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## ENGELMANN, Mauro. *Wittgenstein's Philosophical Development: Phenomenology, Grammar, Method, and the Anthropological View*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

Mauro Engelmann's 2013 book entitled "*Wittgenstein's philosophical development*" investigates in detail Wittgenstein's epic adventure through the labyrinth of philosophy from the *Tractatus* up to his *Philosophical Investigations* (PI). These are without doubt two perennial classics of the history of philosophy. But it is far from easy to understand what Wittgenstein had in mind at the time between the two writings if we insist in isolated readings of both works or in comparative work without using the richness of Wittgenstein's *Nachlass*.

The path from the *Tractatus* to PI is complicated and important both historically and conceptually. This entails a general and ambitious enterprise of reexamining our philosophical tradition by investigating the limits of what can be said meaningfully. Engelmann's work convincingly shows how Wittgenstein's philosophy, usually taken as comprising two phases, should be taken in a much more nuanced way. He shows how Wittgenstein held, in fact, several philosophies throughout his career and did not have just one rupture, or one big change of mind, but many.

Mauro Engelmann's book is the most detailed and updated account of Wittgenstein's philosophical development. It uses Wittgenstein's *Nachlass* as a source of philosophical investigation, and especially his so-called Middle Period's writings, writings that contains real gems of philosophical inquiry to be worked out. Mauro Engelmann's very well documented discussion of his transitional period is complemented by important examination of influential work by other philosophers, especially Russell, Moore, Ogden and Waismann insofar as it had a significant impact on Wittgenstein's development. The reader will find a rich use of letters, manuscripts and typescripts in a complex landscape of philosophical concepts through the first half of the twentieth century. In fact, Engelmann's discussion brings out the historical and conceptual background for the consolidation of analytic philosophy as one of the most central traditions in contemporary philosophy.

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Engelmann shows the different attitudes toward grammar throughout Wittgenstein's philosophical development, especially in his transitional period. He makes use of two powerful ideas, what he refers to as the genetic method and anthropological view. The former introduces a method through which a representation of the generation of a philosophical puzzle can be surveyed. The latter maintains that we have to look the surroundings of language and the form of life in which it is embedded in order to understand its nature as a human activity. Determining the grammar of our language means *in te alia* investigating our use of words in their surroundings or describing such a use compared to other uses. As a result, the confusions that surround one philosophical idea and the engine propelling such assumptions and confusions are dissipated. For that, Engelmann's book discloses in detail how and why Wittgenstein's attention to a greater variety of tools in language evolved. He shows that some traditional pictures of language in philosophy are intrinsically limited. The idea is that our language has remained constant for a long time and keeps seducing us into asking the same questions.

At a deeper level, Engelmann pioneers an important way beyond the resolute/traditional readings of Wittgenstein's first philosophy. Substantial advance concerning Wittgenstein's philosophical development was rare, especially in respect to his transitional period, before Engelmann's authoritative investigation, because, we think, Wittgenstein's scholarship was devoted, with several publications and heated discussions, to the question of how to read the *Tractatus* in light of the criticism in PI. Unfortunately the very understanding of how Wittgenstein himself tried already in 1929 to revise and to show some mistakes of his early book is usually neglected in the context of the resolute/traditional discussion. It is very hard to believe that Wittgenstein did not defend anything in the *Tractatus* or that the book is a total failure, full of nonsense. Whoever reads the *Nachlass* carefully cannot miss that he really held, for instance, language as composed by elementary propositions that should correspond to state of affairs and simple names that refer to simple things in the world. Engelmann's book shows how the Middle Wittgenstein was struggling with notions central to his first philosophy as, for example, that language should function totally on a truth functional basis, or that it should have a general logical form and logic consists of formal tautologies, the unique source of necessity in a radically contingent world. After all it took Wittgenstein almost a decade of intense reflexion, discussion with colleagues and students and reformulation of several texts both conceptually and methodologically to reground his philosophy and present a real alternative to the whole philosophical tradition.

Engelmann's first Chapter "Phenomenology, 'Grammar' and 'Limits of Sense'" investigates Ramsey's criticisms related to the Wittgenstein's concerns at 1929 – notably, the problem of analysis of propositions that attribute degrees of a property to objects. In his *Critical Notice*, Ramsey relates this propositions to the Tractarian notions of logical necessity and nature of inference, showing that the main insights of the *Tractatus* are grounded on a truth-functional explanation of logical necessity. The task of establishing the limits of language, thus, is not completely achieved by the *Tractatus* – in fact, the very nature of logic as presented there is at risk. In order to investigate the necessary relations that are not truth-functional, Wittgenstein turns out his attention to the visual field and starts the

project of phenomenological language. This tool should give place to the ultimate analysis of the phenomena. Engelmann then discusses the rise and fall of the phenomenological language, the very idea of an ultimate analysis of language using the notion of systems of propositions, the use of transcendental arguments to determine the need of coordinates in visual space in order to determine propositional sense, the relation between colors and space, and some shortcomings of verificationism. In this chapter, Engelmann examines often neglected Wittgenstein's works in this transitional period, such as "Some Remarks of Logical Forms" and "Philosophical Remarks". Engelmann's holds that Ramsey's review relates the statements of degree with the nature of logical necessity and inference on the *Tractatus*, but this is not presented in his exposition. It is clear that Wittgenstein demands attention to this, but it is noteworthy that Ramsey do not bring statements of degree at all – at least, there are no mention of those statements in the *Critical Notice*. It is our opinion that Engelmann's work does not give Ramsey's challenges to Wittgenstein's philosophy fair attention. Ramsey's criticism deserves more historical justice. He is central to Wittgenstein coming back to philosophy in 1929. There is also a decisive mention of games required to grasp the nature of logic. Ramsey was reassessing the color exclusion problem in his 1927 *Facts and Propositions*, not investigated by Engelmann. Wittgenstein used games as a philosophical tool later on in the 1930s. Further, in Engelmann's work there is a very marginal treatment of the special form of time, although it is one of the Tractarian objects' logical forms and brought up several difficulties for Wittgenstein and prompted his return to philosophy; Engelmann gives much more attention to phenomenological problems related to space and colours, the two remaining forms of the Tractarian objects (*Tractatus*, 2.0251). We also missed any kind of discussion concerning the problems of how Wittgenstein's phenomenology in his transitional period should be dealt with in comparison to those of other important phenomenologists, Husserl's for instance. Nor is Brower's and Dummett's verificationism mentioned. This is a gap since the former's constructivism was allegedly an influence for Wittgenstein's return to philosophy (DUMMETT, 1978) and the later uses Wittgensteinian ideas from this transitional period to ground some anti-realist approaches to semantic and mathematics (MARION, 1998).

The second Chapter of Engelmann's book is entitled "Russell's causal theory of Meaning, Rule-Following, the Calculus Conception, and the Invention of the Genetic Method". Here Engelmann shows how Wittgenstein reacts to Russell's causal theories of meaning in *The Analysis of Mind*, and to Ogden and Richards's in the book *The Meaning of Meaning*. Russell presents a monistic conception, defending that matter and mind are both composed of sensations. In this account, the relation between word and object is explained causally: a word relates causally with either an image into the mind or material things in the world. More than that, there are causal laws governing the way we use words (ENGELMANN, 2013, p. 66). Ogden and Richards's theory is primarily concerned with social and psychological factors underlying the causal relations of meaning with the aim of disqualifying the importance of introspection it is accorded in Russell's view. Engelmann maintains that an explanation involving psychology, in Wittgenstein's view, is not of any help. In this chapter, Engelmann makes much use of parts of Wittgenstein's "Philosophical Remarks" and the notes edited as "Wittgenstein

and Vienna Circle", primarily to deal with dear traditional philosophical discussions such as the nature of intentionality, the role of memory and the arbitrariness and autonomy of grammar. Engelmann says that "It is very useful, therefore, to go into more details of Russell's views on the matter." (Ibid., p. 73). For our part we think it would have been useful to have had few more pages on this, when the theory of Russell was roughly sketched. It is discussed very quickly; a longer explanation was expected. In the previous chapter, for example, there is a rather unnecessary explanation of the views in philosophy of mathematics of Frege and Russell in the context of Wittgenstein's phenomenology, whereas here, where explanation is needed, it is not provided.

The third chapter of Engelmann's book is called "The *Big Typescript*, the *Tractatus*, Sraffa, and the Anthropological View". It investigates Sraffa's motivation for Wittgenstein's anthropological view, as the latter begins to introduce primitive languages to develop philosophical criticisms. Engelmann discusses Wittgenstein's transition from looking for empirical verification of sentences to searching for criteria to justify their use. Central in this chapter is the notion of perspicuity of grammar in a more comprehensive concept to deal with the linkage between propositions and the world, expectation/command/desire and fulfilment, rules and its application. Here, Engelmann returns to the Tractarian discussion of how a sign becomes a symbol by showing how Wittgenstein began to reject the need of an abstract notation and turned his attention to ordinary languages. In this context, to elucidate grammar means to bring it in the form of a game with rules. It is noteworthy that languages of gestures as well as many primitive languages, which the anthropological view highlights, if taken in isolation, don't fit into the central role that Wittgenstein used to ascribe to sentences in the logical calculus.

The BT, Wittgenstein's projected book, as well as material to be presented in his book with Waismann, is extensively examined in this chapter. This work "can be taken as an intermediate philosophy between the PR and the PI" (ENGELMANN, 2013, p. 114). It is different from the PI, which grounds its critiques on the genetic method in that it is grounded on the calculus conception. As Engelmann's puts it, it is, in fact, "the only work where Wittgenstein systematically presents the calculus conception" (Ibid., 2013). This conception has the priority in Engelmann's exposition, over the genetic method, but "one should not underestimate its use in the BT" (Ibid., op. cit.). The topics of this chapter are related to discussions with Russell and the explanation of the nature of necessity based on the calculus conception of language. The idea is to equate language with a, calculus and system of rules. Engelmann points out that the genetic method and the notion of 'grammar' are grounded in the calculus conception (Ibid., p. 116). The rules of language are the main concern to Wittgenstein. In fact, at that period, he thought that the perspicuity needed to avoid misunderstanding in language should be given by a list of its rules. We think it is important to note, however, that anthropological and pragmatist features are to be seen before BT and PG in the very rise of the notion of games in Wittgenstein's philosophy, when he is, for instance, discussing Frege's *Grundgesetze II* with Waismann. Moreover, Engelmann's book presents no systematic introduction to *Tractatus*, always presupposed in his discussions. In this chapter the discussion of the *Tractatus* is entangled with discussions of BT. It is problematic that a book on the development

of Wittgenstein's philosophy after the problems with his first work does not present the *Tractatus* before the entire first half of the book. Moreover, the difference between and evolution of games, calculus and language games is not discussed<sup>1</sup>. This, in turn, explains why Engelmann fails to see that the anthropological discussion about normativity began with the axioms of geometry and games early in the 30's, not just in the discussions with Sraffa, as pointed by Medina (2002).

In the Chapter 4 of his book "The Road to the *Philosophical Investigations* (*Blue Book, Brown Book, German Brown Book* and MS 142)", Engelmann addresses how and why Wittgenstein's central notion of grammar has changed. His former concept of grammar was presented as a discipline to tabulate the rules of language and to present the limits of sense, while his later conception was meant to be a description of practices related to our use of words and their surroundings (it is not clear why Engelmann uses 'surrounding' and not 'context', as, for example, Medina does). Grammar should be taken as use, not a discipline that tabulates rules of a calculus. After *Philosophical Grammar* until PI, the notion of grammar is taken as a description involving the use of words related to practices. Engelmann identifies three reasons for the shift on the old notion: (i) the project of establishing clear limits of sense is abandoned; (ii) there is a tension between assumptions involving this notion as used to determine the limits of sense and the position of neutrality Wittgenstein aspires to; and (iii) the idea of 'grammar' generates resistance of the readers. Engelmann also points out that the writing styles after 1933 may be due to the need to give voice to interlocutors, those who are to be led to recognize philosophical confusion. It is in the *Blue Book* where the new style first occurs and Wittgenstein seems to conflate nonsense with uselessness, in the context of the assimilation of genetic methods in the use of primitive languages in order to deal with philosophical views. For the first time, it is fully appreciated that there is no clear limits of language, sense and sentence. This new style is a way to couple the interlocutor's metaphysical temptations with new doubts and questions using dialogues as philosophical leitmotif. It is method of counteracting the effects of bad analogies to embrace the vagueness of language instead of full determination of sense. Engelmann also shows how Wittgenstein begun to criticise his former attitude in taking language as a calculus. At the time of BT, Wittgenstein was also misled by false analogies and did not understand that the interconnection of words has its background in the practices of our lives. Accordingly, the question which should be pursued in the activity of dissolving philosophical problems is: are you satisfied with your philosophical explanation? Philosophical activity should remove the temptation of metaphysics because we are puzzled by false analogies, comparisons and pictures. This shows why tribes and societies associated with a form of life are so central in Wittgenstein's later philosophy. He introduces very simple examples of alternative societies and then increases complexities. Engelmann holds that this is an imaginative use of philosophical reasoning, as one can imagine how a metaphysician comes to defend what he defends. In this chapter, Engelmann also argues that the rise of family resemblance is designed to combat the need to find a common feature in several different

<sup>1</sup> For that see, for example, Lugg, 2013 and Schroeder, 2013.

phenomena. However, the last part of this chapter, when Engelmann approaches the second project with Waismann, seems misplaced. It appears right after the presentation of the *Brown Book*, but shows a lot of features of the BT. The latter is not under discussion in this chapter. Maybe these considerations were better located in the previous chapter.

At the beginning of his final chapter, entitled "The *Philosophical Investigations*", Engelmann explains that its aim is not to give an account of the PI as a whole, but to apply the results of all previous chapters to elucidate the main aspects of PI. The author defends what he calls the "right light" under which to read the book, namely as an attack of Wittgenstein's earlier philosophical tendencies. There is also the claim that the 'old grammar' of the BT is not at work in the PI, based on an elucidation of "the role of 'grammatical remarks'" (ENGELMANN, 2013, p. 221). According to Engelmann, in the PI "Wittgenstein operates at a pre-theoretical level" (Ibid., p. 221). At this level, we investigate how philosophical problems first arise. In this chapter, Engelmann emphasizes how his main contributions in the book, namely his account of the genetic method and the introduction of the anthropological view, come together in Wittgenstein's later work. He shows the need in Wittgenstein's method of intermediate links (analogies that partially hold), for instance, for investigating how primitive languages undermine the *Tractatus*'s notions of essence of language and limits of sense and how it refuses BT and PG notion of rules of grammar which give the limits of sense. The detailing of intermediate links is a method against idealized views of language presented in his former works. The famous builder language, for instance, should encourage the reader to raise some important questions, as: In the primitive language are there sentences? Are they descriptive, representational? Are they compositional? Is there negation there? Are there logical operators? According to Engelmann's account, the bipolarity of propositions and the Law of the Excluded Middle underly the necessary existence of simples, which are assumed as condition of possibility for the determination of sense in the *Tractatus*. However, his discussions of Wittgenstein's logic seem outdated in view of current discussions on logic as the proof theory vs. model theory, the possibility of the revision of logic, the emergence and nature of non-classical logic and the very notion of normativity of logic in the context of the logical pluralism. We believe Wittgenstein's philosophy might be useful for those discussions if not insularized in exegetical questions of how to read the introduction and final remarks of the *Tractatus* and not isolated in the history of what was Wittgenstein's change of mind in what period. Wittgenstein's philosophy should and could be brought into discussion with contemporary philosophy.

Although Engelmann's book has no discussion of ethics or aesthetics and culture, and very little on mathematics, and it does not hint how Wittgenstein thought has evolved after PI, it is an undisputable reference concerning Wittgenstein's philosophical development.

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