

Session 12 extracts: Architecture: crossing the fjord

Gesture

- BB p84 s11 It is natural for us to call gestures, [...] elements or instruments of language. (We talk sometimes of a language of gestures.) The pictures [diagrams...] and other instruments of language which have a similar function I shall call patterns. (This explanation, as others which we have given, is vague, and meant to be vague.) We may say that words and patterns have different kinds of functions.
- RP vol.I s435 [...] And yet after all there is a paradigm outside the theme: namely the rhythm of our language, of our thinking and feeling. And the theme is also in its turn a new bit of our language, it is incorporated in it; we learn a new *gesture*.

Architecture

- CV p26 Remember the impression made by good architecture,
MS 156a 25r: that it expresses a thought. One would like to respond
ca. 1932-1934 to it too with a gesture.
- CV p49 Architecture is a *gesture*. Not every purposive
MS 126 15r: movement of the human body is a gesture. Just as
28.10.1942 little as every functional building is architecture.
- RP vol.1 s341 [...] If we see the name, the works come to mind, and
if we think of the works, so does the name. We utter
the name with reverence.

The name turns into a gesture; into an architectonic
form.

Structure & rules

- TLP 3.42 A proposition can determine only one place in logical
space: nevertheless the whole of logical space must
already be given by it.

[...]

(The logical scaffolding surrounding a picture
determines logical space. The force of a proposition
reaches through the whole of logical space.)
- TLP s4.023 [...] A proposition constructs a world with the help of
a logical scaffolding, so that one can actually see
from the proposition how everything stands logically

if it is true. One can draw inferences from a false proposition.

TLP s6.124 The propositions of logic describe the scaffolding of the world, or rather they represent it. They have no 'subject-matter'. They presuppose that names have meaning and elementary propositions sense; and that is their connexion with the world. It is clear that something about the world must be indicated by the fact that certain combinations of symbols – whose essence involves the possession of a determinate character – are tautologies. This contains the decisive point.

PI pt.1 s217 "How am I able to obey a rule?" – if this is not a question about causes, then it is about the justification for my following the rule in the way I do.

If I have exhausted the justifications I have reached bedrock, and my spade is turned. Then I am inclined to say: "This is simply what I do."

(Remember that we sometimes demand definitions for the sake not of their content, but of their form. Our requirement is an architectural one; the definition a kind of ornamental coping that supports nothing.)

RFM s35 But if we do say it [a mathematical expression] – what are we to do next? In what practice is this proposition anchored? It is for the time being a piece of mathematical architecture which hangs in the air, and looks as if it were, let us say, an architrave, but not supported by anything and supporting nothing.

PI Pt.2 s341-
s342 341. A dispute may arise over the correct result of a calculation (say, of a rather long addition). But such disputes are rare and of short duration. They can be decided, as we say, 'with certainty'.

Mathematicians don't in general quarrel over the result of a calculation. (This is an important fact.) – Were it otherwise: if, for instance, one mathematician was convinced that a figure had altered unperceived, or that his or someone else's memory had been deceptive, and so on – then our concept of 'mathematical certainty' would not exist.

342. Even then it might still be said: "While we can never know what the result of a calculation is, for all that, it always has a quite definite result. (God knows it.) Mathematics is indeed of the highest certainty – though we possess only a crude likeness of it."

Architecture as analogy

CV p24
MS 112 46:
14.10.1931

Work on philosophy – like work in architecture in many respects – is really more work on oneself. On one's own conception. On how one sees things. (And what one expects of them.)

LA p13 s9-10

9. You design a door and look at it and say: "Higher, higher, higher ... oh, all right." (Gesture) What is this? Is it an expression of content?

10. Perhaps the most important thing in connection with aesthetics is what maybe called aesthetic reactions, e.g. discontent, disgust, discomfort. [...]

LA p31 s5

[...] Architecture: – draw a door – "Slightly too large." You might say: "He has an excellent eye for measurement." No –he sees it hasn't the right expression-it doesn't make the right gesture.

If you showed me a stick of different length, I'd not have known. Also, in this case I don't make queer gestures and noise; but I do when I see a door or a face.

I say, e.g. of a smile : "It wasn't quite genuine."

"Oh bosh, the lips were parted only 1/1000th of an inch too much. Does it matter?"

"Yes."

"Then it is because of certain consequences."

But not only that: the reaction is different.

Sources:

LA: *Lectures & Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief* (1938-1946); (ed. Cyril Barrett; 1967)

[Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief \(rhga.ru\)](#) (15.03.2021)

PI Pt. 1 & 2: *Philosophical Investigations* (1953); (ed. G.E.M. Anscombe, P.M.S. Hacker & Joachim Schulte; rev. 4th ed P.M.S Hacker & Joachim Schulte; 2009)

[Philosophical Investigations \(usp.br\)](#) (15.03.2021)

TLP: *Tractatus Logico-philosophicus* (1922); (trans. D.F. Pears & B.F. McGuinness; 1963)

[Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus / Side-by-side-by-side-edition / Ludwig Wittgenstein \(umass.edu\)](#) (15.03.2021)

Extracts from: *The Collected Works of Ludwig Wittgenstein*; [Folio Bound VIEWS - The Collected Works of Ludwig Wittgenstein \(informationphilosopher.com\)](#) (14.02.2021)

BB: *The Blue and Brown Books* (1933-1934); (Ludwig Wittgenstein; 2nd ed. 1969)

CV: *Culture and Value* (1977); (ed. Georg Henrik von Wright with Heikki Nyman; rev. 2nd ed; 1998)

RFM: *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics* (1937-1944); (3rd ed. G.H. von Wright, R. Rhees & G.E.M. Anscombe; 1983)

RP vol. I: *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology: Volume I* (1945-1949); (ed. G.E.M. Anscombe & G.H. von Wright; 1980)

MS: Manuscript – available from [www.wittgensteinsource.org](#) (14.02.2021)