantly to think of something else so as to allow what I had been searching for for a long time to occur to me.

The origin and the primitive form of the language game is a reaction; only from this can more complicated forms develop.

Language – I want to say – is a refinement, 'in the beginning was the deed'.¹

Kierkegaard writes: If Christianity were so easy and cosy, why should God in his Scriptures have set Heaven and Earth in motion and threatened *eternal* punishments? – Question: But in that case why is this Scripture so unclear? If we want to warn someone of a terrible danger, do we go about it by telling him a riddle whose solution will be the warning? – But who is to say that the Scripture really is unclear? Isn't it possible that it was essential in this case to 'tell a riddle'? And that, on the other hand, giving a more direct warning would necessarily have had the *wrong* effect? God has *four* people recount the life of his incarnate Son, in each case differently and with inconsistencies – but might we not say: It is important that this narrative should not be more than quite averagely historically plausible *just so that* this should not be taken as the essential, decisive thing? So that the *letter* should not be believed more strongly than is proper and the *spirit* may receive its due. I.e. what you are supposed to see cannot be communicated even by the best and most accurate historian; and *therefore* a mediocre account suffices, is even to be preferred. For that too can tell you what you are supposed to be told. (Roughly in the way a mediocre stage set can be better than a sophisticated one, painted trees better than real ones, – because these might distract attention from what matters.)

¹ Goethe, *Faust*, Part I (In the Study).

The Spirit puts what is essential, essential for your life, into these words. The point is precisely that you are only SUPPOSED to see clearly what appears clearly even in *this* representation. (I am not sure how far all this is exactly in the spirit of Kierkegaard.)

In religion every level of devoutness must have its appropriate form of expression which has no sense at a lower level. This doctrine, which means something at a higher level, is null and void for someone who is still at the lower level; he *can* only understand it *wrongly* and so these words are *not* valid for such a person.

For instance, at my level the Pauline doctrine of predestination is ugly nonsense, irreligiousness. Hence it is not suitable for me, since the only use I could make of the picture I am offered would be a wrong one. If it is a good and godly picture, then it is so for someone at a quite different level, who must use it in his life in a way completely different from anything that would be possible for me.

Christianity is not based on a historical truth; rather, it offers us a (historical) narrative and says: now believe! But not, believe this narrative with the belief appropriate to a historical narrative, rather: believe, through thick and thin, which you can do only as the result of a life. *Here you have a narrative, don't take the same attitude to it as you take to other historical narratives! Make a quite different place in your life for it.* – There is nothing *paradoxical* about that!

Nobody can truthfully say of himself that he is filth. Because if I do say it, though it can be true in a sense, this is not a truth by which I myself can be penetrated: otherwise I should either have to go mad or change myself.

Queer as it sounds: The historical accounts in the Gospels might, historically speaking, be demonstrably false and yet belief would lose nothing by this: *not*, however, because it concerns 'universal truths of reason'! Rather, because historical proof (the historical proof-game) is irrelevant to belief. This message (the Gospels) is seized on by men believingly (i.e. lovingly). *That* is the certainty characterizing this particular acceptance-as-true, not something *else*.

A believer's relation to these narratives is *neither* the relation to historical truth (probability), *nor yet* that to a theory consisting of 'truths of reason'. There is such a thing. – (We have quite different attitudes even to different species of what we call fiction!)

I read: "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."¹ – And it is true: I cannot call him *Lord*; because that says nothing to me. I could call him 'the paragon', 'God' even – or rather, I can understand it when he is called thus; but I cannot utter the word "Lord" with meaning. *Because I do not believe* that he will come to judge me; because *that* says nothing to me. And it could say something to me, only if I lived *completely* differently.

What inclines even me to believe in Christ's Resurrection? It is as though I play with the thought. – If he did not rise from the dead, then he decomposed in the grave like any other man. *He is dead and decomposed*. In that case he is a teacher like any other and can no longer *help*; and once more we are orphaned and alone. So we have to content ourselves with wisdom and speculation. We are in a sort of hell where we can do nothing but dream, roofed in, as it were, and cut off from heaven. But if I am to be *REALLY* saved, – what I need is *certainty* – not wisdom, dreams or speculation – and this certainty is faith. And faith is faith in what is needed by my *heart*, my *soul*, not my speculative intelligence. For it is my soul with its passions, as it were with its flesh and blood, that has to be saved, not my abstract mind. Perhaps we can say: Only *love* can believe the Resurrection. Or: It is *love* that believes the Resurrection. We might say: Redeeming love believes even in the Resurrection; holds fast even to the Resurrection. What combats doubt is, as it were, *redemption*. Holding fast to *this* must be holding fast to that belief. So what that means is: first you must be redeemed and hold on to your redemption (keep hold of your redemption) – then you will see that you are holding fast to this belief. So this can come about only if you no longer rest your weight on the earth but suspend yourself from heaven. Then *everything* will be different and it will be 'no wonder' if you can do things that you cannot do now. (A man who is suspended looks the same as one who is standing, but the interplay of forces within him is nevertheless quite different, so that he can act quite differently than can a standing man.)

You cannot write anything about yourself that is more truthful than you yourself are. That is the difference between writing about yourself and writing about external objects. You write about yourself from your own height. You don't stand on stilts or on a ladder but on your bare feet.

Freud's idea: In madness the lock is not destroyed, only altered; the old key can no longer unlock it, but it could be opened by a differently constructed key.

¹ I Corinthians, 12. (Tr.)

A Bruckner symphony can be said to have *two* beginnings: it begins once with the first idea and then again with the second idea. These two ideas stand to each other not as blood relations, but as man and wife.

Bruckner's Ninth is a sort of *protest* against Beethoven's and this makes it bearable in a way it would not be if it were a sort of imitation. It is related to Beethoven's Ninth very much as Lenau's Faust is to Goethe's, that is to say as the Catholic to the Enlightenment Faust, etc. etc.

Nothing is so difficult as not deceiving oneself.

Longfellow:

In the elder days of art,
Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part,
For the gods are everywhere.

(This could serve me as a motto.)

Phenomena akin to language in music or architecture. Significant irregularity – in Gothic for instance (I am thinking too of the towers of St. Basil's Cathedral). Bach's music is more like language than Mozart's or Haydn's. The recitatives on the double basses in the fourth movement of Beethoven's ninth symphony. (Compare too Schopenhauer's remark about universal music composed to a *particular* text.)¹

In philosophy the winner of the race is the one who can run most slowly. Or: the one who gets there last.

1939

In a way having oneself psychoanalysed is like eating from the tree of knowledge. The knowledge acquired sets us (new) ethical problems; but contributes nothing to their solution.

¹ Schopenhauer: The Metaphysics of Music, *The World as Will and as Idea*, Chapter 39.

1939–1940

What does Mendelssohn's music lack? A 'courageous' melody?

The Old Testament seen as the body without its head; the New Testament: the head; the Epistles of the Apostles: the crown on the head.

When I think of the Jewish Bible, the Old Testament on its own, I feel like saying: the head is (still) missing from this body. These problems have not been solved. These hopes have not been fulfilled. But I do not necessarily have to think of a head as having a *crown*.

Envy is a superficial thing – i.e.: the colour characteristic of envy does not go down deep – further down passion has a different colour. (*That*, of course, does not make envy any the less real.)

The measure of genius is character, – even though character on its own does not amount to genius. Genius is not 'talent *plus* character', but character manifesting itself in the form of a special talent. Just as one man will show courage by jumping into the water after someone, so another will show courage by writing a symphony. (This is a weak example.)

There is no more light in a genius than in any other honest man – but he has a particular kind of lens to concentrate this light into a burning point.

Why is the soul moved by idle thoughts? – After all they are idle. Well, it is moved by them.

(How can the wind move the tree when it's nothing but air? Well, it *does* move it; and don't forget it.)

No one *can* speak the truth; if he has still not mastered himself. He *cannot* speak it; – but not because he is not clever enough yet.

The truth can be spoken only by someone who is already *at home* in it; not by someone who still lives in falsehood and reaches out from falsehood towards truth on just one occasion.

Resting on your laurels is as dangerous as resting when you are walking in the snow. You doze off and die in your sleep.

An example that shows how monstrously vain wishes are is the wish I have to fill a nice notebook with writing as quickly as possible. I get *nothing* at all from this; I don't wish it because, say, it will be evidence of my productivity; it is no more than a *craving* to rid myself of something familiar as soon as I can; although as soon as I have got rid of it I shall have to start a fresh one and the whole business will have to be repeated.

Schopenhauer is quite a *crude* mind, one might say. I.e. though he has refinement, this suddenly becomes exhausted at a certain level and then he is as crude as the crudest. Where real depth starts, his comes to an end.

One could say of Schopenhauer: he never searches his conscience.

I sit astride life like a bad rider on a horse. I only owe it to the horse's good nature that I am not thrown off at this very moment.

If art serves 'to arouse feelings' is, perhaps, perceiving it with the senses to be included amongst these feelings?

I believe that my originality (if that is the right word) is an originality belonging to the soil rather than to the seed. (Perhaps I have no seed of my own.) Sow a seed in my soil and it will grow differently than it would in any other soil.

Freud's originality too was like this, I think. I have always believed – without knowing why – that the real germ of psycho-analysis came from Breuer, not Freud. Of course Breuer's seed-grain can only have been quite tiny. *Courage* is always original.

People nowadays think that scientists exist to instruct them, poets, musicians, etc. to give them pleasure. The idea *that these have something to teach them* – that does not occur to them.

Piano playing, a dance of human fingers.

Shakespeare displays the dance of human passions, one might say. Hence he has to be objective; otherwise he would not so much display the dance of

human passions – as talk about it. But he displays it to us in a dance, not naturalistically. (I got this idea from Paul Engelmann.)

Even a work of supreme art has something that can be called 'style', something too that can even be called 'mannerism'. *They*¹ have less style than the first speech of a child.

1940

The insidious thing about the causal point of view is that it leads us to say: "Of course, it had to happen like that." Whereas we ought to think: it may have happened *like that* – and also in many other ways.

If we look at things from an ethnological point of view, does that mean we are saying that philosophy is ethnology? No, it only means that we are taking up a position right outside so as to be able to see things *more objectively*.

What I am opposed to is the concept of some ideal exactitude given us *a priori*, as it were. At different times we have different ideals of exactitude; and none of them is supreme.

One of the most important methods I use is to imagine a historical development for our ideas different from what actually occurred. If we do this we see the problem from a completely new angle.

Often it is only very slightly more disagreeable to tell the truth than to lie; about as difficult as drinking bitter rather than sweet coffee; and yet I still have a strong inclination to lie.

Within all great art there is a WILD animal: *tamed*. Not with Mendelssohn, for example. All great art has man's primitive drives as its groundbass. They are

¹ The manuscript gives no clue to the reference here. Rush Rhees plausibly suggests that Wittgenstein was thinking of Mannerist artists. The imitative character of Mannerism fits the comparison with a child's first attempt at speech. (Tr.)

not the *melody* (as they are with Wagner, perhaps) but they are what gives the melody its *depth* and power.

In *this* sense Mendelssohn can be called a 'reproductive' artist. —

In the same sense: the house I built for Gretl¹ is the product of a decidedly sensitive ear and *good* manners, an expression of great *understanding* (of a culture, etc.). But *primordial* life, wild life striving to erupt into the open — that is lacking. And so you could say it isn't *healthy* (Kierkegaard). (Hothouse plant.)

A teacher may get good, even astounding, results from his pupils while he is teaching them and yet not be a good teacher; because it may be that, while his pupils are directly under his influence, he raises them to a height which is not natural to them, without fostering their own capacities for work at this level, so that they immediately decline again as soon as the teacher leaves the classroom. Perhaps this is how it is with me; I have sometimes thought so. (When Mahler himself conducted his students in training sessions² he obtained excellent performances; the orchestra seemed to deteriorate at once when he was not conducting it himself.)

'The aim of music: to communicate feelings.'

Connected with this: We may say correctly "his face has the same expression now as previously" — even though measurement yielded different results on the two occasions.

How do we use the words "the same facial expression"? — How do we know that someone is using these words correctly? But do I know that *I* am using them correctly?

One might say: "Genius is *talent exercised with courage*."

Aim at being loved without being admired.

Not funk but funk conquered is what is worthy of admiration and makes life worth having been lived. Courage, not cleverness; not even inspiration, — this is the grain of mustard that grows into a great tree. To the extent that there is

¹ Wittgenstein's sister, for whom he built the house at 19 Kundmannngasse, Vienna.

² The manuscript is unclear at this point.

courage there is a link with life and death. (I was thinking of Labor's and Mendelssohn's organ music.) But you don't win courage for yourself by recognizing the want of it in someone else.

Sometimes an expression has to be withdrawn from language and sent for cleaning, – then it can be put back into circulation.

How hard I find it to see what is *right in front of my eyes!*

You can't be reluctant to give up your lie, and still tell the truth.

Writing in the right style is setting the carriage straight on the rails.

If this stone won't budge at present and is wedged in, move some of the other stones round it first. –

All we want to do is straighten you up on the track if your coach is crooked on the rails. Driving it afterwards is something we shall leave to you.

Scraping away mortar is much easier than moving a stone. Well, you have to do one before you can do the other.

1941

My style is like bad musical composition.

Don't apologize for anything, don't leave anything out; look and say what it's really like – but you must see something that throws new light on the facts.

Our greatest stupidities may be very wise.

It is incredible how helpful a new drawer can be, suitably located in our filing cabinet.

You must say something new and yet it must all be old.

In fact you must confine yourself to saying old things – and *all the same* it must be something new!

Different interpretations must correspond to different applications.

A poet too has constantly to ask himself: ‘but is what I am writing really true?’ – and this does not necessarily mean: ‘is this how it happens in reality?’.

Yes, you have got to assemble bits of old material. But into a *building*. –

As we get old, problems *slip from our fingers* again, as they used to when we were young. It isn’t just that we can’t crack them, we cannot even keep hold of them.

What a curious attitude scientists have –: “We still don’t know that; but it is knowable and it is only a matter of time before we get to know it!” As if that went without saying. –

I could imagine someone thinking that the names “Fortnum” and “Mason” fitted each other.

Don’t demand too much, and don’t be afraid that what you demand justly will melt into nothing.

People who are constantly asking ‘why’ are like tourists who stand in front of a building reading Baedeker and are so busy reading the history of its construction, etc., that they are prevented from *seeing* the building.

Counterpoint might present an extraordinarily difficult problem for a composer; the problem namely: what attitude should *I*, given *my* propensities, adopt to counterpoint? He may have hit upon a conventionally acceptable attitude and yet still feel that it is not properly *his*. That it is not clear what counterpoint *ought* to mean to him. (I was thinking of Schubert in this connection; of his wanting to take lessons in counterpoint right at the end of his life. I think his aim may have been not so much just learning more counterpoint as determining where he stood in relation to it.)

Wagner's *motifs* might be called musical prose sentences. And just as there is such a thing as 'rhyming prose', so too these *motifs* can be joined together in melodic form, without their constituting *one* melody. Wagnerian drama too is not drama so much as an assemblage of situations strung together as though on a thread which, for its part, is merely *cleverly* spun and not inspired as the motifs and situations are.

Don't take the example of others as your guide, but nature!

Philosophers use a language that is already deformed as though by shoes that are too tight.

The characters in a drama excite our sympathy; they are like people we know, often like people we love or hate: the characters in the second part of 'Faust' don't arouse our sympathy at all! We never feel as though we knew them. They file past us like ideas, not like human beings.

1942

The mathematician (Pascal) who admires the beauty of a theorem in number theory; it's as though he were admiring a beautiful natural phenomenon. It's marvellous, he says, what wonderful properties numbers have. It's as though he were admiring the regularities in a kind of *crystal*.

One might say: what wonderful laws the Creator built into numbers!

You can't *build* clouds. And that's why the future you *dream* of never comes true.

Before aeroplanes existed people dreamed of aeroplanes and of what a world with them would look like. But just as the reality was not at all like what they dreamed, so we have no reason to think that the future will really develop in the way we dream now. For our dreams are covered in tinsel like paper hats and fancy dress costumes.

The popular scientific books by our scientists aren't the outcome of hard work, but are written when they are resting on their laurels.

If you already *have* a person's love no sacrifice can be too much to give for it; but any sacrifice is too great to *buy* it for you.

Virtually in the same way as there is a difference between *deep* and shallow sleep, there are thoughts which occur deep down and thoughts which bustle about on the surface.

You cannot draw the seed up out of the earth. All you can do is give it warmth and moisture and light; then it must grow. (You mustn't even *touch* it unless you use care.)

What is pretty cannot be beautiful. —

A man will be *imprisoned* in a room with a door that's unlocked and opens inwards; as long as it does not occur to him to *pull* rather than push it.

Put a man in the wrong atmosphere and nothing will function as it should. He will seem unhealthy in every part. Put him back into his proper element and everything will blossom and look healthy. But if he is not in his right element, what then? Well, then he just has to make the best of appearing before the world as a cripple.

If white turns into black some people say "Essentially it is still the same". And others, if the colour becomes one degree darker, say "It has changed *completely*".

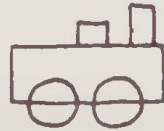
Architecture is a *gesture*. Not every purposive movement of the human body is a gesture. And no more is every building designed for a purpose architecture.

At present we are combating a trend. But this trend will die out, superseded by others, and then the way we are arguing against it will no longer be understood; people will not see why all this needed saying.

Looking for the fallacy in a fishy argument and hunt-the-thimble.

1943

Suppose that 2000 years ago someone had invented the *shape*



and had said that one day it would be the shape of an instrument of locomotion.

Or perhaps: that someone had constructed the complete *mechanism* of a steam engine without having any idea that, or how, it could be used to drive anything.

What you are regarding as a gift is a problem for you to solve.

Genius is what makes us forget the master's talent.

Genius is what makes us forget skill.

Where genius wears thin skill may show through. (Overture to the Mastersingers.)

Genius is what prevents us from seeing the master's talent.

Only where genius wears thin can you see the talent.

1944

Thoughts that are at peace. That's what someone who philosophizes yearns for.

Why shouldn't I apply words in ways that conflict with their original usage? Doesn't Freud, for example, do this when he calls even an anxiety dream a wish-fulfilment dream? Where is the difference? In a scientific perspective a new use is justified by a *theory*. And if this theory is false, the new extended use has to be given up. But in philosophy the extended use does not rest on true or false beliefs about natural processes. No fact justifies it. None can give it any support.

People say to us: "You understand this expression don't you? Well, I too am using it with the meaning you are familiar with." (Not: "... with *that* particular meaning -".) This is to treat meaning as a halo that the word carries round with it and retains in any sort of application.

A philosopher is a man who has to cure many intellectual diseases in himself before he can arrive at the notions of common sense.

If in life we are surrounded by death, so too in the health of our intellect we are surrounded by madness.¹

Wanting to think is one thing; having a talent for thinking another.

If Freud's theory on the interpretation of dreams has anything in it, it shows how *complicated* is the way the human mind represents the facts in pictures

So complicated, so irregular is the way they are represented that we can *barely* call it representation any longer.

1944 or later

My account will be hard to follow: because it says something new but still has egg-shells from the old view sticking to it.

Circa 1941-1944

Is it some frustrated longing that makes a man mad? (I was thinking of Schumann, but of myself too.)

¹ Cf. Editor's note on p. 302 of *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*, Second Edition.

Circa 1944

That man will be revolutionary who can revolutionize himself.

What's ragged should be left ragged.

A miracle is, as it were, a *gesture* which God makes. As a man sits quietly and then makes an impressive gesture, God lets the world run on smoothly and then accompanies the words of a saint by a symbolic occurrence, a gesture of nature. It would be an instance if, when a saint has spoken, the trees around him bowed, as if in reverence. – Now, do I believe that this happens? I don't.

The only way for me to believe in a miracle in this sense would be to be *impressed* by an occurrence in this particular way. So that I should say e.g.: "It was *impossible* to see these trees and not to feel that they were responding to the words." Just as I might say "It is impossible to see the face of this dog and not to see that he is alert and full of attention to what his master is doing". And I can imagine that the mere report of the *words* and life of a saint can make someone believe the reports that the trees bowed. But I am not so impressed.

When I came home I expected a surprise and there was no surprise for me, so, of course, I was surprised.

People are religious to the extent that they believe themselves to be not so much *imperfect*, as *ill*.

Any man who is half-way decent will think himself extremely imperfect, but a religious man thinks himself *wretched*.

Go on, believe! It does no harm.

Believing means submitting to an authority. Having once submitted, you can't then, without rebelling against it, first call it in question and then once again find it acceptable.

No cry of torment can be greater than the cry of one man.

Or again, *no* torment can be greater than what a single human being may suffer.

A man is capable of infinite torment therefore, and so too he can stand in need of infinite help.

The Christian religion is only for the man who needs infinite help, solely, that is, for the man who experiences infinite torment.

The whole planet can suffer no greater torment than a *single* soul.

The Christian faith – as I see it – is a man's refuge in this *ultimate* torment.

Anyone in such torment who has the gift of opening his heart, rather than contracting it, accepts the means of salvation in his heart.

Someone who in this way penitently opens his heart to God in confession lays it open for other men too. In doing this he loses the dignity that goes with his personal prestige and becomes like a child. That means without official position, dignity or disparity from others. A man can bare himself before others only out of a particular kind of love. A love which acknowledges, as it were, that we are all wicked children.

We could also say: Hate between men comes from our cutting ourselves off from each other. Because we don't want anyone else to look inside us, since it's not a pretty sight in there.

Of course, you must continue to feel ashamed of what's inside you, but not ashamed of yourself before your fellow-men.

No greater torment can be experienced than One human being can experience. For if a man feels lost, that is the ultimate torment.

Circa 1945

Words are deeds.¹

Only a very unhappy man has the right to pity someone else.

It isn't sensible to be furious even at Hitler; how much less so at God.

After someone has died we see his life in a conciliatory light. His life appears to us with outlines softened by a haze. There was no softening for *him* though, his life was jagged and incomplete. For him there was no reconciliation; his life is naked and wretched.

It is as though I had lost my way and asked someone the way home. He says he will show me and walks with me along a nice smooth path. This suddenly

¹ Cf. *Philosophical Investigations*, I, § 546.

stops. And now my friend tells me: "All you have to do now is find your way home from here."

1946

Are *all* men great? No. – Well then, how can you have any hope of being a great man! Why should something be bestowed on you that's not bestowed on your neighbour? To what purpose?! If it isn't your *wish* to be rich that makes you think yourself rich, it must be something you observe or experience that reveals it to you! And what do you experience (other than vanity)? Simply that you have a certain *talent*. And my conceit of being an extraordinary person has been with me *much* longer than my awareness of my particular talent.

Schubert is irreligious and melancholy.

Schubert's tunes can be said to be full of *climaxes*, and this can't be said of Mozart's; Schubert is baroque. You can point to particular places in a tune by Schubert and say: look, that is the point of this tune, this is where the thought comes to a head.

We can apply to the tunes by the various composers the principle: each species of tree is a 'tree' in a different *sense* of the word. That is, don't be misled by the fact that we say all these are tunes. They are stages along a path which leads from something you would not call a tune to something else that you would equally not call a tune. If you just look at the sequences of notes and changes of key all these entities seem to be on the same level. But if you look at the context in which they exist (and hence at their meaning), you will be inclined to say: In this case melody is something quite different from what it is in that one (amongst other things, here it has a different origin and plays a different role).

The thought working its way towards the light.

Jukundus remarks in *The Lost Laugh*¹ that his religion consists in his knowing – now, when things are going well for him – that his fate could take a turn for the worse. This is really an expression of the same religion as the saying "The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away".

¹ Gottfried Keller: *The Lost Laugh*.

Understanding oneself properly is difficult, because an action to which one *might* be prompted by good, generous motives is something one may also be doing out of cowardice or indifference. Certainly, one may be acting in such and such a way out of genuine love, but equally well out of deceitfulness, or a cold heart. Just as not all gentleness is a form of goodness. And only if I were able to submerge myself in religion could these doubts be stilled. Because only religion would have the power to destroy vanity and penetrate all the nooks and crannies.

If you are reading something aloud and want to read *well*, you accompany the words with vivid images. At least it is *often* like that. But sometimes ["Towards Corinth from Athens . . ."]¹ what matters is the punctuation, i.e. your precise intonation and the duration of your pauses.

It is remarkable how hard we find it to believe something that we do not see the truth of for ourselves. When, for instance, I hear the expression of admiration for Shakespeare by distinguished men in the course of several centuries, I can never rid myself of the suspicion that praising him has been the conventional thing to do; though I have to tell myself that this is not how it is. It takes the authority of a *Milton* really to convince me. I take it for granted that he was incorruptible. — But I don't of course mean by this that I don't believe an enormous amount of praise to have been, and still to be, lavished on Shakespeare without understanding and for the wrong reasons by a thousand professors of literature.

Getting hold of the difficulty *deep down* is what is hard.

Because if it is grasped near the surface it simply remains the difficulty it was. It has to be pulled out by the roots; and that involves our beginning to think about these things in a new way. The change is as decisive as, for example, that from the alchemical to the chemical way of thinking. The new way of thinking is what is so hard to establish.

Once the new way of thinking has been established, the old problems vanish; indeed they become hard to recapture. For they go with our way of expressing ourselves and, if we clothe ourselves in a new form of expression, the old problems are discarded along with the old garment.

The hysterical fear over the atom bomb now being experienced, or at any rate expressed, by the public almost suggests that at last something really salutary

¹ Goethe, *The Bride of Corinth*.

has been invented. The fright at least gives the impression of a really effective bitter medicine. I can't help thinking: if this didn't have something good about it the *philistines* wouldn't be making an outcry. But perhaps this too is a childish idea. Because really all I can mean is that the bomb offers a prospect of the end, the destruction, of an evil, – our disgusting soapy water science. And certainly that's not an unpleasant thought; but who can say what would come *after* this destruction? The people now making speeches against producing the bomb are undoubtedly the *scum* of the intellectuals, but even that does not prove beyond question that what they abominate is to be welcomed.

The human being is the best picture of the human soul.¹

In former times people went into monasteries. Were they stupid or insensitive people? – Well, if people like that found they needed to take such measures in order to be able to go on living, the problem cannot be an easy one!

Shakespeare's similes are, *in the ordinary sense*, bad. So if they are all the same good – and I don't know whether they are or not – they must be a law to themselves. Perhaps, e.g. their ring gives them plausibility and truth.

It may be that the essential thing with Shakespeare is his ease and authority and that you just have to accept him as he is if you are going to be able to admire him properly, in the way you accept nature, a piece of scenery for example, just as it is.

If I am right about this, that would mean that the style of his whole work, I mean of all his works taken together, is the essential thing and what provides his justification.

My *failure* to understand him could then be explained by my inability to read him *easily*. That is, as one views a splendid piece of scenery.

A man can see what he has, but not what he is. What he is can be compared to his height above sea level, which you cannot for the most part judge without more ado. And the greatness, or triviality, of a piece of work depends on where the man who made it was standing.

But you can equally say: a man will never be great if he misjudges himself: if he throws dust in his own eyes.

¹ Cf. *Philosophical Investigations*, II, iv.

How small a thought it takes to fill someone's whole life!

Just as a man can spend his life travelling around the same little country and think there is nothing outside it!

You see everything in a queer perspective (or projection): the country that you keep travelling round strikes you as enormously big; the surrounding countries all look like narrow border regions.

If you want to go down deep you do not need to travel far; indeed, you don't have to leave your most immediate and familiar surroundings.

It is very *remarkable* that we should be inclined to think of civilization – houses, trees, cars, etc. – as separating man from his origins, from what is lofty and eternal, etc. Our civilized environment, along with its trees and plants, strikes us then as though it were cheaply wrapped in cellophane and isolated from everything great, from God, as it were. That is a remarkable picture that intrudes on us.

My 'achievement' is very much like that of a mathematician who invents a calculus.

If people did not sometimes do silly things, nothing intelligent would ever get done.

The purely corporeal can be uncanny. Compare the way angels and devils are portrayed. So-called "miracles" must be connected with this. A miracle must be, as it were, a *sacred gesture*.

The way you use the word "God" does not show *whom* you mean – but, rather, what you mean.

In a bullfight the bull is the hero of a tragedy. Driven mad first by suffering, he then dies a slow and terrible death.

A hero looks death in the face, real death, not just the image of death. Behaving honourably in a crisis doesn't mean being able to act the part of a hero well, as in the theatre, it means rather being able to look death *itself* in the eye.

For an actor may play lots of different roles, but at the end of it all *he himself*, the human being, is the one who has to die.

What does it consist in: following a musical phrase with understanding? Contemplating a face with sensitivity for its expression? Drinking in the expression on the face?

Think of the demeanour of someone drawing a face in a way that shows understanding for its expression. Think of the sketcher's face, his movements; – what shows that every stroke he makes is dictated by the face, that nothing in his drawing is arbitrary, that he is a *finely tuned* instrument?

Is that really an *experience*? What I mean is: can this be said to express an experience?

Once again: what is it to follow a musical phrase with understanding, or to play it with understanding? Don't look inside yourself. Consider rather what makes you say of *someone else* that this is what he is doing. And *what* prompts you to say that *he* is having a particular experience? For that matter, do we actually ever say this? Wouldn't I be more likely to say of someone else that he's having a whole host of experiences?

Perhaps I would say, "He is experiencing the theme intensely"; but consider how this is manifested.

One might again get the idea that experiencing a theme intensely 'consists' in sensations of the movements, etc., with which we accompany it. And that (again) looks a soothing explanation. But do you have any reason to think it true? Such as, for instance, a recollection of this experience? Isn't this theory once again just a picture? In fact,¹ it's not like this: The theory is no more than an attempt to link up the expressive movements with a 'sensation'.

If you ask me: How did I experience the theme? – perhaps I shall answer "As a question" or something of the sort, or I shall whistle it with expression, etc.

"He is experiencing the theme intensely. Something is happening within him as he hears it." *What* exactly?

Doesn't the theme point to anything beyond itself? Oh yes! But this means: the impression it makes on me is connected with things in its environment –

¹ The sense of the passage strongly suggests that "Nein" was a slip of the pen for (perhaps) "Nun". (Tr.).

for example, with the existence of the German language and its intonation, but that means with the whole range of our language games.


If I say for instance: here it's as though a conclusion were being drawn, here as though someone were expressing agreement, or as though *this* were a reply to what came before, – my understanding of it presupposes my familiarity with conclusions, expressions of agreement, replies.

A theme, no less than a face, wears an expression.

"The repeat is *necessary*." In what respect is it necessary? Well, sing it, and you will see that only the repeat gives it its tremendous power. – Don't we have an impression that a model for this theme already exists in reality and the theme only approaches it, corresponds to it, if this section is repeated? Or am I to utter the inanity: "It just sounds more beautiful with the repeat"? (There you can see by the way what an idiotic role the word "beautiful" plays in aesthetics.) Yet there just *is* no paradigm apart from the theme itself. And yet again there *is* a paradigm apart from the theme: namely, the rhythm of our language, of our thinking and feeling. And the theme, moreover, is a *new* part of our language; it becomes incorporated into it; we learn a new *gesture*.

The theme interacts with language.

Sowing ideas is one thing, reaping ideas another.

The last two bars of the "Death and the Maiden" theme, the ; it's possible to understand this at first as an ordinary, conventional figure before coming to understand its deeper expression. I.e. before coming to understand that what is ordinary is here filled with significance.

"Fare well!"

"A whole world of pain is contained in these words." How *can* it be contained in them? – It is bound up with them. The words are like an acorn from which an *oak tree* can grow.

Esperanto. The feeling of disgust we get if we utter an *invented* word with invented derivative syllables. The word is cold, lacking in associations, and yet it plays at being 'language'. A system of purely written signs would not disgust us so much.

You could attach prices to thoughts. Some cost a lot, some a little. And how does one pay for thoughts? The answer, I think, is: with courage.

If life becomes hard to bear we think of a change in our circumstances. But the most important and effective change, a change in our own attitude, hardly even occurs to us, and the resolution to take such a step is very difficult for us.

One's style of writing may be unoriginal in form – like mine – and yet one's words may be well chosen; or, on the other hand, one may have a style that's original in *form*, one that is freshly grown from deep within oneself. (Or again it may, of course, just be botched together anyhow out of old bits and pieces.)

I believe that one of the things Christianity says is that sound doctrines are all useless. That you have to change your *life*. (Or the *direction* of your life.)

It says that wisdom is all cold; and that you can no more use it for setting your life to rights than you can forge iron when it is *cold*.

The point is that a sound doctrine need not *take hold* of you; you can follow it as you would a doctor's prescription. – But here you need something to move you and turn you in a new direction. – (I.e. this is how I understand it.) Once you have been turned round, you must *stay* turned round.

Wisdom is passionless. But faith by contrast is what Kierkegaard calls a *passion*.

Religion is, as it were, the calm bottom of the sea at its deepest point, which remains calm however high the waves on the surface may be. –

"I never believed in God before" – that I understand. But not: "I never really believed in Him before."

I am often afraid of madness. Do I have any reason for assuming that this fear does not spring from, so to speak, an optical illusion: taking something to be an abyss right at my feet, when it's nothing of the sort? The only *experience* I know of that speaks for its not being an illusion is the case of Lenau. For his "Faust" contains thoughts of a kind I too am familiar with. Lenau puts them into Faust's mouth, but they are certainly his own thoughts about himself. The important thing is what Faust says of his *loneliness*, or *isolation*.

His talent too strikes me as similar to mine: A lot of froth – but a few *fine* thoughts. The narratives in his "Faust" are all bad, but the observations are often true and great.

Lenau's "Faust" is remarkable for the fact that man has dealings only with the Devil. God does not stir himself.

Bacon, in my view, was not a *precise thinker*. He had large-scale and, as it were, wide-ranging visions. But if this is all someone has, he is bound to be generous with his promises and inadequate when it comes to keeping them.

Someone might *dream up* a flying machine without being precise about its details. He might imagine it as looking externally very much like a real aeroplane and describe its functioning graphically. Neither is it obvious that a phantasy like this must be worthless. Perhaps it will stimulate work of a different sort in others. – So while these others make preparations, a long time in advance as it were, to build an aeroplane that will really fly, he occupies himself with dreaming about what such an aeroplane will have to look like and what it will be capable of doing. This says *nothing* about the value of these activities. The dreamer's *may* be worthless – and so may the others'.

Madness need not be regarded as an illness. Why shouldn't it be seen as a sudden – more or *less* sudden – change of character?

Everybody is mistrustful (or most people are), perhaps more so towards their relations than towards others. Do they have any reason for mistrust? Yes and no. Reasons can be given, but they are not compelling. Why shouldn't a man suddenly become *much* more mistrustful towards others? Why not *much* more withdrawn? Or devoid of love? Don't people get like this even in the ordinary course of events? – Where, in such cases, is the line between will and ability? Is it that I *will* not open my heart to anyone any more, or that I *cannot*? If so much can lose its savour, why not everything? If people are wary even in ordinary life why shouldn't they – *perhaps* suddenly – become *much* more wary? And *much* more inaccessible?

An observation in a poem is overstated if the intellectual points are nakedly exposed, not clothed from the heart.

Yes, a key can lie for ever in the place where the locksmith left it, and never be used to open the lock the master forged it for.

"It is high time for us to compare these phenomena with something *different*" — one may say. — I am thinking, e.g., of mental illnesses.

Freud's fanciful pseudo-explanations (precisely because they are brilliant) perform a disservice.

(Now any ass has these pictures available to use in 'explaining' symptoms of illness.)

Irony in music. E.g. in Wagner's "Mastersingers". Incomparably deeper in the Fugato in the first movement of the Ninth. There is something here analogous to the expression of bitter irony in speech.

I could equally well have said: the distorted in music. In the sense in which we speak of features distorted by grief. When Grillparzer says Mozart countenanced only what is "beautiful" in music, I think he means that he did not countenance what is distorted, frightful, that there is nothing corresponding to *this* in his music. I am not saying that is completely true; but even supposing it to be so, it is still a prejudice on Grillparzer's part to think that by rights it ought not to be otherwise. The fact that music since Mozart (and of course especially through Beethoven) has extended the range of its language is to be neither commended nor deplored; rather: *this is how it has changed*. There is something ungrateful about Grillparzer's attitude. Did he want *another* Mozart? Could he imagine what such a being might have composed? Could he have imagined Mozart if he had not known him?

The concept of "the beautiful" has done a lot of mischief in this connection too.

Concepts *may* alleviate mischief or they may make it worse; foster it or check it.

We may perhaps think, looking at the grinning faces of idiots, that *they* do not really suffer; they do though, only not in the same place as the more intelligent. They do not have *headache*, as it were, but as much suffering of other sorts as anyone else. Not all suffering need after all evoke the *same* facial expression. A nobler man will bear himself differently in affliction than I.

I cannot kneel to pray because it's as though my knees were stiff. I am afraid of dissolution (of my own dissolution), should I become soft.

I am showing my pupils details of an immense landscape which they cannot possibly know their way around.

1947

The truly apocalyptic view of the world is that things do *not* repeat themselves. It isn't absurd, e.g., to believe that the age of science and technology is the beginning of the end for humanity; that the idea of great progress is a delusion, along with the idea that the truth will ultimately be known; that there is nothing good or desirable about scientific knowledge and that mankind, in seeking it, is falling into a trap. It is by no means obvious that this is not how things are.

A man's dreams are virtually never realized.

Socrates keeps reducing the sophist to silence, – but does he have *right* on his side when he does this? Well, it is true that the sophist does not know what he thinks he knows; but that is no triumph for Socrates. It can't be a case of "You see! You don't know it!" – nor yet, triumphantly, of "So none of us knows anything!"

Wisdom is cold and to that extent stupid. (Faith on the other hand is a passion.) It might also be said: Wisdom merely *conceals* life from you. (Wisdom is like cold grey ash, covering up the glowing embers.)

Don't *for heaven's sake*, be afraid of talking nonsense! But you must pay attention to your nonsense.

The miracles of nature.

One might say: art *shows* us the miracles of nature. It is based on the *concept* of the miracles of nature. (The blossom, just opening out. What is *marvellous* about it?) We say: "Just look at it opening out!"

It could only be by accident that a man's dreams about the future of philosophy, art, science, should come true. What he sees in his dream is an extension of his own world, *PERHAPS* what he wishes (and perhaps not), but not reality.

The mathematician too can wonder at the miracles (the crystal) of nature of course; but can he do so once a problem has arisen about *what* it actually is he is contemplating? Is it really possible as long as the object that he finds astonishing and gazes at with awe is *shrouded* in a philosophical fog?

I could imagine somebody might admire not only real trees, but also the shadows or reflections that they cast, taking them too for trees. But once he has told himself that these are not really trees after all and has come to be puzzled at what they are, or at how they are related to trees, his admiration will have suffered a rupture that will need healing.

Sometimes a sentence can be understood only if it is read at the *right tempo*. My sentences are all supposed to be read *slowly*.

The 'necessity' with which the second idea succeeds the first. (The overture to "Figaro".) Nothing could be more idiotic than to say that it is 'agreeable' to hear the one after the other. — All the same, the paradigm according to which everything is *right* is obscure. 'It is the natural development.' We gesture with our hands and are inclined to say: "Of course!" — Or we might compare the transition to a transition like the introduction of a new character in a story for instance, or a poem. *This* is how the piece fits into the world of our thoughts and feelings.

The linings of my heart keep sticking together and to open it I should each time have to tear them apart.

A typical American film, naïve and silly, can — for all its silliness and even *by means of* it — be instructive. A fatuous, self-conscious English film can teach one nothing. I have often learnt a lesson from a silly American film.

Is what I am doing really worth the effort? Yes, but only if a light shines on it from above. And if that happens — why should I concern myself that the fruits of my labours should not be stolen? If what I am writing really has some

value, how could anyone steal the value from me? And if the light from above is lacking, I can't in any case be more than clever.

I completely understand how someone may find it *hateful* for the priority of his invention or discovery to be disputed, and want to defend his priority 'with tooth and claw'. *All the same* this is completely chimerical. It certainly seems to me too cheap, all too easy, for *Claudius* to make fun of the squabbles between Newton and Leibniz over who was first; but it's nevertheless true, I think, that this quarrel is simply the expression of evil weaknesses and fostered by *VILE* people. Just *what* would Newton have lost if he had acknowledged Leibniz's originality? Absolutely nothing! He would have gained a lot. And yet, how hard it is to acknowledge something of this sort: someone who tries it feels as though he were confessing his own incapacity. Only people who hold you in esteem and at the same time *love* you can make it easy for you to behave like this.

It's a question of *envy* of course. And anyone who experiences it ought to keep on telling himself: "It's a mistake! It's a mistake! —".

Every idea that costs a lot carries in its train a host of cheap ones; among these are even some that are useful.

Sometimes you see ideas in the way an astronomer sees stars in the far distance. (Or it seems like that anyway.)

If I were to write a *good* sentence which by accident turned out to consist of two rhyming lines, that would be a *blunder*.

There is a lot to be learned from Tolstoy's bad theorizing about how a work of art conveys 'a feeling'. — You really could call it, not exactly the expression of a feeling, but at least an expression of feeling, or a felt expression. And you could say too that in so far as people understand it, they 'resonate' in harmony with it, respond to it. You might say: the work of art does not aim to convey *something else*, just itself. Just as, when I pay someone a visit, I don't just want to make him have feelings of such and such a sort; what I mainly want is to visit him, though of course I should like to be well received too.

And it does start to get quite absurd if you say that an artist wants the feelings he had when writing to be experienced by someone else who reads his work. Presumably I can think I understand a poem (e.g.), understand it as its

author would wish me to – but what *he* may have felt in writing it doesn't concern me *at all*.

Just as I cannot write verse, so too my ability to write prose extends only *so far*, and no farther. There is a quite definite limit to the prose I can write and I can no more overstep *that* than I can write a poem. *This* is the nature of my equipment; and it is the only equipment I have. It's as though someone were to say: In this game I can only attain *such and such* a degree of perfection, I can't go *beyond* it.

Perhaps everyone who achieves an important piece of work has an imaginative idea – a dream – of how it might be further developed; but it would all the same be remarkable if things were really to turn out according to his dream. Nowadays of course it's easy not to believe in your own dreams.

Nietzsche writes somewhere¹ that even the best poets and thinkers have written stuff that is mediocre and bad, but have separated off the good material. But it is not quite like that. It's true that a gardener, along with his roses, keeps manure and rubbish and straw in his garden, but what distinguishes them is not just their value, but mainly their function in the garden.

Something that looks like a bad sentence can be the *germ* of a good one.

The faculty of 'taste' cannot create a new structure, it can only make adjustments to one that already exists. Taste loosens and tightens screws, it does not build a new piece of machinery.

Taste makes adjustments. Giving birth is not its affair.

Taste makes things ACCEPTABLE.

(For this reason I believe that a great creator has no need of taste; his child is born into the world fully formed.)

Sometimes polishing is a function of taste, but sometimes not. *I* have taste.

¹ *Human, All Too Human*, I, § 155.

Even the *most refined* taste has *nothing* to do with creative power.

Taste is refinement of sensitivity; but sensitivity does not *do* anything, it is purely receptive.

I am *not* able to judge whether taste is all I have, or whether I have originality too. The former I can see quite clearly but not the other, or only quite indistinctly. And perhaps this is how it has to be, and you can only see what you *have*, not what you are. Someone who does not lie is already original enough. Because, after all, any originality worth wishing for could not be a sort of clever trick, or a personal peculiarity, be it as distinctive as you like.

In fact the beginnings of good originality are already there if you do not want to be something you are not. And all this has been said before *much* better by other people.

Taste can be charming, but not gripping.

An old style can be translated, as it were, into a newer language; it can, one might say, be performed afresh at a tempo appropriate to our own times. To do this is really only to reproduce. That is what my building work amounted to.

But what I mean is *not* giving an old style a fresh trim. You don't take the old forms and fix them up to suit the latest taste. No, you are really speaking the old language, perhaps without realizing it, but you are speaking it in a way that is appropriate to the modern world, without on that account necessarily being in accordance with its taste.

A man reacts *like this*: he says "No, I *won't* tolerate that!" – and resists it. Perhaps this brings about an equally intolerable situation and perhaps by then strength for any further revolt is exhausted. People say: "If *he* hadn't done *that*, the evil would have been avoided." But what justifies this? Who knows the laws according to which society develops? I am quite sure they are a closed book even to the cleverest of men. If you fight, you fight. If you hope, you hope.

You can fight, hope and even believe without believing *scientifically*.

Science: enrichment and impoverishment. *One* particular method elbows all the others aside. They all seem paltry by comparison, preliminary stages at best.

You must go right down to the original sources so as to see them all side by side, both the neglected and the preferred.

Am *I* the only one who cannot found a school or can a philosopher never do this? I cannot found a school because I do not really want to be imitated. Not at any rate by those who publish articles in philosophical journals.

The use of the word "fate". Our attitude to the future and the past. To what extent do we hold ourselves responsible for the future? How much do we speculate about the future? How do we think about the past and the future? If something unwelcome happens: – do we ask "Whose fault is it?", do we say "It must be somebody's fault", – or do we say "It was God's will", "It was fate"?

In the sense in which asking a question and insisting on an answer is expressive of a different attitude, a different mode of life, from not asking it, the *same* can be said of utterances like "It is God's will" or "We are not masters of our fate". The work done by this sentence, or at any rate something like it, could also be done by a command! Including one which you give yourself. And conversely the utterance of a command, such as "Don't be resentful", may be like the affirmation of a truth.

Fate is the antithesis of natural law. A natural law is something you try to fathom and make use of, but not fate.

I am by no means sure that I should prefer a continuation of my work by others to a change in the way people live which would make all these questions superfluous. (For this reason I could never found a school.)

A philosopher says "Look at things like this!" – but in the first place that doesn't ensure that people will look at things like that, and in the second place his admonition may come altogether too late; it's possible, moreover, that such an admonition can achieve nothing in any case and that the impetus for such a change in the way things are perceived has to originate somewhere else entirely. For instance it is by no means clear whether Bacon started anything moving, other than the surface of his readers' minds.

Nothing seems to me less likely than that a scientist or mathematician who reads me should be seriously influenced in the way he works. (In that respect my reflections are like the notices on the ticket offices at English railway stations¹ "Is your journey really necessary?". As though someone who read this would think "On second thoughts *no*".) What is needed here is artillery of a completely different kind from anything I am in a position to muster. The most I might expect to achieve by way of effect is that I should first stimulate the writing of a *whole lot* of garbage and that then this *perhaps* might provoke somebody to write something good. I ought never to hope for more than the most indirect influence.

E.g. there is nothing more stupid than the chatter about cause and effect in history books; nothing is more wrong-headed, more half-baked. – But what hope could anyone have of putting a stop to it just by *saying* that? (It would be like my trying to change the way women and men dress by talking.)

Remember how it was said of Labor's playing: "He is *speaking*." How curious! What was it about this playing that was so strongly reminiscent of speech? And how remarkable that we do not find the similarity with speech incidental, but something important, big! – Music, *some* music at least, makes us want to call it a language; but some music of course doesn't. (Not that this need involve any judgement of value!)

The book is full of life – not like a man, but like an ant-heap.

One keeps forgetting to go right down to the foundations. One doesn't put the question marks *deep* enough down.

The labour pains at the birth of new concepts.

"Wisdom is grey." Life on the other hand and religion are full of colour.

¹ During and immediately after the Second World War.

Science and industry, and their progress, might turn out to be the most enduring thing in the modern world. Perhaps any speculation about a coming collapse of science and industry is, for the present and for a *long* time to come, nothing but a dream; perhaps science and industry, having caused infinite misery in the process, will unite the world – I mean condense it into a *single* unit, though one in which peace is the last thing that will find a home.

Because science and industry do decide wars, or so it seems.

Don't concern yourself with what, presumably, no one but you grasps!

My thoughts probably move in a far narrower circle than I suspect.

Thoughts rise to the surface slowly, like bubbles. (Sometimes it's as though you could see a thought, an idea, as an indistinct point far away on the horizon; and then it often approaches with astonishing swiftness.)

I believe that bad housekeeping within the state fosters bad housekeeping in families. A workman who is constantly ready to go on strike will not bring up his children to respect order either.

God grant the philosopher insight into what lies in front of everyone's eyes.

Life is like a path along a mountain ridge; to left and right are slippery slopes down which you slide without being able to stop yourself, in one direction or the other. I keep seeing people slip like this and I say "How could a man help himself in such a situation!". And *that* is what "denying free will" comes to. That is the attitude expressed in this 'belief'. But it is not a *scientific* belief and has nothing to do with scientific convictions.

Denying responsibility is not *holding* people responsible.

Some people's taste is to an educated taste as is the visual impression received by a purblind eye to that of a normal eye. Where a normal eye will see something clearly articulated, a weak eye will see a blurred patch of colour.

Someone who knows too much finds it hard not to lie.

I am so afraid of someone's playing the piano in the house that, when this happens and then the tinkling stops, I have a sort of hallucination of its still going on. I can hear it quite clearly even though I know that it's all in my imagination.

It strikes me that a religious belief could only be something like a passionate commitment to a system of reference. Hence, although it's *belief*, it's really a way of living, or a way of assessing life. It's passionately seizing hold of *this* interpretation. Instruction in a religious faith, therefore, would have to take the form of a portrayal, a description, of that system of reference, while at the same time being an appeal to conscience. And this combination would have to result in the pupil himself, of his own accord, passionately taking hold of the system of reference. It would be as though someone were first to let me see the hopelessness of my situation and then show me the means of rescue until, of my own accord, or not at any rate led to it by my *instructor*, I ran to it and grasped it.

Perhaps one day this civilization will produce a culture.

When that happens there will be a real history of the discoveries of the 18th, 19th and 20th Centuries, which will be deeply interesting.

In the course of a scientific investigation we say all kinds of things; we make many utterances whose role in the investigation we do not understand. For it isn't as though everything we say has a conscious purpose; our tongues just keep going. Our thoughts run in established routines, we pass automatically from one thought to another according to the techniques we have learned. And now comes the time for us to survey what we have said. We have made a whole lot of movements that do not further our purpose, or that even impede it, and now we have to clarify our thought processes philosophically.

It seems to me I am still a long way from understanding these things, a long way from the point of knowing what I do and what I don't need to discuss. I still keep getting entangled in details without knowing whether I ought to be talking about such things at all; and I have the impression that I may be inspecting a large area only eventually to exclude it from consideration. But even in that case these reflections wouldn't be worthless; as long, that is, as they are not just going round in a circle.

1948

When you are philosophizing you have to descend into primeval chaos and feel at home there.

Genius is talent in which character makes itself heard. That is why I want to say that Kraus had talent, an exceptional talent, but not genius. There are certainly flashes of genius such that despite the *great* infusion of talent, you do not notice the talent. An example: "For the ox and the ass can do things too..."¹ It is remarkable how much greater that is than anything Kraus, e.g., ever wrote. This is no mere intellectual skeleton, but a complete human being.

That too is why the greatness of what a man writes depends on everything else he writes and does.

During a dream and even *long* after we have woken up, words occurring in the dream can strike us as having the greatest significance. Can't we be subject to the same illusion when awake? I have the impression that *I* am sometimes liable to this nowadays. The insane often seem to be like this.

What I am writing here may be feeble stuff; well, then I am just not capable of bringing the big, important thing to light. But hidden in these feeble remarks are great prospects.

In a letter (to Goethe I think)² Schiller writes of a "poetic mood". I think I know what he means, I believe I am familiar with it myself. It is a mood of

¹ Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, *Timorus*, Preface. The complete sentence reads: "For the ox and the ass can do things too, but up to now only a man can give you an assurance."

² Letter to Goethe, 17th December 1795.

receptivity to nature in which one's thoughts seem as vivid as nature itself. But it is strange that Schiller did not produce anything better (or so it seems to me) and so I am not entirely convinced that what *I* produce in such a mood is really worth anything. It may be that what gives my thoughts their lustre on these occasions is a light shining on them from behind. That they do not *themselves* glow.

Where others go on ahead, I stay in one place.

(For the Preface.)¹ It is not without reluctance that I deliver this book to the public. It will fall into hands which are not for the most part those in which I like to imagine it. May it soon – this is what I wish for it – be completely forgotten by the philosophical journalists, and so be preserved perhaps for a better sort of reader.

Only every now and again does one of the sentences that I write here make a step forward; the rest are like the snipping of the barber's scissors, which he has to keep moving so as to make a cut with them at the right moment.

As long as I continue to come across questions in more remote regions which I can't answer, it is understandable that I should still not be able to find my way around regions that are less remote. For how do I know that what stands in the way of an answer here is not precisely what is preventing me from clearing away the fog over there?

Raisins may be the best part of a cake; but a bag of raisins is not better than a cake; and someone who is in a position to give us a bag full of raisins still can't bake a cake with them, let alone do something better. I am thinking of Kraus and his aphorisms, but of myself too and my philosophical remarks.

A cake – that isn't as it were: thinned-out raisins.

Colours spur us to philosophize. Perhaps that explains Goethe's passion for the theory of colours.

¹ For *Philosophical Investigations*.

Colours seem to present us with a riddle, a riddle that stimulates¹ us – not one that disturbs¹ us.

Man can regard all the evil within himself as delusion.

If it is true that Mahler's music is worthless, as I believe to be the case, then the question is what I think he ought to have done with his talent. For quite obviously it took a *set of very rare talents* to produce this bad music. Should he, say, have written his symphonies and then burnt them? Or should he have done violence to himself and not written them? Should he have written them and realized that they were worthless? But how could he have realized that? I can see it, because I can compare his music with what the great composers wrote. But *he* could not, because though perhaps someone to whom such a comparison has occurred may have *misgivings* about the value of his work through seeing, as it were, that his nature is not that of the other great composers, – that still does not mean that he will recognize its worthlessness; because he can always tell himself that though he is certainly *different* from the rest (whom he nevertheless admires), his work has a different kind of value. Perhaps we might say: If nobody you admire is like you, then presumably you believe in your own value only because you are *you*. – Even someone who is struggling against vanity will, if his struggle is not entirely successful, still deceive himself about the value of his own work.

But the greatest danger seems to lie in putting one's own work, in one way or another, into the position of being compared, first by oneself then by others, with the great works of former times. One ought to put such a comparison right out of one's mind. For if conditions nowadays are really so different from what they once were that one cannot even compare the *genre* one's work belongs to with that of earlier works, then one can't compare them in respect of their value either. I myself continually make the mistake I'm referring to.

Conglomeration: national sentiment for instance.

Animals come when their names are called. Just like human beings.

I ask countless irrelevant questions. If only I can succeed in hacking my way through this forest!

¹ In the German there is a play on the two cognate verbs *anregt* and *aufregt* which I have not been able to catch. (Tr.)

I really want my copious punctuation marks to slow down the speed of reading. Because I should like to be read slowly. (As I myself read.)

I believe Bacon got bogged down in his philosophical work, and this is a danger that threatens me too. He had a vivid image of a huge building which, however, faded when he really wanted to get down to details. It was as though his contemporaries had begun to erect a great building, from the foundations up; and as though he, in his imagination, had seen something similar, a vision of such a building, an even more imposing vision perhaps than that of those doing the building work. For this he needed to have an *inkling* of the method of construction, but no talent whatever for building. But the bad thing about it was that he launched polemical attacks on the real builders and did not recognize his *own* limitations, or else did not want to.

But it is, on the other hand, enormously difficult to discern these limitations, i.e. to depict them clearly. Or, as one might say, to invent a style of painting capable of depicting what is, in this way, fuzzy. For I want to keep telling myself: "Make sure you really do paint only what you see!"

In Freudian analysis a dream is dismantled, as it were. It loses its original sense *completely*. We might think of it as of a play enacted on the stage, with a plot that's pretty incomprehensible at times, but at times too quite intelligible, or apparently so; we might then suppose this plot torn into little fragments and each of these given a completely new sense. Or we might think of it in the following way: a picture is drawn on a big sheet of paper which is then so folded that pieces which don't belong together at all in the original picture now appear side by side to form a new picture, which may or may not make sense. (This latter would correspond to the manifest dream, the original picture to the 'latent dream thought'.)

Now I could imagine that someone seeing the unfolded picture might exclaim "Yes, that's the solution, that's what I dreamed, minus the gaps and distortions". This would then be the solution precisely by virtue of his acknowledging it as such. It's like searching for a word when you are writing and then saying: "*That's it, that expresses what I intended!*" – Your acceptance certifies the word as having been found and hence as being the one you were looking for. (In this instance we could really say: we don't know what we are looking for until we have found it – which is like what Russell says about wishing.)

What is intriguing about a dream is not its *causal* connection with events in my life, etc., but rather the impression it gives of being a fragment of a story – a very *vivid* fragment to be sure – the rest of which remains obscure. (We feel like asking: "where did this figure come from then and what became of it?")

What's more, if someone now shows me that this story is not the right one; that in reality it was based on quite a different story, so that I want to exclaim disappointedly "Oh, *that's* how it was?", it really is as though I have been deprived of something. The original story certainly disintegrates now, as the paper is unfolded; the man I saw was taken from over *here*, his words from over *there*, the surroundings in the dream from somewhere else again; but all the same the dream story has a charm of its own, like a painting that attracts and inspires us.

It can certainly be said that contemplation of the dream-image inspires us, that we just *are* inspired. Because if we tell someone else our dream the image will not usually inspire him. The dream affects us as does an idea pregnant with possible developments.

Circa 1947-1948

Architecture immortalizes and glorifies something. Hence there can be no architecture where there is nothing to glorify.¹

1948

Strike a coin from every mistake.

Understanding and explaining a musical phrase. – Sometimes the simplest explanation is a gesture; on another occasion it might be a dance step, or words describing a dance. – But isn't understanding the phrase experiencing something whilst we hear it? In that case what part does the explanation play? Are we supposed to think of it as we hear the music? Are we supposed to imagine the dance, or whatever it may be, while we listen? And suppose we do do this – why should *that* be called listening to the music with understanding? If seeing the dance is what is important, it would be better to perform *that* rather than the music. But that is all *misunderstanding*.

I give someone an explanation and tell him "It's as though . . ."; then he says "Yes, now I understand it" or "Yes, now I see how it's to be played." It's most important that he didn't have to *accept* the explanation; it's not as though I had, as it were, given him conclusive reasons for thinking that this passage should be compared with that and the other one. I don't, e.g., explain to him that according² to things the composer has said this passage is supposed to represent such and such.

If I now ask "So what do I actually experience when I hear this theme and

¹ Several variations in the manuscript. ² Text unclear.

understand what I hear?" – nothing occurs to me by way of reply except trivialities. Images, sensations of movement, recollections and such like.

Perhaps I say, "I respond to it" – but what does that mean? It might mean something like: I gesture in time with the music. And if we point out that for the most part this only happens to a very rudimentary extent, we shall probably get the reply that such rudimentary movements are filled out by images. But suppose we assume all the same that someone accompanies the music with movements in full measure, – to what extent does *that* amount to understanding it? Do I want to say that the movements he makes constitute his understanding; or his kinaesthetic sensations? (How much do I know about these?) – What is true is that in some circumstances I will take the movements he makes as a sign that he understands.

But (if I reject images, kinaesthetic sensations, etc. as an explanation), should I say that understanding is simply a specific experience that cannot be analysed any further? Well, that would be tolerable as long as it were not supposed to mean: it is a specific *experiential content*. For in point of fact *these* words make us think of distinctions like those between seeing, hearing and smelling.

So how do we explain to someone what "understanding music" means? By specifying the images, kinaesthetic sensations, etc., experienced by someone who understands? *More likely*, by drawing attention to his expressive movements. – And we really ought to ask what function explanation has here. And what it means to speak of: understanding what it means to understand music. For some would say: to understand that means: to understand music itself. And in that case we should have to ask "Well, can someone be taught to understand music?", for that is the only sort of teaching that could be called *explaining music*.

There is a certain *expression* proper to the appreciation of music, in listening, playing, and at other times too. Sometimes gestures form part of this expression, but sometimes it will just be a matter of how a man plays, or hums, the piece, now and again of the comparisons he draws and the images with which he as it were illustrates the music. Someone who understands music will listen differently (e.g. with a different expression on his face), he will talk differently, from someone who does not. But he will show that he understands a particular theme not just in manifestations that accompany his hearing or playing that theme but in his understanding for music in general.

Appreciating music is a manifestation of the life of mankind. How should we describe it to someone? Well, I suppose we should first have to describe *music*. Then we could describe how human beings react to it. But is that all we need do, or must we also teach him to understand it for himself? Well, getting him to understand and giving him an explanation that does not achieve this will be "teaching him what understanding is" in *different* senses of that phrase. And again, teaching him to understand poetry or painting may contribute to teaching him what is involved in understanding music.

While still at school our children get taught that water *consists* of the gases hydrogen and oxygen, or sugar of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen. Anyone who doesn't understand is stupid. The most important questions are concealed.

The beauty of a star-shaped figure – a hexagonal star, say – is impaired if we regard it as symmetrical relatively to a given axis.

Bach said that all his achievements were simply the fruit of industry. But industry like that requires humility and an enormous capacity for suffering, hence strength. And someone who, with all this, can also express himself perfectly, simply speaks to us in the language of a great man.

I think the way people are educated nowadays tends to diminish their capacity for suffering. At present a school is reckoned good 'if the children have a good time'. And that used *not* to be the criterion. Parents moreover want their children to grow up like themselves (only more so), but nevertheless subject them to an education *quite* different from their own. – Endurance of suffering isn't rated highly because there is supposed not to be any suffering – really it's out of date.

"The cussedness of things." – An unnecessary anthropomorphism. We might speak of the *world* as malicious; we could easily imagine the Devil had created the world, or part of it. And it is *not* necessary to imagine the evil spirit intervening in particular situations; everything can happen 'according to the laws of nature'; it is just that the whole scheme of things will be aimed at evil from the very start. But man exists in this world, where things break, slide about, cause every imaginable mischief. And of course he is one such thing himself. – The 'cussedness' of things is a stupid anthropomorphism. Because the truth is much graver than this fiction.

A stylistic device may be useful and yet I may be barred from using it. Schopenhauer's "as which" for instance. Sometimes this would make for much more comfortable and clearer expression, but if someone feels it is archaic, he cannot use it; and he must not disregard this feeling either.

Religious faith and superstition are quite different. One of them results from *fear* and is a sort of false science. The other is a trusting.

It would almost be strange if there did not exist animals with the mental life of plants. I.e. lacking mental life.

I think it might be regarded as a basic law of natural history that wherever something in nature 'has a function', 'serves a purpose', the same thing can also be found in circumstances where it serves no purpose and is even 'dysfunctional'.

If dreams sometimes protect sleep, you can count on their sometimes disturbing it; if dream hallucination sometimes serves a *plausible* purpose (of imaginary wish fulfilment), count on its doing the opposite as well. There is no 'dynamic theory of dreams'.¹

What is important about depicting anomalies precisely? If you cannot do it, that shows you do not know your way around the concepts.

I am too soft, too weak, and so too lazy to achieve anything significant. The industry of great men is, amongst other things, a sign of their *strength*, quite apart from their inner wealth.

If God really does choose those who are to be saved, there is no reason why he should not choose them according to nationality, race or temperament. Or why the choice should not find expression in the laws of nature. (Certainly he was *able* so to choose that his choice should follow a law.)

I have read excerpts from the writings of St. John of the Cross where he says that people have fallen into the pit because they did not have the good fortune to find a wise spiritual director at the right moment.

And if that is so, how can anyone say that God does not try men beyond their strength?

What I really feel like saying here is that distorted concepts have done a lot of mischief, but the truth is that I just *do not know* what does good and what does mischief.

¹ Freud.

We must not forget: even our more refined, more philosophical doubts have a foundation in instinct. E.g. that expressed in 'We can never know ...'. Continuing accessibility to further arguments. We should find people to whom we could not teach this mentally inferior. *Still* incapable of forming a certain concept.

If the dreams we have in sleep have a similar function to day dreams, part of their purpose is to prepare a man for *any* eventuality (including the worst).

If someone can believe in God with complete certainty, why not in Other Minds?

For me this musical phrase is a gesture. It insinuates itself into my life. I adopt it as my own.

Life's infinite variations are essential to our life. And so too even to the habitual character of life. What we regard as expression *consists* in incalculability. If I knew exactly how he would grimace, move, there would be no facial expression, no gesture. – Is that true though? – I can after all listen again and again to a piece of music that I know (completely) by heart; and it might even be played on a musical box. Its gestures would still be gestures for me, even though I knew all the time what was going to come next. Indeed, I might even keep being surprised. (In a certain sense.)

An honest religious thinker is like a tightrope walker. He almost looks as though he were walking on nothing but air. His support is the slenderest imaginable. And yet it really is possible to walk on it.

Unshakable faith. (E.g. in a promise.) Is it any less certain than being convinced of a mathematical truth? – But does that make the language games any more alike!

It is important for our view of things that someone may feel concerning certain people that their inner life will always be a mystery to him. That he will never understand them. (Englishwomen in the eyes of Europeans.)

I think it an important and remarkable fact that a musical theme alters its *character* if it is played at (very) different tempi. A transition from quantity to quality.

The problems of life are insoluble on the surface and can only be solved in depth. They are insoluble in surface dimensions.

In a conversation: One person throws a ball; the other does not know: whether he is supposed to throw it back, or throw it to a third person, or leave it on the ground, or pick it up and put it in his pocket, etc.

In a bad period the task facing a great architect (Van der Nüll) is completely different from what it is in a good period. You must not let yourself be seduced by the terminology in common currency. Don't take comparability, but rather incomparability, as a matter of course.

Nothing is more important for teaching us to understand the concepts we have than constructing fictitious ones.

"Thinking is difficult" (Ward). What does this really mean? Why is it difficult? – It is almost like saying "Looking is difficult". Because looking intently is difficult. And it's possible to look intently without seeing anything, or to keep thinking you see something without being able to see clearly. Looking can tire you even when you don't see anything.

When you can't unravel a tangle, the most sensible thing is for you to recognize this; and the most honourable thing, to admit it. [Antisemitism.]

What you ought to do to remedy the evil is *not* clear. What you must *not* do is clear in particular cases.

It is queer that Busch's drawings can often be called 'metaphysical'. Is there such a thing as a metaphysical style of drawing then? – "Seen against the background of the eternal",¹ you might say. However, these strokes have such a meaning only within a whole language. And it is a language without grammar; you couldn't say what its rules are.

When he was old Charlemagne tried to learn to write, but without success: and similarly someone may fail when he tries to acquire a manner of thinking. He never becomes fluent in it.

A language which is spoken in strict tempo and which can, therefore, also be spoken in time with a *metronome*. It isn't a matter of course that music should be performable as ours is, at least optionally, to the metronome. (Playing the theme from the 8th Symphony² exactly in time with the metronome.)

Suppose we were to meet people who all had the same facial features: that would be enough for us not to know where we were with them.

Even to have expressed a false thought boldly and clearly is already to have gained a great deal.

It's only by thinking even more crazily than philosophers do that you can solve their problems.

Imagine someone watching a pendulum and thinking: God makes it move like that. Well, isn't God equally free to act in accordance with a calculation?

A writer far more talented than I would still have only a minor talent.

To say, when they are at work, "Let's have done with it now", is a *physical* need for human beings; it is the constant necessity when you are

¹ Cf. *Notebooks*, 7.10.1916.

² Beethoven's Eighth Symphony.

philosophizing to go on thinking in the face of this need that makes this such strenuous work.

You have to accept the faults in your own style. Almost like the blemishes in your own face.

Never stay up on the barren heights of cleverness, but come down into the green valleys of silliness.

I have one of those talents that constantly has to make a virtue out of necessity.

Tradition is not something a man can learn; not a thread he can pick up when he feels like it; any more than a man can choose his own ancestors.

Someone lacking a tradition who would like to have one is like a man unhappily in love.

There is a pathos peculiar to the man who is happily in love as well as to the one who is unhappily in love.

But it is harder to bear yourself well when you are unhappily in love than when you are happily in love.

Moore stirred up a philosophical wasps' nest with his paradox; and the only reason the wasps did not duly fly out was that they were too listless.

In the sphere of the mind someone's project cannot usually be continued by anyone else, nor should it be. These thoughts will fertilize the soil for a new sowing.

Are you a bad philosopher then, if what you write is hard to understand? If you were better you would make what is difficult easy to understand. – But who says that's possible?! [Tolstoy].

Man's greatest happiness is love. Suppose you say of the schizophrenic: he does not love, he cannot love, he refuses to love – what is the difference?!

“He refuses to . . .” means: it is in his power. And *who* wants to say that?!

Well, what kind of thing do we say “is in my power”? – We may say this when we want to draw a distinction. I can lift *this* weight, but I am not going to do it; I *cannot* lift that one.

“God has commanded it, therefore it must be possible to do it.” That means nothing. There is no ‘*therefore*’ about it. At most the two expressions might mean the *same*.

In this context “He has commanded it” means roughly: He will punish anybody who doesn’t do it. And nothing follows from that about what anybody can or cannot do. And *that* is what ‘predestination’ means.

But that doesn’t mean that it’s right to say: “He punishes you even though you *cannot* do otherwise.” – Perhaps, though, one might say: in this case punishment is inflicted in circumstances where it would be impermissible for men to inflict it. And then the whole concept of ‘punishment’ changes. For now you can no longer use the old illustrations, or else you have to apply them quite differently. Just look at an allegory like “The Pilgrim’s Progress” and notice how nothing is right – in human terms. – But isn’t it right all the same? I.e.: can’t it be applied? Indeed, it has been applied. (On railway stations there are dials with two hands; they show when the next train leaves. They look like clocks though they aren’t; but they have a use of their own.) (It ought to be possible to find a better simile.)

If anyone gets upset by this allegory, one might say to him: Apply it differently, or else leave it alone! (But there are *some* whom it will confuse far more than it can help.)

Anything your reader can do for himself leave to him.

Nearly all my writings are private conversations with myself. Things that I say to myself tête-à-tête.

Ambition is the death of thought.

Humour is not a mood but a way of looking at the world. So if it is correct to say that humour was stamped out in Nazi Germany, that does not mean that people were not in good spirits, or anything of that sort, but something much deeper and more important.

Two people are laughing together, say at a joke. One of them has used certain somewhat unusual words and now they both break out into a sort of bleating. That might appear *very* extraordinary to a visitor coming from quite a different environment. Whereas we find it completely *reasonable*.

(I recently witnessed this scene on a bus and was able to think myself into the position of someone to whom this would be unfamiliar. From that point of view it struck me as quite irrational, like the responses of an outlandish *animal*.)

1949

The concept of a 'festivity'. We connect it with merrymaking; in another age it may have been connected with fear and dread. What we call "wit" and "humour" doubtless did not exist in other ages. And both are constantly changing.

"Le style c'est l'homme", "Le style c'est l'homme même". The first expression has cheap epigrammatic brevity. The second, correct version opens up quite a different perspective. It says that a man's style is a *picture* of him.

There are remarks that sow and remarks that reap.

The relations between these concepts form a landscape which language presents us with in countless fragments; piecing them together is *too hard* for me. I can make only a very imperfect job of it.

If I prepare myself for some eventuality, you can be pretty sure that it will not happen. Given the right sort of case.

It is *difficult* to know something and to act as if you did not know it.

There really are cases where someone has the sense of what he wants to say much more clearly in his mind than he can express in words. (This happens to me very often.) It is as though one had a dream image quite clearly before one's mind's eye, but could not describe it to someone else so as to let him see it too. As a matter of fact, for the writer (myself) it is often as though the image stays there behind the words, so that they *seem* to describe it *to me*.

A mediocre writer must beware of too quickly replacing a crude, incorrect expression with a correct one. By doing so he kills his original idea, which was at least still a living seedling. Now it is withered and no longer worth *anything*. He may as well throw it on the rubbish heap. Whereas the wretched little seedling was still worth something.

One reason why authors become dated, even though they once *amounted* to something, is that their writings, when reinforced by their contemporary setting, speak strongly to men, whereas without this reinforcement their works die, as if bereft of the illumination that gave them their colour.

There is some connection between this and the beauty of mathematical demonstrations, as experienced by Pascal. Within *that* way of looking at the world these demonstrations did have *beauty* – not what superficial people call beauty. Again, a crystal is not beautiful in just any 'setting' – though perhaps it always looks *attractive*. –

Strange that whole epochs can't free themselves from the grip of certain concepts – the concept of 'beautiful' and 'beauty' for instance.

My own thinking about art and values is far more disillusioned than would have been *possible* for someone 100 years ago. That doesn't mean, though, that it's more correct on that account. It only means that I have examples of degeneration in the forefront of my mind which were not in the *forefront* of men's minds then.

Troubles are like illnesses; you have to accept them: the worst thing you can do is rebel against them.

You get attacks of them too, triggered off by internal or external causes. And then you just have to tell yourself: "Another attack."

I may find scientific questions interesting, but they never really grip me. Only *conceptual* and *aesthetic* questions do that. At bottom I am indifferent to the solution of scientific problems; but not the other sort.

Even when you aren't thinking in circles, you may still sometimes stride straight through the thicket of questions out into the open, and at other times wander along tortuous or zigzagging paths which don't lead out into the open at all.

The Sabbath is not simply a time for rest, for relaxation. We ought to contemplate our labours from without and not just from within.

This is how philosophers should salute each other: "Take your time!"

What is eternal and important is often hidden from a man by an impenetrable veil. He knows: there's something under there, but he cannot *see* it. The veil reflects the daylight.

Why shouldn't a man become desperately unhappy? It is one human possibility. As in 'Corinthian Bagatelle', this is one of the possible paths that the balls may take. And perhaps not even one of the unusual ones.

For a philosopher there is more grass growing down in the valleys of silliness than up on the barren heights of cleverness.

The temporality of the clock and temporality in music. They are not by any means equivalent concepts.

Playing in *strict* tempo does not mean playing according to the metronome. Though it may be that a certain *sort* of music should be played by metronome. (Is the opening theme <of the second movement>¹ of the 8th Symphony of this sort?)

Could you explain the concept of the punishments of hell without using the concept of punishment? Or that of God's goodness without using the concept of goodness?

If you want to get the right *effect* with your words, certainly not.

¹ Editor's addition.

Suppose someone were taught: there is a being who, if you do such and such or live thus and thus, will take you to a place of everlasting torment after you die; most people end up there, a few get to a place of everlasting happiness. – This being has selected in advance those who are to go to the good place and, since only those who have lived a certain sort of life go to the place of torment, he has also arranged in advance for the rest to live like that.

What might be the effect of such a doctrine?

Well, it does not mention punishment, but rather a sort of natural necessity. And if you were to present things to anyone in this light, he could only react with despair or incredulity to such a doctrine.

Teaching it could not constitute an ethical upbringing. If you wanted to bring someone up ethically while yet teaching him such a doctrine, you would have to teach it to him *after* having educated him ethically, representing it as a sort of incomprehensible mystery.

“Out of his goodness he has chosen them and he will punish you” makes no sense. The two halves of the proposition belong to different ways of looking at things. The second half is ethical, the first not. And taken together with the first, the second is absurd.

It is an accident that ‘fast’ rhymes with ‘last’.¹ But it is a lucky accident, and you can *discover* this lucky accident.

In Beethoven’s music what may be called the expression of irony makes an appearance for the first time. E.g. in the first movement of the Ninth. With him, moreover, it’s a terrible irony, the irony of fate perhaps. – Irony reappears with Wagner, but this time transposed into the civic mode.

You could no doubt say that both Wagner and Brahms, each in his different way, imitated Beethoven; but what in him was cosmic becomes earthly with them.

The same expressions occur in his music, but obeying different laws. In Mozart’s or Haydn’s music again, fate plays no role of any sort. That is not the *concern* of this music.

That ass Tovey says somewhere that this, or something similar, is due to the fact that Mozart had no access to literature of a certain sort. As if it had been proved that the masters’ music had been made what it was solely by books. Certainly, music and books are connected. But if Mozart found no great

¹ ‘Rast’ = ‘rest’; ‘Hast’ = ‘haste’. (Tr.)

tragedy in what he read, does that mean he did not encounter it in his *life*? And do composers never see anything except through the spectacles of poets?

Only in a quite particular musical context is there such a thing as three-part counterpoint.

Tender expression in music. It isn't to be characterized in terms of degrees of loudness or tempo. Any more than a tender facial expression can be described in terms of the distribution of matter in space. As a matter of fact it can't even be explained by reference to a paradigm, since there are countless ways in which the same piece may be played with genuine expression.

God's essence is supposed to guarantee his existence – what this really means is that what is here at issue is not the existence of something.

Couldn't one actually say equally well that the essence of colour guarantees its existence? As opposed, say, to white elephants. Because all that really means is: I cannot explain what 'colour' is, what the word "colour" means, except with the help of a colour sample. So in this case there is no such thing as explaining 'what it *would* be like if colours *were* to exist'.

And now we might say: There can be a description of what it would be like if there were gods on Olympus – but not: 'what it would be like if there were such a thing as God'. And to say this is to determine the concept 'God' more precisely.

How are we taught the word "God" (its use, that is)? I cannot give a full grammatical description of it. But I can, as it were, make some contributions to such a description; I can say a good deal about it and perhaps in time assemble a sort of collection of examples.

Remember in this connection that though we might perhaps like to give such descriptions of the use of words in a dictionary, all we in fact do is give a few examples and explanations. But remember too that no more than this is necessary. What use could we make of an enormously long description? – Well, we could do nothing with it, if it dealt with the use of words in languages that we already knew. But what if we came across such a description of the use of an Assyrian word? In what language? Let's say, in some other language already familiar to us. – The word "sometimes" will occur frequently in this description, or "often", or "usually", or "nearly always", or "almost never".

It is difficult to paint an adequate picture of what such a description might be like.

And after all a painter is basically what I am, often a very bad painter too.

What is it like for people not to have the same sense of humour? They do not react properly to each other. It's as though there were a custom amongst certain people for one person to throw another a ball which he is supposed to catch and throw back; but some people, instead of throwing it back, put it in their pocket.

Or what is it like for somebody to be unable to fathom someone else's taste?

It is true that we can compare a picture that is firmly rooted in us to a superstition; but it is equally true that we *always* eventually have to reach some firm ground, either a picture or something else, so that a picture which is at the root of all our thinking is to be respected and not treated as a superstition.

If Christianity is the truth then all the philosophy that is written about it is false.

Culture is an observance. Or at least it presupposes an observance.

Recounting a dream, a medley of recollections. These often form a significant and enigmatic whole. They form, as it were, a fragment that makes a *powerful* impression on us (*sometimes* anyway), so that we look for an explanation, for connections.

But why did just *these* recollections occur now? Who can say? – It may be connected with our present life, and so too with our wishes, fears, etc. – “But do you want to say that this phenomenon can only exist in these particular causal surroundings?” – I want to say it does not necessarily have to make sense to speak of discovering its cause.

Shakespeare and dreams. A dream is all wrong, absurd, composite, and yet at the same time it is completely right: put together in *this* strange way it makes an impression. Why? I don't know. And if Shakespeare is great, as he is said to be, then it must be possible to say of him: it's all wrong, things *aren't like that* – and yet at the same time it's quite right according to a law of its own.

It could be put like this too: if Shakespeare is great, his greatness is displayed only in the whole *corpus* of his plays, which create their *own* language and world. In other words he is completely unrealistic. (Like a dream.)

1950

There is nothing outrageous in saying that a man's character may be influenced by the world outside him (Weininger). Because that only means that, as we know from experience, men change with circumstances. If it is asked: How *could* a man, the ethical in a man, be *coerced* by his environment? – the answer is that even though he may say “No human being has to give way to compulsion”, yet under such circumstances he *will* as a matter of fact act in such and such a way.

‘You don't HAVE to, I can show you a (different) way out, – but you won't take it.’

I do not believe that Shakespeare can be set alongside any other poet. Was he perhaps a *creator of language* rather than a poet?

I could only stare in wonder at Shakespeare; never do anything with him.

I am *deeply* suspicious of most of Shakespeare's admirers. The misfortune is, I believe, that he stands by himself, at least in the culture of the west, so that one can only place him by placing him wrongly.

It is *not* as though Shakespeare portrayed human types well and were in that respect *true to life*. He is *not* true to life. But he has such a supple hand and his *brush strokes* are so individual, that each one of his characters looks *significant*, is worth looking at.

“Beethoven's great heart” – nobody could speak of “Shakespeare's great heart”. ‘The supple hand that created new natural linguistic forms’ would seem to me nearer the mark.

A poet cannot really say of himself “I sing as the birds sing” – but perhaps Shakespeare could have said this of himself.

One and the same theme is different in character in the minor and the major, but it is quite wrong to speak generally about a character belonging to the minor key. (In Schubert the major often sounds sadder than the minor.) And similarly I think it idle and no help in understanding painting to speak of the characters of individual colours. When one speaks like that one actually only has special applications in mind. The fact that green has such and such an effect as the colour of a table cloth, red another, licenses no conclusion about their effect in a picture.

I do not think that Shakespeare would have been able to reflect on the 'lot of the poet'.

Nor could he regard himself as a prophet or as a teacher of mankind.

People stare at him in wonderment, almost as at a spectacular natural phenomenon. They do not have the feeling that this brings them into contact with a great *human being*. Rather with a phenomenon.

I believe that if one is to enjoy a writer one has to *like* the culture he belongs to as well. If one finds it indifferent or distasteful, one's admiration cools off.

If someone who believes in God looks round and asks "Where does everything I see come from?", "Where does all this come from?", he is *not* craving for a (causal) explanation; and his question gets its point from being the expression of a certain craving. He is, namely, expressing an attitude to all explanations. – But how is this manifested in his life?

The attitude that's in question is that of taking a certain matter seriously and then, beyond a certain point, no longer regarding it as serious, but maintaining that something else is even more important.

Someone may for instance say it's a very grave matter that such and such a man should have died before he could complete a certain piece of work; and yet, in another sense, this is not what matters. At this point one uses the words "in a deeper sense".

Actually I should like to say that in this case too the *words* you utter or what you think as you utter them are not what matters, so much as the difference they make at various points in your life. How do I know that two people mean the same when each says he believes in God? And just the same goes for belief in the Trinity. A theology which insists on the use of *certain particular* words and phrases, and outlaws others, does not make anything clearer (Karl Barth). It gesticulates with words, as one might say, because it wants to say something and does not know how to express it. *Practice* gives the words their sense.

A proof of God's existence ought really to be something by means of which one could convince oneself that God exists. But I think that what *believers* who have furnished such proofs have wanted to do is give their 'belief' an intellectual analysis and foundation, although they themselves would never have come to believe as a result of such proofs. Perhaps one could 'convince someone that God exists' by means of a certain kind of upbringing, by shaping his life in such and such a way.

Life can educate one to a belief in God. And *experiences* too are what bring this about; but I don't mean visions and other forms of sense experience which show us the 'existence of this being', but, e.g., sufferings of various sorts. These neither show us God in the way a sense impression shows us an object, nor do they give rise to *conjectures* about him. Experiences, thoughts, – life can force this concept on us.

So perhaps it is similar to the concept of 'object'.

The reason why I cannot understand Shakespeare is that I want to find symmetry in all this asymmetry.

His pieces give me an impression as of enormous *sketches* rather than of paintings; as though they had been *dashed off* by someone who can permit himself *anything*, so to speak. And I understand how someone can admire that and call it *supreme* art, but I don't like it. – So if someone stands in front of these pieces speechless, I can understand him; but anyone who admires them as one admires, say, Beethoven, seems to me to misunderstand Shakespeare.

One age misunderstands another; and a *petty* age misunderstands all the others in its own nasty way.

How God judges a man is something we cannot imagine at all. If he really takes strength of temptation and the frailty of nature into account, whom can he condemn? But otherwise the resultant of these two forces is simply the end for which the man was predestined. In that case he was created so that the interplay of forces would make him either conquer or succumb. And that is not a religious idea at all, but more like a scientific hypothesis.

So if you want to stay within the religious sphere you must *struggle*.

Look at human beings: one is poison to the other. A mother to her son, and vice versa, etc. But the mother is blind and so is her son. Perhaps they have guilty consciences, but what good does that do them? The child is wicked, but nobody teaches it to be any different and its parents spoil it with their stupid affection; and how are they supposed to understand this and how is their child supposed to understand it? It's as though they were *all* wicked and *all* innocent.

Philosophy hasn't made any progress? – If somebody scratches the spot where he has an itch, do we have to see some progress? Isn't it genuine scratching

otherwise, or genuine itching? And can't this reaction to an irritation continue in the same way for a long time before a cure for the itching is discovered?

1951

God may say to me: "I am judging you out of your own mouth. Your own actions have made you shudder with disgust when you have seen other people do them."

Is this the sense of belief in the Devil: that not everything that comes to us as an inspiration comes from what is good?

You cannot assess yourself properly if you are not well versed in the categories. (Frege's style of writing is sometimes *great*; Freud writes excellently and it is a pleasure to read him, but his writing is never *great*.)¹

¹ Cf. Zettel, § 712.

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