

**The Relation of the Later Philosophy of
Wittgenstein to the Philosophy of *Being and
Time***

By Karim-Pasha Ladbon
University College, London

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Abstract

The thesis is about the relation of the later philosophy of Wittgenstein to the philosophy of *Being and Time*. After a brief discussion of the philosophy of *Being and Time*, I offer what I take to be a conventional view of the relation, according to which *Being and Time* falls foul of the later Wittgenstein's critique of traditional philosophy- in particular by misconceiving the nature of the verb 'to be', which leads to its investigation of the 'meaning of Being'. I then discuss Wittgenstein's later philosophy in greater detail- first his *Remarks on Frazer's Golden Bough* and then the *Philosophical Investigations*- in order to understand more clearly its aims and assumptions. On the light of this, I offer a more detailed interpretation of *Being and Time*- and in particular its key notion- Being- so as to show that not only does its philosophy not fall foul of the later Wittgenstein's critique of traditional philosophy, but also that it shares a profound kinship with the later philosophy of Wittgenstein, such that it is a logical next step in philosophy for an adherent to Wittgenstein's later philosophy.

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The Relation of the Later Philosophy of Wittgenstein to the Philosophy of *Being and Time*

Chapter One: Introduction

What is the relation of the later philosophy of Wittgenstein to the philosophy of Heidegger's greatest work, *Being and Time*? Or- less abstractly- what should someone who is an adherent of the later philosophy of Wittgenstein say about the philosophy of *Being and Time*? The aim of this thesis is to answer these questions. But first of all, I will explain why I think these questions are worth asking.

I think they are worth asking because I believe that by answering them as they should be answered, we will come to see that the philosophy of *Being and Time* does not fall foul of the later Wittgenstein's critique of philosophy, and that indeed it shares a profound kinship with Wittgenstein's later philosophy. But why would this be an interesting outcome?

Well, what is at stake with these questions is not merely whether one set of philosophical doctrines is compatible with another. At stake are the nature and consequences of Wittgenstein's later philosophy: whether or not other forms of philosophy are possible once one has accepted Wittgenstein's later philosophy and in particular its critique of other forms of philosophy.

I think it is generally believed by philosophers that Wittgenstein's later philosophy consists largely of a critique that could be extended to cover all other forms of philosophy; and that this critique is such that, if one goes along with it, philosophy can only really carry on just as a kind of therapy or treatment in the Wittgensteinian mould. Nor are such beliefs surprising, given that it seems in accordance with what the later Wittgenstein says about his philosophy, and other forms of philosophy¹.

But in this thesis I will argue against this view of Wittgenstein's later philosophy. I will argue that the philosophy of *Being and Time* does not fall foul of the later Wittgenstein's critique of other forms of philosophy; and more than this, that the philosophies of the later Wittgenstein and *Being and Time* are such that they share a profound kinship- a kinship in the light of which the philosophy of *Being and Time* may seem like a natural- if not necessary- next step for an adherent of the later philosophy of Wittgenstein.

I will then, when I answer my questions, be attempting to show that Wittgenstein's later philosophy allows to its adherents a philosophical future richer than one consisting of just philosophy as

¹ For example, see section 109 of the *Philosophical Investigations*, where Wittgenstein sees philosophical problems as arising from 'the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language', and his philosophy as a battle against such bewitchment. Here, as elsewhere, Wittgenstein doesn't make any distinction between 'good' philosophy and 'bad' philosophy, beyond the distinction he makes between his own way of philosophising and those ways of philosophising that he criticises. For philosophy as treatment, see section 254; and for philosophy as therapy, see section 133. Again, in these sections, Wittgenstein's way of talking seems to imply that the only good kind of philosophy is his philosophy as treatment/therapy.

I should perhaps qualify what I've said by saying that I know of no philosopher who has explicitly stated that nothing that could reasonably be called philosophy is possible *in principle* on the later Wittgenstein's view. I think, rather, that there is just a general consensus that the later Wittgenstein's critique of philosophy is pretty wide-ranging, and that there are no obvious candidates for a type of philosophy that might escape the later Wittgenstein's critique. Philosophers talk about the later

therapy in the Wittgensteinian mould. To do this would, I hope, be enough to justify my thesis. But I will also be trying to show that the possibility of this richer philosophical life comes from where it might least have been expected- from Heidegger. And I think that, if I succeed, this will be a surprising result, and therefore increase the interest of, and justification for, my thesis. For Heidegger's philosophy, to anyone who knows a little of his work (together with something of the later Wittgenstein's) may easily seem the epitome of the kind of philosophy that arises from a philosopher's bewitchment by language. After all, didn't he become ensnared in one of language's most venerable traps- the verb 'to be'²?

In the course of answering my questions, I will, of course, be offering my interpretations of the later philosophy of Wittgenstein and the philosophy of *Being and Time*. While I don't think either of these interpretations is very unorthodox or surprising, I do think that they present these two philosophies in a way that is, for what its worth, haven't seen anywhere else. Ideally, I would have compared and contrasted my interpretations against those of others, but this is impossible, given the constraints on the length of this thesis. So instead I will have to just put forward the case for my interpretations as best as I can, without dealing with the alternatives. However, I do discuss other

Wittgenstein's critique of 'philosophy' or 'metaphysics' in a way that isn't very decisive as between 'every conceivable type of philosophy' and 'philosophy of a certain kind'.

² For an example of someone who holds this view of Heidegger, one can take Herman Philipse, a discussion of whose article- *Heidegger's Question of Being and the 'Augustinian Picture' of Language*- will form the bulk of chapter three. I think that, given the way Philipse treats Wittgenstein's later philosophy and applies it to *Being and Time*, he may be thought of as someone who has worked out in detail the views that many philosophers would instinctively hold on the question of the relation of the philosophy of the later Wittgenstein to the philosophy of *Being and Time*. Therefore the purpose of the discussion of Philipse in chapter three is not only to show why one might think that *Being and Time* falls foul of the later Wittgenstein's critique of philosophy, but also to help justify my claim that it is very surprising that *Being and Time*'s philosophy should be even compatible-i.e. should not fall foul of the critique of- Wittgenstein's later philosophy.

ways in which one might interpret Heidegger from a Wittgensteinian point of view (see the discussion on Philippe in chapter three and the brief mention of Dreyfus, below) and the various 'theoretical' ways of interpreting Wittgenstein are implicitly criticised in my own interpretation of Wittgenstein (see the start of chapter four- Karl-Otto Apel's interpretation is cursorily noted there as an example of these).

All this is connected with a wider point about the scope of this thesis. Its aims are ambitious. To try and write about either Wittgenstein's later philosophy or the philosophy of *Being and Time* would be daunting enough, and it is perhaps rather foolhardy of me to try and write about both. I am particularly conscious of my inadequacy when it comes to Heidegger. He wrote so much. And the obscurity of *Being and Time*, even- and especially- with respect to its central topic- Being- is such that it seems to demand an extensive exploration not only of Heidegger's writings, both pre- and post-*Being and Time*, but also of the many, many other philosophers who influenced Heidegger's thought, from the Pre-Socratics to Husserl. I am in no position to offer this. And the restriction on the length of this thesis alone prevents me from attempting it.

The upshot of all this is that my treatment of my subject will be not be as thorough as I could have wished. I will have to state many of my views succinctly, without perhaps doing sufficient justice to all that could be said for and against, and there will not be as much opportunity as I could have wished to weigh my interpretations of Wittgenstein and Heidegger against those of others. But I chose to write about the subject of my thesis because I believed that the *Being and Time* has something important and right to say to us, and that if

this is the case, it can't possibly fall foul of the later Wittgenstein's critique of philosophy. And I hope this motivation of my thesis will mitigate some of its shortcomings.

One final point. It might be thought that my claims aren't so extravagant- or at least novel- as I've made out. Perhaps I'm exaggerating the extent to which Wittgenstein and Heidegger generally appear to be incompatible. After all, there has long been a recognition that Wittgenstein and Heidegger share philosophical preoccupations³. Admittedly pointing out parallels between philosophers doesn't necessarily amount to saying anything significant about the relation between them. But there have been previous attempts to reconcile the later philosophy of Wittgenstein and Heidegger's philosophy.

Needless to say, I know of no such attempt that I think does justice to both philosophers. I'll mention one of these attempts in chapter three (that by Karl-Otto Apel)- not in nearly enough detail to do him justice, but at least I'll say something about one of the places where I think he goes wrong. But here I think I'd just like to mention one more attempt- or at least something that might seem like an attempt.

Hubert Dreyfus has written a very influential commentary on division one of *Being and Time* (called *Being-in-the-world*- see bibliography) which in some respects might be thought of as an attempt to interpret Heidegger in Wittgensteinian terms. Thus Dreyfus, who sees the central, positive aim of *Being and Time* as being to

³ For example, they are both in their ways concerned with dismantling the philosophical tradition; they both think that many of the traditional problems of philosophy are pseudo-problems; they both employ description as part of their method; etc.

explain intelligibility, says things such as 'For both Heidegger and Wittgenstein, then, the source of the intelligibility of the world is the average public practices through which alone there can be any understanding at all'. Admittedly Dreyfus doesn't think that Heidegger and Wittgenstein agree on everything⁴, and so, as I said, it is not right to think that in his commentary, Dreyfus is attempting to reconcile the later philosophy of Wittgenstein with the philosophy of *Being and Time*. But I think that Dreyfus's work could certainly be seen as a step towards such a reconciliation.

But as sympathetic as I am to attempts to reconcile in some sense Wittgenstein and Heidegger, I think that Dreyfus's interpretation does too much violence to Heidegger's text to be successful. He too boldly takes Heideggerian terms and glosses them in a way I find unconvincing. Thus, at the very beginning of his commentary proper, he says: 'Remember through this difficult section that what Heidegger has in mind when he talks about being is the intelligibility correlative with our everyday background practices' (c.f. pg. 10). I think that this doesn't do justice to the immense difference in the backgrounds and preoccupations of Wittgenstein and Heidegger. To paraphrase something that Wittgenstein says of Frazer (see chapter four), all that Dreyfus does is to make Heidegger's philosophy plausible to people who think as he does.

The plan of this thesis is as follows. First of all, as an essential preliminary to the main business of the thesis, I will give a brief

⁴ See, for example, page 7: 'To begin with, Heidegger and Wittgenstein have a very different understanding of the background of everyday activity. Wittgenstein is convinced that the practices that make up the human form of life are a hopeless tangle.... Heidegger, on the contrary, thinks that the commonsense background has an elaborate structure that it is the job of the existential analytic to lay out'

introduction to the philosophy of *Being and Time*. I will then examine why one might think that the philosophy of *Being and Time* falls foul of Wittgenstein's critique of philosophy. I will do this in part by looking at an article by Herman Philipse called *Heidegger's Question of Being and the 'Augustinian Picture' of Language*. This will allow us to see what must be done if I am to argue successfully that Heidegger's philosophy does not fall foul of Wittgenstein's critique of philosophy. I will then examine Wittgenstein's later philosophy in some detail, in order to elucidate its nature. Finally I will return to a discussion of Heidegger's philosophy, so as to show that it does not fall foul of Wittgenstein's critique of philosophy, and that in fact both philosophies have a profound kinship, which makes the philosophy of *Being and Time* a natural next step for an adherent to Wittgenstein's later philosophy.

Chapter Two: The Philosophy of *Being and Time*

I will now attempt to give a brief introduction to the philosophy of *Being and Time*, by way of preparation for the discussion of it that will follow⁵. But this will be no easy task. After all, *Being and Time* is a long and difficult work. And any work as long and complex would be virtually impossible to sum up in so brief a space as is available here. Moreover, the peculiar nature of *Being and Time* presents special problems to a would-be epitomiser. For *Being and Time* is not a work of arguments, as conventionally understood- sets of propositions that entail a conclusion- all connected together in an overreaching argument to form the architecture of the whole. Instead, *Being and Time* has many long, almost poetic descriptive passages- as well as many enigmatic statements about 'Being'- that often have no clear, logical argument, and can seem to depend for their impact mainly on the force of Heidegger's writing. These things are difficult to convey without extensive quotation and detailed discussion of the text.

Given this, I will adopt the strategy of confining my introduction to a brief discussion of the general aim and structure of *Being and Time*, together with remarks on the main theme of the work- Being. I will briefly discuss the preface of *Being and Time*, together with the first five or so sections of the introduction⁶. It is in this crucial part of the work

⁵ All the quotations from *Being and Time* are taken from the standard English translation by Macquarrie and Robinson (see bibliography) and all page references are made in accordance with the pagination of the later German editions, as marked in the margins of the Macquarrie and Robinson translation.

⁶ This seems like a good place to say a word about the structure of *Being and Time*. The work was originally conceived as consisting of two parts (*Teilen* in German), each consisting of three divisions (or *Abschnitten*), together with a two-part introduction and a preface. However, the third division of the first part Heidegger burnt, and the second part was never written, although there are Heidegger writings that cover much of the proposed ground of of this part (c.f. the 1929 book on Kant and the

that the seeds are sown from which the rest of the book springs. In particular, it is in this part of the work that Heidegger sets up the idea of Being, and the problem of Being, and discusses how he will solve it. He so sets these things up that the rest of the work is in some ways simply the realisation of what has already been sketched out in the first twenty or so pages⁷. I shall not discuss those sections of the introduction in which Heidegger deals in detail with his methodology. These will also be dealt with in chapter five of this thesis.

My brief introduction to the philosophy of *Being and Time* will raise many questions, and leave many of them unanswered. This is deliberate on my part, but it is also a natural consequence of the nature of *Being and Time*. We are nowhere in the work given a simple, straightforward definition- either in plain ordinary language, or conventional philosophical language- of what Heidegger means by his talk of 'Being'. And even in the introduction- and especially in those parts at the beginning of the work that I intend to discuss here- it can seem as if Heidegger has forgotten to add the vital piece of explanation that will suddenly make it clear what he's actually talking about- so thoroughly are we plunged *in medias res*. To get any idea of what Heidegger is trying to get at with his talk of Being, one has to take a wide view, look at the uses he puts this talk to, and then try and interpret it. But I will defer doing this until the last chapter of this thesis. I want initially to present an introduction to *Being and Time* that will

early work on Aristotle from 1921-23). As *Being and Time* stands now, then, it consists of a preface, a two-part introduction, and the first two divisions of the first part. The two divisions are made up of six chapters each, and these and the two parts of the introduction are made up of sections, numbered consecutively throughout the work. In dealing with the philosophy of *Being and Time*, it is important to remember that it is an unfinished work, and one that never fulfills its goal in the form in which we have it.

⁷ In this respect the introduction to *Being and Time* is similar to the introductions of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* and Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind*.

serve as a basis for later discussions, and which will not pre-empt my interpretation in chapter five. My introduction, then, leaves many questions unanswered, and is hopefully quite neutral between different interpretations of *Being and Time*. All I want to do is to set out the 'grammar' of Heidegger's talk about Being, so that we can then go on to discuss what it might actually mean.

Being and Time begins with a brief preface of about half a page. And though the preface raises more questions than it answers, it does at least establish some of the main outlines of what follows.

The first words of the preface are a quotation from Plato's dialogue, *The Sophist*⁸. This quotation straightaway tells us something about the general nature and subject matter of *Being and Time*. The *Sophist* is a work of ontology⁹, and part of a long philosophical discourse that stretches from the pre-Socratics, through Plato and Aristotle, and on, through the Middle Ages, to modern philosophy. This discourse has, of course, taken many turns, and its purpose has been conceived of in different ways by different philosophers. Questions about the meaning of the verb 'to be' have overlapped with metaphysical questions about what it is to exist, and what there is that exists, and myriad answers have been proposed. But it at least may be comforting-especially considering the strangeness of most of what

⁸ The quotation- minus breathing marks- runs as follows: '...δηλον γαρ ως υμεις μεν ταυτα (τι ποτε βοθλεσθε σημαινειν οποταν ον φθεγγησθε) παλαι γινωσκετε, ημεις δε προ του μεν ωομειθα, νθν δ' ηπορηκαμεν...'. And it is translated as follows: 'For manifestly you have long been aware of what you mean when you use the expression 'being'. We, however, who used to think we understood it, have now become perplexed'. The quotation comes from *The Sophist*, 244a.

⁹ The starting point of *The Sophist* is- as should not be surprising given its title- an attempt to define what a sophist is. But in the course of the discussion, we get a long digression which involves various forms and cognates of the verb 'to be', and which is, depending on your point of view, and which part of the dialogue is under discussion, about the various meanings of the verb 'to be', or about the metaphysics.

follows- that Heidegger, at least, sees himself very much as working within the tradition of ontology (even though it soon emerges he had a very idiosyncratic take on this tradition ¹⁰).

As for what follows the *Sophist* quote, it is worth quoting a large part of the central paragraph of the preface:

Do we in our time have an answer to the question of what we really mean by the word 'being'? Not at all. So it is fitting that we should raise anew *the question of the meaning of Being*. But are we nowadays even perplexed at our inability to understand the expression 'Being'? Not at all. So first of all we must reawaken an understanding for the meaning of this question. Our aim in the following treatise is to work out the question of the meaning of *Being* and to do so concretely.

This passage introduces the idea that we are ignorant of the meaning of the expression 'being' (the German word is *seiend*, the present participle of the verb *sein*- 'to be'). This ties up with the *Sophist* quotation, which also contains a present participle- *ov*). And this idea leads- for Heidegger, at least, though the reason why may not yet be apparent to us- to the contention that we therefore need to raise anew 'the question of the meaning of Being'. (In the passage, the word 'meaning' translates *Sinn*, while 'Being', here and throughout this thesis, translates the substantive *Sein*, which is- obviously- connected to the verb 'sein'). The aim of *Being and Time*, then, 'is to work out the question of the meaning of *Being*'.

¹⁰ See pg. 21-22 for a brief account of the 'history of ontology', as Heidegger saw it.

There is much in this passage that is unclear- for example, the way in which we can be said to be ignorant of the meaning of 'being'. After all, we know how to use the word, and the verb from which it comes, and this might be thought to be a pretty good indication that we do understand the meaning of the word 'being'¹¹. Also, the exact nature of the link between the meaning of 'being' and the meaning of Being is not explained- it isn't even clear what kind of 'thing' Being is, or in what sense it can be said to have a meaning. A further element is added when Heidegger talks about our understanding- or lack of understanding- of the expression 'Being'. But again, how exactly this fits in with everything else- and what the link is between the meaning of Being and the meaning of 'Being'- is left unclear.

All this is very confusing. But at least there is the small consolation of the fact that Heidegger acknowledges that even the question of the meaning of Being- let alone its answer- is foreign to us. Along with the raising of the question Heidegger says he 'must reawaken an understanding of the meaning of this question'.

We have in the preface, then, various elements, from which the rest of *Being and Time* grows. We have the question of the meaning of Being, which it is the aim of the book to work out, and which is linked to our lack of understanding of the meaning of 'being' and of the meaning of 'Being'; we have the fact that we are not even perplexed by our inability to understand the meaning of 'Being'; and also the link to the ontological tradition. But we are not really any the wiser about what is at stake here or about how the various elements fit together.

¹¹ Nor does Heidegger ever deny that we are capable of using the verb 'to be' in a perfectly acceptable and correct manner.

Things do, however, get slightly clearer as we advance through the first sections of the introduction.

In the first section of the introduction, Heidegger discusses in greater detail the need to restate the question of Being, and as a part of this he discusses the presuppositions on the basis of which it has been thought that there is no need to ask the question. He does this in order to show that the presuppositions are groundless, and that therefore the question of the meaning of Being should be restated.

Heidegger discusses three presuppositions: Being has been thought to be the most universal of concepts; or it has thought to be indefinable; or to be self-evident. We will consider these presuppositions in turn as, in discussing them, Heidegger sheds a little more light on the notion of Being.

With regards to the first presupposition, Heidegger says '...[I]t has been maintained that 'Being' is the 'most universal' concept'. A little later he continues as follows:

But the 'universality' of 'Being' is not that of a *class* or *genus*. The term 'Being' does not define that realm of entities which is uppermost when these are articulated conceptually according to genus and species: *οὐτε τὸ ὄν γένος*. The 'universality' of Being '*transcends*' any universality of genus'. In medieval ontology 'Being' is designated as a '*transcendens*'. Aristotle himself knew the unity of this transcendental 'universal' as a *unity of analogy* in contrast to the multiplicity of the highest generic concepts applicable to things.

Here we have more tying in with the ontological tradition, in this case via both the explicit mention of Aristotle, and the fragmentary Greek quotation (which is from *Metaphysics*, B3, 998 b 22). But what is chiefly at stake in this passage is the kind of universality that belongs to Being. As the passage implies, we could think of the universality of Being as being that of a class or genus. And in this case we might think the question of the meaning of Being not worth asking. But what would this view of the universality of Being amount to?

I think the best way of understanding it is to think of the term 'Being' as, as it were, a mere label for the most universal class of things- the group made up of all the things that are- that exist. Along with this view could go a conception of the aim of ontology as being to answer the questions of what sort of things they are- i.e. what sort of things are in the class of Being, what sort of things exist- and of how they should be 'conceptually articulated' into genera and species. And along with this view wouldn't go the idea that one of the tasks of ontology is to investigate some strange entity or activity or state called Being.

On this view of the universality of Being, I think it is clear why it might be thought that 'Being' is the clearest of concepts, and one that needs no further discussion; the concept merely defines the set of things that there are in 'the world'- it merely delimits the area in which we then have to go to work as ontologists, classifying and explaining.

But Heidegger rejects this way of thinking about the universality of Being. For him, 'Being' does not merely define the most general class of things. But this is not because he thinks there are some things

outside the class of Being. Rather, the point is that, for Heidegger, 'Being' means something more than a mere label for the most universal class of entities.

But what kind of thing does Heidegger think Being is? A clue lies in Heidegger's reference to Aristotle.

Aristotle himself- like Heidegger- rejected the idea that Being denotes a universal genus or kind¹². Put crudely- and according to only one of many possible interpretations- one of the reasons Aristotle had for rejecting this idea was his belief that there are different senses of the verb 'to be'¹³. These different senses correspond to the different kinds of 'thing' that there are (this ties in with the classification of different kinds of thing in the *Categories*)¹⁴. Aristotle also thought that these different senses are united around some 'focal meaning'¹⁵. This is the sense in which substances- the things in a certain, primary category- are said to be. Thus, what it means for something in a

¹² See the *Metaphysics* reference above. It is, of course, no coincidence that Heidegger mentions Aristotle in the passage I've quoted. The sentence Heidegger quotes from translates as follows: 'But it is not possible that either unity or being should be a genus of things'. Here the word 'being' translates the Greek word *τὸ ὄν*. How exactly this term should be translated, and what it actually means, are open to debate. And I certainly don't mean to imply that Aristotle's term is an exact- or even vague- equivalent to Heidegger's. I'm only making the point that there may be parallels in the ways they treat their terms, given Heidegger's reference to Aristotle. My Aristotle quotations, here and below, are taken from the revised Oxford translation of the complete works of Aristotle (see bibliography).

¹³ In what sense Aristotle is concerned with the verb 'to be'- e.g. whether he is concerned with it solely, or primarily in its existential sense- is a matter for debate. But the answer doesn't effect the point I'm trying to make in regard to Heidegger.

¹⁴ For the various senses of 'to be', and their connection with different types of things, see *Metaphysics*, Z1, 1028 a 10-13: 'There are several senses in which a thing may be said to be... for in one sense it means what a thing is or a 'this', and in another sense it means that a thing is of a certain quality or quantity or has some such predicate asserted of it'.

¹⁵ For the idea of a focal meaning, see *Metaphysics*, Γ2, 1003 a 33-34: 'There are many senses in which a thing may be said to 'be', but they are related to one central point, one definite kind of thing, and are not homonymous'.

category other than that of substance to 'be' is dependent on the way in which the things in the primary category 'are'¹⁶.

How is this relevant to Heidegger? Well, the fact that Aristotle thinks there are different ways in which things can 'be' suggests- to put it no more strongly than that- that Being might be thought of as some kind of activity or state, of which there can be different varieties. Now, whatever Aristotle's attitude to such a view, there seems to be reason to suppose that Heidegger is thinking along these lines- after all, he doesn't just talk about the verb 'to be', or 'being', or the different ways in which things can be *said* to be. Heidegger also talks about Being- *Das Sein*, the substantive formed from the verb.

In favour of this idea is the fact that Heidegger often italicises the verb 'to be' in such a way as to suggest that he wishes to highlight the idea that 'Being' is something like a state or activity. Also, this interpretation would help explain the link between the idea that we can't understand 'being' and the idea that we need to raise the question of the meaning of Being- we may be able to use the verb 'to be', but we do not understand it in a certain sense, because we are not aware of, or do not know enough about, the activity or state that it describes¹⁷.

¹⁶ For the primacy of substance- here in terms of existence- see *Metaphysics*, Z1, 1028 a 32-35: 'Now there are several senses in which a thing is said to be primary; but substance is primary in every sense- in formula, in order of knowledge, in time. For of the other categories none can exist independently, but only substance'.

¹⁷ It is important to note, however, that Heidegger nowhere explicitly says that in talking about Being, he is talking about the state or activity that the verb 'to be' describes. If he had done so, then it would be an easy and obvious thing to convict Heidegger of falling foul of Wittgenstein's critique of philosophy.

So this can be our provisional conclusion- albeit one subject to change and clarification. Heidegger has in mind when he talks about Being something like a state or activity. At the very least, aspects of the 'grammar' of his talk about Being suggest this, although how this grammar is to be fleshed out as a philosophy still remains to be seen.

We come now to the second presupposition that Heidegger discusses. And what Heidegger says here would seem to concur with what we have just said about 'Being' referring to something like a state or activity. Heidegger says 'It has been maintained secondly that the concept of 'Being' is indefinable'. He then continues as follows:

This is deduced from its supreme universality, and rightly so, if *definitio fit per genus proximum et differentiam specificam*. Being cannot be conceived as an entity 'Being' cannot be derived from higher concepts by definition, nor can it be presented through lower ones. But does this imply that Being no longer offers a problem? Not at all.

The point being made here is that Being is not any kind of thing- or entity as the translation puts it. But, Heidegger says- and surely correctly- this doesn't mean that it doesn't pose any kind of problem. But for our current purposes, the important thing to note is that, since Being isn't an entity, nothing has been said against our provisional conclusion about Being.

Now the word entity is here- and elsewhere in the translation I'm quoting from- meant to stand for the term *Seiende*. Heidegger uses this word frequently. The term is derived from *seined*, the present participle

of the verb *sein*. Hence *Seiende* literally means 'a being' or 'something which is'. The fact that Heidegger chooses to use this term as his preferred way of talking about 'things', perhaps lends some support to the idea that Being is some kind of state or action; for by using this term, Heidegger encourages the idea that in talking about Being, he is talking about some kind of state or action of Being that is essential to things- or rather entities¹⁸.

We come now to the last presupposition. Heidegger says '...[I]† is held that Being is of all concepts the one that is self-evident'. He goes on as follows:

Whenever one cognises anything or makes an assertion, whenever one comports oneself towards entities, even towards oneself, some use is made of 'Being'; and this expression is held to be intelligible 'without further ado', just as everyone understands 'The sky is blue', 'I am merry', and the like. But here we have an average kind of intelligibility, which merely demonstrates that this is unintelligible. It makes manifest that in any way of comporting oneself towards entities as entities- even in any Being towards entities as entities- there lies *a priori* an enigma. The very fact that we already live in an understanding of Being and that the meaning of Being is still veiled in darkness proves that it is necessary in principle to raise the question again.

This is a very strange passage, in which much is unclear. How, for example, do we make use of 'Being' whenever we cognise something,

¹⁸ Heidegger does use the German words *Sache* and *Ding*- the last word in particular is used when talking about philosophical views that Heidegger wishes to criticise. The fact that these words have no verbal aspect will turn out to be significant (see chapter five).

make an assertion, etc.? But here we have again the link between the verb 'to be' and Being which we have seen a couple of times before.

We also find here the strange notion that, while the meaning of Being is 'veiled in darkness'- which we knew already- we do nevertheless 'live in an understanding of Being'. In what way this is so is unclear, despite what Heidegger says that we make use of the concept of 'Being' all the time - in cognising, making assertions, and so on. However, it is tempting to relate the idea that we understand Being, with the idea that Being has, in some sense, a meaning.

At the end of the first section of *Being and Time*, then, we have made some progress in our understanding of Heidegger's notion of Being, though key questions remain unanswered. Being would seem to be something like a kind of state or action of entities- the action we describe when we say that something 'is'- at least to judge from the way Heidegger talks about Being. And we live in an understanding of Being, though its meaning is veiled, though we have yet to find out in what sense Being has a meaning itself.

In section two of *Being and Time*, Heidegger discusses the formal structure of the question of Being, and a picture of what this question involves begins to emerge. Every inquiry, says Heidegger, has 'that which is asked about', 'that which is interrogated' and 'that which is to be found out by the asking'. As regards the question of Being, that which is asked about is Being; and that which is to be found out by the asking is the meaning of Being; and those things that are to be interrogated are entities. And why are entities to be interrogated? As

should come as no surprise, it is because 'Being' means the Being of entities' (pg. 6)¹⁹.

Which entity should be interrogated? In section two the answer is prefigured, when Heidegger discusses the priority of Dasein as regards the question of the meaning of Being- 'Dasein' being the term for the entities that we ourselves are²⁰. Dasein, Heidegger tells us, has priority, as regards the question of the meaning of Being, because 'in order to work out the question of Being adequately, we must make an entity- the inquirer- transparent in his own Being'. The idea of this is presumably that, in order to understand what is going on in an inquiry- and what should go on- one needs to know important aspects of the situation- for example what the inquirer is like. This doesn't apply in the case of, say, scientific research- we don't require an analysis of the cognitive powers of a scientist before we are prepared to accept his work. But there is in philosophy a well-established tradition of examining 'cognitive faculties', as a way of providing a sound basis for knowledge.

But it is in section four that it is explicitly stated that Dasein is the entity that should be interrogated. We are told 'that there is some way in which Dasein understands itself in its Being, and that to some degree it does so explicitly. And along with this fact goes the fact that *'Understanding of Being is itself a definite characteristic of Dasein's Being'*. This is a claim we have had before. And it turns out to be of

¹⁹ See also page 9: 'Being is always the Being of an entity'.

²⁰ See page 7: 'This entity which each of us is himself and which includes inquiring as one of the possibilities of its Being, we shall denote by the term 'Dasein'. It is important to note that when Heidegger uses the term 'Dasein', he doesn't mean 'human being' in the sense, say, of a particular type of animal. Rather, 'Dasein' refers to any person capable of engaging in the kind of inquiry that Heidegger is undertaking.

central importance. For it accounts for the fact that Dasein is in fact the entity to be interrogated. We must examine ourselves, and the way in which we understand Being- both our own Being and the Being of other entities.

Section five deals with the interrogation itself- the interrogation of ourselves. Just because we are the entities to be interrogated, this doesn't mean that the process will be easy. Nor should this surprise us, given what was said about how we have only an average understanding of Dasein, and how the meaning of Being is veiled from us. Heidegger develops this point:

Ontically²¹, of course, Dasein is not only close to us- even that which is closest: we *are* it, each of us, we ourselves. In spite of all this, or rather for just this reason, it is ontologically that which is farthest. To be sure, its ownmost Being is such that it has an understanding of that Being, and already maintains itself in each case as if its Being has been interpreted in some manner. But we are certainly not saying that when Dasein's own Being is thus interpreted pre-ontologically²² in the way which lies closest, this interpretation can be taken over as an appropriate clue, as if this way of understanding Being is what must emerge when one's ownmost state of Being is considered as an ontological theme. The kind of Being which belongs to Dasein is rather such that, in understanding its own Being, it has a tendency to do so

²¹ The term 'ontical' (*ontisch*) is not explicitly defined in *Being and Time*. But its meaning emerges relatively clearly. It means 'to do with entities' (as opposed to the term 'ontological' - 'to do with Being'). So this sentence of means: 'Dasein, considered as an entity, is the closest that which is closest to us'.

²² For the meaning of this term see pg. 12. Dasein understands Being, before it takes up the 'theoretical inquiry' of ontology. This understanding is, then, pre-ontological.

in terms of that entity towards which it comports itself proximally and in a way that is essentially constant- in terms of the world'.

We have here the idea that Dasein often interprets its own Being incorrectly on the basis of its understanding of the world. This would be were it not for the reference to Being- a very Wittgensteinian idea. For of central importance to Wittgenstein's philosophy is the idea that we often take 'pictures' or 'models' from one place, and mis-apply them in explaining other phenomena (see chapter four).

So the interrogation is to be a long, tortuous progress, in order to bypass our inadequate understanding of ourselves. Dasein is 'to be shown as it is *proximally and for the most part*- in its average everydayness'. And by paying attention to the 'basic state of Dasein's everydayness, 'we shall bring out the Being of this entity in a preparatory fashion'. A preparatory fundamental analysis of Dasein duly forms part one of the first division of *Being and Time*, and, as the introduction has it, it 'brings out the Being' of Dasein, although 'without interpreting its meaning'. On the way the analysis takes up various themes, many of which, at first sight, might seem to be more at home in a work on ethics or psychology, rather than ontology.

Heidegger continues that, after the preparatory fundamental analysis has been completed, 'We shall point to *temporality* as the meaning of the Being of that entity which we call 'Dasein''. This will then be demonstrated by interpreting over again the structures of Dasein which were only provisionally exhibited before. This forms the topic of part two of *Being and Time*. Heidegger then explains how he will show that Being is understood in terms of *Zeit* or time, and how the

meaning of Being will then finally be able to be grasped. This was to happen in part three of *Being and Time*, which was never published.

This last paragraph is, I realise, very obscure. Part two of *Being and Time*, which deals with Dasein's temporality, is so complex and difficult that I will not even be touching upon it. I will not even be able to examine in detail anything like the whole of the first part of *Being and Time*. Instead, I will, in chapter five, deal with selected passages, and try and deal with some of its general features. Hopefully this will be enough to redeem the work as a whole, or at least to point in the direction of how it might be redeemed. But it is interesting to note that when Heidegger says that he will point to Temporality as the meaning of Dasein's Being. In what sense such statements are meant to be taken is something we will have to try and find out.

Another thing worth noting is the way in which Heidegger notes that the path he takes is not guaranteed to lead to the right answer—we won't know when we have reached the end of our investigation. This, too, is something we shall try and explain:

In any investigation in this field, where 'the thing itself is deeply veiled' one must take pains not to overestimate the results. For in such an inquiry one is constantly compelled to face the possibility of disclosing an even more primordial and more universal horizon from which we may draw the answer to the question, 'What is 'Being'?'

Now we have some idea of the way Heidegger talks about Being, of the problem of Being, and of how he will solve the problem of

Being. Heidegger talks about Being as if its some kind of activity or state, the kind of activity or state that we say something has when we say that it is. We have seen how Heidegger talks about the meaning of Being, but we're not really much wiser about what this *means*. We have seen Heidegger's observations on how we live in an understanding of Being, how the meaning is however veiled from us, and how we are prone to misinterpret our own Being in terms of the world. We have seen Heidegger's sketch of the path his investigation will take, but again, talk of the meaning of Dasein's Being and of the meaning of Being meant that this was not easy to make sense of. And on top of all this, we noted that Heidegger himself failed to carry his programme through to its conclusion- *Being and Time remains an unfinished work*.

But for now, perhaps enough has been said for the next section of this thesis, where the case against the idea of Being will be set out.

Chapter Three: A Wittgensteinian Critique of the Philosophy of *Being and Time*

We've now briefly examined the philosophy of *Being and Time*, and can move on to ask whether or not that philosophy falls foul of Wittgenstein's critique.

The starting point for much of Wittgenstein's criticising is the idea that a particular philosophical problem or position is closely associated with some false picture of some aspect of the world, or else has come about because a particular feature of the grammar of our language has led one into a nonsensical way of talking.

There is nothing particularly original, perhaps, in this way of criticising other philosophers. The idea that philosophical error arises out of misunderstanding the way language works is an ancient one, and the view that being captivated by a particular way of thinking about the world can lead one in to error is perhaps- on its own at least- not particularly profound. Wittgenstein's greatness lies in the way in which he develops his criticisms beyond the initial starting point.

However, in this chapter, I will limit myself to pointing out how Heidegger might be interpreted as having fallen prey to the grammar of language, or a false picture of the world. Wittgenstein's later philosophy- and in particular how and why he criticises other forms of philosophy- will be considered in more detail in the next chapter.

The introduction to Heidegger's philosophy in the previous chapter presents, I think, obvious openings for a Wittgensteinian critique. And the most obvious locus for such criticisms is clearly the notion of Being. I will briefly sketch a very obvious (though no less credible for that) account of how a Wittgensteinian critique of *Being and Time* might begin. I will then present a more thoroughly worked-out account, devised by someone else- Herman Philipse- which takes a slightly different tack in criticising Heidegger. In this way, I will be able to show that there are multiple reasons to think that Heidegger is vulnerable to a Wittgensteinian critique. I will also be able to show that the idea that Heidegger falls foul of Wittgenstein's critique of philosophy is in philosophical circulation- to some extent, at least.

Heidegger's notion of Being can be thought of as arising out of a classic philosophical error. One might say that Heidegger conceives the verb 'to be' on the model of verbs whose grammar may have certain superficial similarities, but which actually work in a very different kind of way. Think of some verbs that are used to describe people or things doing actions- for example, the verbs 'to breath', 'to swim', 'to kick', and so on. In these cases, at least, there is a type of action that corresponds to the verb, and we can observe the corresponding actions and investigate them. We can ask, for example, about the processes and purpose of breathing; we can ask about different techniques for swimming; and explore the physics involved in giving a ball a kick.

Now, the verb 'to be' does not operate in the same way as the verbs we have mentioned. It plays different roles in our language games- too many and too complex roles to described here. But- to give

a few general examples- it can be used in sentences expressing identity, it plays the part of the copula, and it also has an existential sense (though this sense is rare in English, as opposed to Ancient Greek, that has no separate verb meaning 'to exist'). However, Heidegger may be thought of as conceiving of the verb 'to be' as analogous to the action verbs we have mentioned, in the sense of having a corresponding action. That he does so is perhaps less surprising given the way we can talk about things just 'being', using the verb in its existential sense, and the air of profound mystery that surrounds the notion of 'existence' generally (many of the most compelling philosophical questions- at least to laymen- seem bound up with the idea of existence- why does anything exist at all? Why am I here- why do I exist?).

So Heidegger thinks there is an action that corresponds to the verb 'to be', in an analogous way to that in which there is an action corresponding to the action verbs mentioned above. It is the action of Being. And this action, like others, is capable of Being investigated. But it obviously isn't an action like swimming or breathing- it must be somehow more mysterious than they are, because it obviously isn't available to us to be investigated by us in such a straightforward way as they are. So we need a peculiar method in order to investigate it- the method of *Being and Time*. And yet, though we don't know much about the action of Being, we know how to use the verb 'to be', so perhaps in a sense we do understand the action of Being, though we don't understand it very clearly, and we our understanding will have to be made more explicit by way of our special method of investigation.

This way of interpreting *Being and Time* could be elaborated more and more, until all of the key features of the work were somehow accounted for. But I think enough has been said to make my point—that it is possible to see *Being and Time* as having arisen out of a classic philosophical error.

I will now discuss briefly Philipse's more sophisticated attempt to interpret Heidegger as vulnerable to Wittgenstein's critique of philosophy, as found in his article, *Heidegger's Question of Being and the 'Augustinian Picture' of Language*. Philipse sets out the theme of the article as follows:

In this paper I shall mainly concentrate on Heidegger's question of being²³ in so far as it is a search for *the leading and fundamental sense* of 'to be'. ...[M]y working hypothesis will be that his question of being... is informed by the Augustinian picture of language. ...[T]o the extent that the question of being aims at 'the' fundamental and leading sense of being, which supposedly is the common root of the meanings of the 'is' of predication, of identity and of existence, it is a pseudo-question generated by the Augustinian picture. (Pgs. 258-9).

Philipse thinks, then, that Heidegger is mistaken in thinking that there is one fundamental meaning or sense of Being, which, in some sense, is the foundation of the meanings of the various different uses of the verb 'to be'. He also thinks that Heidegger makes his mistake because he is subject to the Augustinian picture of language, as exemplified in the passage from Augustine's *Confessions* quoted at the

²³ Philipse translates Heidegger's *Sein* as 'being', rather than as 'Being', as I do.

start of the *Philosophical Investigations*. Philipse explains the Augustinian picture as follows:

In this description [the passage from the *Confessions* quoted at the start of the *Philosophical Investigations*] Wittgenstein sees a 'picture' of what one often tacitly assumes to be the essence of human language: the words of a language are names of objects, and sentences, being combinations of names, are used to describe states of affairs. He equates Augustine's conception with the idea that ostensive definition is the fundamental form of an explanation of the meaning of a word. (Pg. 253).

Philipse's argument for his 'working hypothesis' has two distinct parts to it. In the first (see section II), Philipse examines three different aspects of Heidegger's question of Being and, on the basis of this, concludes that it is motivated by the- mistaken and misguided- Augustinian picture of language. In the second part (see sections III and IV), Philipse seeks to back up his diagnosis of the question of Being with 'an aetiological investigation concerning Husserl's influence on Heidegger'. In this thesis, I will only deal with the first part of Philipse's argument. I will now mention in turn the three aspects of the question of Being that Philipse examines.

Philipse firstly draws attention to the fact that Heidegger assumes that the various meanings of the verb 'to be' are rooted in one fundamental sense, and that this is to be sought for in the phenomenon of Being. From a Wittgensteinian point of view, of course, the assumption that different meanings of the same word must be

based on some common meaning, has been one of the major errors by which the philosophical tradition has been shaped. One has only to think of the example of Socrates (cited by Philipse), who in many of Plato's dialogues is portrayed as chastising the 'proto-Wittgensteinians' who, when asked about the meaning of a word, give instances of its use rather than a single definition²⁴. Heidegger is no doubt led into this error, in part at least, by the Augustinian picture of language.

Next comes the fact that Heidegger passes from the meaning of the 'being' to the meaning of Being, i.e. from the meaning of a verb to the meaning of a thing- Being (see my discussion of the preface to *Being and Time* in chapter two, above). The best way of making sense of this would seem to be to assume that Heidegger thinks that knowing the meaning of the phenomenon, Being, will give the meaning of the verb, 'to be'. And this in turn would seem to point to some view whereby all words are referring expressions. This of course is in line with the Augustinian view of language.

Finally, we have Heidegger's assumption that it makes sense to suppose that, although we are competent users of the verb 'to be', nevertheless we do not really understand the meaning of the verb. This is strange because we normally think that if someone can use a word perfectly, he understands its meaning. But Heidegger cannot accept this, because if he did, then his contention that there is something more we have to find out about the meaning of Being would go up in flames.

²⁴ This feature of many Platonic dialogues- particularly the early ones- is perhaps too familiar to require references. But see, for example, the beginning of the *Theatetus* (146 B-E), where knowledge is being discussed.

In the light of all this, Philipse concludes that 'Heidegger's most fundamental presupposition in raising the question of being consists in the interpretation of the verb 'to be' as a referring expression', before adding that 'the alleged question of being is a philosophical delusion, a product of the spell of Augustine's picture of language'.

To someone of a Wittgensteinian persuasion, these criticisms of Heidegger's philosophy might seem enough to wreck *Being and Time* entirely. The aim of the work is to find the meaning of Being. And if this aim is ultimately motivated by an unsound view of the nature of language, or a false understanding of the verb 'to be' - then it is difficult to see how *Being and Time* could be seen as part of a legitimate philosophical enterprise.

Of course, one might be able to salvage a great deal from the work. Philipse does, after all, make a distinction between the search for the leading and fundamental sense of 'to be' and the programme of developing existential categories for Dasein (c.f. pg. 258). And *Being and Time* is undoubtedly a work of great power, with a great deal to say that is interesting and insightful. But if it came to be seen that the motivation for talk of Being rested on a faulty view of language, it is probable that the philosophical framework would crumble, and that any parts one tried to save would be nothing more than powerfully phrased observations on the nature of life.

I think Philipse's view of *Being and Time* is a very compelling, even seductive one. It seems to offer a convincing account of the work, and to explain why its language comes across as being so obscure. And if the main motivation for the question of Being is the

Augustinian view of language- or a faulty view of the verb 'to be'- *Being and Time* could perhaps be largely consigned to the philosophical dustbin- at least as far as Wittgensteinians are concerned.

And yet, in spite of what has been said in this chapter, I don't think the Augustinian picture of language, or a faulty view of 'to be', is the main motivation for *Being and Time*. I don't even think that Heidegger is particularly concerned with establishing the meaning of the verb 'to be' - at least not in any way that would be philosophical problematic for Wittgenstein. And I think that when the real motivation is revealed, the work will no longer appear vulnerable to Wittgensteinian attacks. In the next section of this thesis I will examine in more detail Wittgenstein's philosophy, in an attempt to clarify further what it is about Philosophy that Wittgenstein objects to. After that, I will offer my own interpretation of Heidegger, and try to make good my claim that the philosophy of *Being and Time* does not fall foul of the later Wittgenstein's critique of philosophy.

Chapter 4: My Interpretation of Wittgenstein's Later Philosophy

There have been numerous attempts over the years to give a clear and unified account of Wittgenstein's later philosophy. It's a difficult task, and not only for the obvious reasons- the amount of material to be mastered, and the difficulty of the subject matter. There's also the peculiar nature of a lot of Wittgenstein's writings. They usually are usually made up of quite short, self-contained sections, that may or may not be part of a sequence on the same subject, and it is often hard to see beyond the penetrating observations to discern any overarching argument or purpose. Also, most of the published material has been sorted and arranged by editors rather than by Wittgenstein himself. But even in the most polished parts of Wittgenstein's later philosophy, such as the *Philosophical Investigations*- though even the version of this that we have is not as Wittgenstein would have published it²⁵- the long strings of sections can seem like a shaky foundation for a sustained and systematic exposition of a philosophical system.

But there have been many attempts, and many of these share the assumption- perfectly natural and appropriate in the cases of most philosophers- that Wittgenstein's later philosophy, and hence his critique of other ways of doing philosophy, are founded on a coherent body of doctrines, which is no doubt capable of being expressed in standard philosophical language, and assigned its place alongside the

²⁵ See the *Editors' Note*: 'What appears as Part I of this volume was complete by 1945. Part II was written between 1946 and 1949. If Wittgenstein had published his work himself, he would have suppressed a good deal of what is in the last thirty pages or so of Part I and worked what is in Part II, with further material, into its place'.

other bodies of doctrines which go to make up the history of philosophy. Philipse briefly mentions one of these attempts in the first section of that article of his that we have just been discussing.

Phlipse tells us that the philosopher Karl-Otto Apel 'enforced a rapprochement between Heidegger and the later Wittgenstein, based on the heuristic point of view that Heidegger's destruction of the ontology of presence may be compared to Wittgenstein's view of traditional philosophy as informed by the Augustinian picture of language'²⁶. And in carrying out this enforcing of a rapprochement, Philipse informs us, Apel 'read into the *Investigations* a kind of transcendental theory, the theory that our daily language embodies a preliminary understanding of the world which is somehow constitutive of the world we live in.... Concepts like *language game* and *form of life* are supposed to be elements of this general theory'²⁷. Apel also attributes 'a linguistic pragmatism' to Wittgenstein²⁸.

According to Philipse, there is, however, a problem with Apel's interpretation of Wittgenstein's later philosophy. And this is a problem that I think is common to all interpretations that share, like Apel's, the assumption that Wittgenstein's later philosophy is founded on a coherent body of philosophical doctrines. Philipse says that 'Apel decides... to disregard Wittgenstein's warning that his philosophy is purely an activity, which uses a variety of therapies, and that it does not consist of theses or theories'²⁹. In connection with this claim, Philipse cites sections 109 and 128 of the *Philosophical Investigations*. Section

²⁶ See pg. 254.

²⁷ See pg. 255.

²⁸ See pg. 256.

²⁹ See pg. 255.

109 contains the following significant passage, which seems to support Philipse's point:

And we may not advance any kind of theory. There must not be anything hypothetical in our considerations. We must do away with all *explanation*, and description alone must take its place. And this description gets its light, that is to say its purpose, from the philosophical problems. These are, of course, not empirical problems; they are solved, rather, by looking into the workings of our language, and that in such a way as to make us recognize those workings: *in despite of* an urge to misunderstand them. The problems are solved, not by giving new information, but by arranging what we have always known. Philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language.

Given such passages as this one, with its explicit condemnation of theory in philosophy and its implicit characterisation of philosophy as a therapeutic activity- or 'battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence'- I agree with Philipse that one should be extremely wary of attributing to Wittgenstein anything so decidedly theoretical as the position attributed to him by Apel.

But once we have taken this point on board, we are left with a problem. If we accept the fact that Wittgenstein's later philosophy does not consist at all of theories, theses, hypotheses or explanations (I take it that all these terms are used more or less synonymously by Wittgenstein- though I am aware that as yet I've said nothing to indicate what I think Wittgenstein actually means by them) but is rather

just a kind of therapeutic activity, it is hard to see how we are to get any kind of handle on it.

After all, it is common for therapeutic activities to have some kind of theoretical basis (leaving aside for the moment the question of what would actually count as a theoretical basis). Think of psychoanalytic therapies, for example, which usually have extensive theoretical underpinnings. Admittedly, a properly worked out theoretical basis isn't essential for something to count as a therapeutic activity- we could imagine 'primitive' rituals that are carried out in order to relieve pain but which are just performed, and not justified by- or carried out on the basis of- some body of theories. We could also think of things that we ourselves- modern 'rational' people- do in order to make ourselves feel better that have nothing worthy of the name of 'theoretical foundation'. But we would probably expect a theoretical basis in sophisticated medical, psychological or philosophical contexts- particularly, perhaps, in philosophical contexts. At the very least, we surely expect Wittgenstein to offer a detailed account of why we need to be cured of whatever he thinks we need to be cured of- because if he thinks we need to be cured of philosophy, it is far from obvious why we should want to rid ourselves of it. After all, philosophy isn't *obviously* similar to a nasty disease, that we would be happy to get rid of without anyone having first told us why we would be better off without it.

This is a real problem, and given this problem, one might easily be forgiven for thinking- like Apel- that Wittgenstein's philosophy does consist- despite his protestations- at least in part of theories- in the sense of a coherent body of doctrines- which is capable of being expressed in standard philosophical language; and that, in so far as

Wittgenstein does reject theories, he does so using the term in some special sense, which doesn't preclude us assigning to him a philosophy consisting of what would normally count as theories, theses, etc.

However, while I agree that Wittgenstein does use terms such as theory, thesis, etc. with a special sense, I don't think the approach just mentioned is the right one to take. I think it fails to do justice to the special nature of Wittgenstein's later philosophy. My approach to the problem of interpreting Wittgenstein's later philosophy is to accept at face value the idea that Wittgenstein's later philosophy does not consist of any theories, and is not founded on a body of doctrines, but is instead a kind activity. I think we must abandon the model of a philosophy consisting of theories, etc., and instead think in terms of an activity, one of whose primary aims is to bring us away from a philosophical way of thinking and instead bring us into a different relation to the world, and which does this by putting forward no theory, but merely by describing the world in a certain kind of way, which reminds us of what we already knew.

In trying to elucidate the activity of Wittgenstein's later philosophy, I shall adopt a slightly unusual approach. I will not tackle the great philosophical works head on. Rather, I will begin with a 'minor' text, which belongs to the formative stage of Wittgenstein's later philosophy, and which deals with problems that are in themselves not really philosophical. An analysis of this minor, non-philosophical text will reveal some of the main ideas and attitudes that are common to all Wittgenstein's later works, and in this way the ground will be prepared for my interpretation of the greatest work of Wittgenstein's later period- the *Philosophical Investigations*.

This plan has a couple of advantages. First of all, because we will be dealing with an early text, in which Wittgenstein is still struggling to create his new method of philosophising, we will be able to see more clearly the ideas and attitudes that pervade the whole Wittgenstein's later philosophy, but which in the later, more assured works, perhaps retreat a little into the background.

But secondly- and more importantly- by dealing with a text that addresses non-philosophical problems, we will be able to discern the main ideas and attitudes of Wittgenstein's later philosophy without being distracted by complex philosophical subject matter. I have not chosen to carry out my interpretation of Wittgenstein's later philosophy in this way for the sake of shedding light on the historical development of Wittgenstein's thought. Rather, I am concerned to show that Wittgenstein's later philosophy does not at all rely on anything like a theory of meaning or a theory of language- which might appear the case if one went straight for a work like the *Investigations*- by introducing its main ideas in a context where the nature of linguistic meaning or of language is not at stake.

The text I've chosen is that currently published under the title *Remarks on Frazer's Golden Bough*, the first part of which – the one I will solely be concerned with- was written in 1931³⁰. It deals with two

³⁰ Given the complex provenance of most of the texts published under Wittgenstein's name, it is perhaps worth briefly discussing the text of *Remarks on Frazer's Golden Bough*. According to the *Introductory Note* attached to the beginning of the work, and written by its editor, Rush Rhees, 'Wittgenstein began writing on Frazer in his manuscript book on June 19th, 1931, and he added remarks during the next two or three weeks'. Probably in 1931, Wittgenstein dictated to a typist the greater part of the manuscript books written since July 1930. The typescript ran to 771 pages. 'It has a section, just under 10 pages long, of the remarks on Frazer, with a few changes in order and phrasing. Others are in different contexts, and a few are left out'. The text known as *Remarks on Frazer's Golden Bough* is made up of the 10 page long section which Wittgenstein had typed 'as

ways of trying to 'come to terms' with, or understand, the 'magical and religious notions of men' as they appear in the *Golden Bough*³¹. On the one hand, Frazer is presented as trying to *explain* them, while on the other, Wittgenstein opposes Frazer and puts his method forward as an alternative. We have here, then, a fairly clear discussion about the two methods, the opposition between which is at the heart of Wittgenstein's philosophy (remember the passage from section 109 of the *Philosophical Investigations*- quoted above, page 24- with its mention of explanation).

We will start with Frazer and his explanations. And the first thing to try to do is to get some sense of Frazer's treatment.

As Wittgenstein tells it, Frazer explains magical and religious rituals by saying that they are done because it is believed they will produce a particular effect. There are many examples of this type of explanation in the quotations that Wittgenstein gives from the *Golden Bough*. For instance the following: '...[H]e [Frazer] explains to us... that the king must be killed in his prime because, according to the notions of the savages, his soul would not be kept fresh otherwise...' (pg. 1e-2e).

though forming a separate essay'; passages not included in this and coming at various points in Wittgenstein's manuscripts and in the typescript just referred to; and a second set of remarks written 'not earlier than 1936 and probably after 1948. It is with the first two components of the text that I will deal with here, those belonging to the formative stage of Wittgenstein's later philosophy. In the edition of this text referred to in this thesis (see bibliography), the original German and the English translation are on facing pages, with the pages of German text numbered consecutively, and also the pages of English text. The numbers of the pages of the English translation are followed by an 'e' to distinguish them from their German equivalents. Page 1e contains the English translation of the German text on page 1, and so on.

³¹ The phrase comes from page 1e: 'Frazer's account of the magical and religious notions of men is unsatisfactory...'

At the same time, however, Frazer- surely out of a sense of humane empathy- is keen to make the point that, in contrast to how it might at first appear, the magical and religious practices he discusses are not carried out because of stupidity. Thus Wittgenstein says 'Frazer says it is difficult to discover the error in magic and this is why it persists for so long' (pg. 2e)³².

Given this summary of Frazer 's treatment of rituals (necessarily brief, as Wittgenstein's is) one might be forgiven for thinking that, at first sight anyway, Frazer makes a pretty good attempt at understanding rituals, and that even if his account is not completely right- or even if it comes to be proved completely wrong- there at any rate is little ground for thinking that he has made some profound methodological error. After all, isn't reasonable to interpret the actions of others as done for the sake of utility, as Frazer does- even if, as is presumably the case for many of the rituals of the *Golden Bough*, the rationale behind them is not explicitly expressed in utilitarian terms by those that carry them out?³³

But be this as it may, Wittgenstein does, of course, criticise Frazer. And his forceful criticisms take two forms.

³² The editor of *Remarks on Frazer's Golden Bough* cites a passage from page 264 of the *Golden Bough*, part of which runs as follows: 'But reflection should satisfy us that... their [our predecessors'] errors were not wilful extravagances or the ravings of insanity, but simply hypotheses, justifiable as such at the time when they were propounded, but which a fuller experience has proved to be inadequate.... Therefore in reviewing the opinions and practices of ruder ages and races we shall do well to look with leniency upon their errors as inevitable slips made in the search for truth, and to give them the benefit of that indulgence which we ourselves may one day stand in need of: *cum excusatione itaque veteres audiendi sunt*' (pg. 2).

³³ There is a long and venerable tradition of interpreting religious rituals in this way (think, for example, of the attitude to sacrifices that we find expressed in Cicero: *do ut des*- 'I give so that you give'. We give sacrifices to the gods so that they do good things for us).

On the one hand, Wittgenstein draws attention to the way in which Frazer's explanations are simply wrong- they don't do justice to 'the facts'. Wittgenstein says that Frazer's account of the 'magical and religious notions of men' 'makes these notions appear as *mistakes*' (pg. 1e). But this is wrong. They are not simply mistakes- at least a lot of the time they are not- even if we don't think that religious and magical rituals can cause the wind to blow or the rain to fall. The reason why this is so is indicated in the following passage:

It may happen, as it often does today, that someone will give up a practice when he has seen that something on which it depends is an error. But this happens only in cases where you can make a man change his way of doing things simply by calling his attention to his error. This is not how it is in connection with the religious practices of a people; and what we have here is *not* an error. (Pg. 2e).

The point is that to think of religion or magic simply as performed on the basis of certain hypotheses in order to achieve particular objectives, is to miss out a whole crucial aspect of them. Religion and ritual are woven into the lives of their practitioners in much more subtle ways than Frazer thinks.

I think Wittgenstein makes a good point here. And if we want evidence for his point, then we needn't look far into the past or into cultures very different from our own. Think of the Church of England vicar who no longer believes literally in key features of the Creed- on one way of thinking of religion, the central set of 'hypotheses' on which Christianity is based- yet for whom the church and its teachings are still

of immense importance and meaning. Or think of the lapsed Catholic who doesn't believe but for whom the world of the Church still has a compelling force. Wittgenstein mentions Augustine 'when he called on God on every page of the Confessions' (Pg. 1e). This is not a case of someone acting out the consequences of a particular body of doctrines about the world. And what is true in such cases is also true, according to Wittgenstein, in the case of more 'primitive' religious and magical rituals³⁴.

On the other hand, Wittgenstein says that Frazer explains rituals as if those carrying them out were of his own time. Thus we have comments such as the following: 'All that Frazer does is to make this practice [the killing of the priest-king] plausible to people who think as he does' (pg. 1e.) and 'Frazer cannot imagine a priest who is not basically an English parson of our times with all his stupidity and feebleness' (pg. 5e). And what is wrong with this? It makes those carrying out the actions seem stupid ('It is very queer that all these practices are finally presented, so to speak, as stupid actions' - pg. 1e)- this in spite of Frazer's protestations that rituals are not stupid- and consequently the explanations seem implausible ('But it never does become plausible that people do all this out of sheer stupidity' - pg. 1e).

I think Wittgenstein makes an interesting point here- there is something slightly unnerving about Frazer's explanations of rituals- something slightly reminiscent of a parody like *1066 And All That*, that

³⁴ The reference to Augustine calling on God recalls the connected fact that Wittgenstein writes, in the preface to the *Philosophical Remarks*: 'I would like to say "This book is written to the glory of God", but nowadays that would be chicanery, that is, it would not be rightly understood. It means the book is written in good will, and in so far as it is not so written, but out of vanity, etc., the author would wish to see it condemned'.

depends for its effect on 'levelling the differences' between the attitudes of different historical periods- including our own. And this sense of anachronism may be a signal that there is something wrong with an explanation. But I don't think it is clear at this stage how worried we should be by this line of criticism- how much it necessarily impinges on the value- not to say truthfulness- of Frazer's explanations. After all, perhaps the truth about rituals just is implausible.

So much for Wittgenstein's criticisms. Together, they do seem to present quite a convincing case for thinking that Frazer's explanations of rituals are crude, to say the least, and insufficiently careful of the evidence. But why is any of this philosophically interesting? O.K.- Frazer's explanation may be inadequate to explain the phenomena he is trying to deal with, but surely what is at stake here is merely the adequacy of a particular anthropological theory.

I think that, as far as Wittgenstein is concerned, a lot more than that is at stake here. Wittgenstein is trying to make a fundamental point about the way in which we should understand human activities, and rituals in particular. And that this is so is suggested by the passages that comment on Frazer's account of the case of the King of the Wood at Nemi. Of this case, Frazer gives one of his accounts based on utility:

And here the explanation is not what satisfied us anyway. When Frazer begins by telling the story of the King of the Wood at Nemi, he does this in a tone which shows that something strange and terrible is happening here. And this is the answer to the question 'why is this happening?': Because it is terrible. In other words, what strikes us in this course of events as terrible,

impressive, horrible, tragic, etc., anything but trivial and insignificant, *that* is what gave birth to them. (Pg. 2e-3e).

Here Wittgenstein says that we can find an answer to the question of why the ritual is happening in a way other than through Frazer's explanations- rather, in fact, through the way in which Frazer first *describes* the ritual- when he shows us that it is something terrible, impressive, horrible and tragic. I think that Wittgenstein is here trying to make an important distinction between two ways of 'coming to terms' with rituals.

But what is the distinction? From what has been said so far it is hard to say, and we will only be able to get a clear idea of it once we have considered what Wittgenstein has to say in favour of his method of understanding, and also what Wittgenstein really has against the method of understanding represented by Frazer. But for now I think it is safe to say that there is a definite difference in *feel* between Frazer's approach through explanation, and the one that Wittgenstein is highlighting in the passage just quoted.

I don't think that in the passage just quoted Wittgenstein is suggesting that we should think that those who carried out the ritual did so simply because they were scared not to, or because they were scared into doing it. He does not want to attribute motives to them in quite the same way as Frazer does. Rather, Wittgenstein seems to just want to point out the fact that the ritual is terrible, impressive, horrible and tragic- to us, and probably to those participating in it. And whatever Wittgenstein's method of understanding ultimately turns out to be, I think that pointing out how terrible, impressive, etc. a ritual is

does in some way help to lessen the aura of queerness that might have seemed to pervade the ritual. It is the kind of thing that helps us to empathise with those carrying out a ritual, and that makes the ritual more *intelligible*- something that Frazer's explanations don't necessarily manage.

So much for this brief, vague introduction to Wittgenstein's method. But given this, it would seem natural to think that when Wittgenstein criticises Frazer, he is trying to make some deep philosophical point about explanations in general, rather than just Frazer. What could this deep point be?

We have already seen the two ways in which Wittgenstein criticises Frazer's explanations- by saying on the one hand that they are implausible; and on the other that his explanations- based on the idea of ritual as a kind of proto-science- simply don't do justice to the facts. But aren't these two criticisms in fact linked? Frazer interprets rituals using as his model the way of thinking of a rational man of his own time and background. He *imposes* this model on the rituals he seeks to interpret, but the interpretation doesn't fit, and the result is explanations that seem implausible³⁵.

We have now, then, a more sophisticated account of what is wrong with Frazer's explanations- an account that was implicit all

³⁵ One might also say- though Wittgenstein doesn't make this point in his text- that Frazer interprets rituals with the model of human behaviour in mind according to which all human actions are performed for some reason. This is of course a fallacy that goes back to the Greeks. Think, for example, of Aristotle, at the beginning of the *Nicomachean Ethics*: 'Every art and every investigation, and likewise every practical pursuit or undertaking, seems to aim at some good...' (Book I, Chapt. 1, 1094 a 1). In the real world, human beings often do just act, without being able to give any satisfactory reasons for their actions. And this we might say is often the case with rituals: Why is the sacrifice made? Very often not because it is believed it will have a particular effect. Rather no clear reason can be cited.

along, I think, in Wittgenstein's criticisms. Frazer's mistake is that he has a false model of behaviour in his mind, which he imposes onto the rituals he tries to explain, and this has the effect of producing explanations that are both implausible and incorrect. Yet does this get us any further in understanding the fundamental methodological point that Wittgenstein is trying to make? It would seem not, because no one would deny that imposing a false model onto the phenomena one is seeking to explain before one's mind when one is formulating explanations is a bad thing, likely to lead to error.

We have reached an impasse. But it can be overcome, I think, if we turn again to Wittgenstein's second way of criticising Frazer, according to which his explanations seem implausible. One might think that this criticism is neither here nor there for Frazer- he is aiming at the truth rather mere plausibility. But for Wittgenstein plausibility carries great importance. A clue to the reason why is given in the following passage:

I think one reason why the attempt to find an explanation is wrong is that we have only to put together in the right way what we *know*, without adding anything, and the satisfaction we are trying to get from the explanation comes of itself. (Pg. 2e).

Here, Wittgenstein characterises the source of a part of his opposition to Frazer's method by saying that satisfaction- of some kind- is achieved in another way than through explanation. The important thing here is the emphasis Wittgenstein puts on satisfaction- in fact he says that satisfaction is what we are trying to get from an explanation. This is, I think, connected with the emphasis that Wittgenstein puts

elsewhere on plausibility. And I think it is also connected with the deep point Wittgenstein is trying to make in criticising Frazer. Trying to understand rituals in Frazer's way is in some sense unsatisfying³⁶. And this is what is really wrong with explanations.

But why should we be so concerned with satisfaction and plausibility, rather than just concentrating on, say, truth? And what exactly is it about Frazer's explanations that makes them unsatisfying? To answer these questions, I will examine Wittgenstein's method for coming to terms with rituals, and the type of understanding that it brings.

We have already seen that description is at the heart of the method of Wittgenstein's philosophy in the *Philosophical Investigations*. And there is a parallel in the case of the *Remarks*. For example, at one point, Wittgenstein says 'We can only describe and say, human life is like that' (Pg. 3e).

But what does Wittgenstein mean by description in the context of the understanding of rituals? Why is it the (or a least a) right method for coming to terms with rituals? And how does Wittgenstein's type of description differ from Frazer's? After all, one might be forgiven for thinking that Frazer's method consists of description.

We have already considered one example of a description that Wittgenstein approves of- namely Frazer's of the ritual involving the

³⁶ This goes along with the point about the implausibility and oddness of Frazer's explanations and also the point about the way in which Frazer's *description* (as opposed to explanation) of the King of the Wood at Nemi helps us to empathise with the ritual- to understand it, in short, and to get a satisfying answer to the question of why the ritual was carried out in the first place.

King of the Wood at Nemi. But from what Wittgenstein says about this, it is not easy to see what's going on. I think that a better way of getting a handle on Wittgenstein's method of description is to examine another key methodological notion- that of 'perspicuous presentation'³⁷.

In one passage, Wittgenstein effectively defines 'showing something in a perspicuous way' as 'arranging the factual material so that we can easily pass from one part to another and have a clear view of it' (8e-9e). And in another, he says 'perspicuous presentation makes possible that understanding which consists just in the fact that we 'see the connections'. Hence the importance of finding *intermediate links*' (pg. 9e)³⁸. What does the method of perspicuous presentation involve? And what type of understanding does it bring?

Well, I think there are numerous examples of this technique in the *Remarks*, the trouble being that in this work, being only really a collection of notes, the examples aren't clearly worked out. But if we examine what I think are examples of this method, then what we will see will be a method in which Wittgenstein makes comparisons- generally saying how things are *like* each other. And this has the important result of getting us to think about things in a different way. Thus we have passages such as the following:

Why shouldn't it be possible that a man's own name be sacred to him? Surely it is both the most important instrument

³⁷ 'For us the conception of a perspicuous presentation [a way of setting out the whole field together by making easy the passage from one part of it to another] is fundamental' (pg. 9e).

³⁸ Significantly, the passage this quote comes from crops up again in the *Philosophical Investigations*, section 122.

given to him and also something like a piece of jewellery hung round his neck at birth. (Pg. 5e).

The point of this passage is as follows. We might think that people thinking of their names as sacred is crazy and primitive- something complete alien to our way of thinking. But then think of the important role played by a name. It is like a personalised tool, and one that plays a great role in our lives, as well as the lives of primitive people. Think of the many times in a day when we use our names and, how stuck we'd be if we didn't have a name. And again, isn't a name like a piece of jewellery? Don't we care what our names are? Don't we think some names beautiful and other names ugly? And doesn't what we think of a name sometimes in some way effect the way in which we behave towards a person (though we may not like to admit that our actions are swayed by such 'primitive' considerations). And when we have thought of all this- when all these facts that are actually well-known to us have been brought to mind- doesn't holding names sacred seem like a very understandable thing to do?

Here, then, a name is compared to other things- tools and jewellery- and we thus see the holding of names as sacred *in a new light*- and as understandable and intelligible. (Indeed, names themselves seem to take on a new and mysterious aspect as a result of the comparisons. So not only do we come to understand something that before seemed odd, but even an ordinary aspect of our own world is transformed).

In other places we find the same technique at work, though it is often embedded in the text in complex ways. For example, in the

following passage, Wittgenstein makes the point that we have an instinctive understanding of rituals and their 'grammar':

Just how misleading Frazer's accounts are, we see, I think, from the fact that one could well imagine primitive practices oneself and it would only be by chance if they were not actually to be found somewhere. That is, the principle according to which these practices are ordered is much more general than Frazer shows it to be and we find it in ourselves: we could imagine that, say, in a given tribe no-one is allowed to see the king, or again that every man in the tribe is compelled to see him. And then it will certainly not be left more or less to chance, but the king will be *shown* to the people. Perhaps no-one will be allowed to touch him, or perhaps they will be *compelled* to do so. Think how after Schubert's death his brother cut certain of Schubert's scores into small pieces and gave to his favourite pupils these pieces of a few bars each. As a sign of piety this action is *just* as comprehensible to us as the other of keeping the scores undisturbed and accessible to no one. And if Schubert's brother had burnt the scores we could still understand this as a sign of piety.

The ceremonial (hot or cold) as opposed to the haphazard (lukewarm) is a characteristic of piety. (Pg. 5e).

The main point of this passage is that we understand rituals, we understand how they work- they are not alien to us. But the move, as it were, that this point assumes, is that which shows the link between the behaviour of Schubert's brother and behaviour in primitive rituals- the

behaviour in these two cases is all of a piece, and all ritual, in fact, behaviour. In juxtaposing talk of 'primitive' rituals with a description of the behaviour of Schubert's brother- an example of 'civilised', Western behaviour, recognizably part of our cultural heritage, something which we may perhaps feel that we can easily understand and relate to- I suggest that one of the things we are meant to get from the passage- if we haven't got the point already- is that the two sorts of behaviour are on a par³⁹. Both sorts of behaviour are examples of the way in which humans often do things that they find meaningful and which are important to them, but which serve no apparent use. And I think that this comparison helps us to understand the 'primitive' ritual, and puts it in a new light, as something we can feel we understand. The ritual becomes intelligible. (While at the same time, as in the case of names, the way we think of the 'rituals' and practices of our own culture is changed- they become more mysterious, less able to be taken for granted as 'natural' and 'ordinary').

So we can see what perspicuous representation is, and the kind of understanding it enables. Perspicuous representation changes the way we think about something. But it does so in a special way. It changes the way in which we see a ritual, and puts it in a different light. It makes it intelligible, and allows us to empathise with those performing it. And it does this through the making of comparisons. We see the connections between what we already find intelligible, and what appears strange to us, and that which was strange is 'brought within the circle' of what we understand.

³⁹ That they are on a par with each other may seem obvious to us now, but I think there were certainly times, not too long ago, when it wouldn't have been. Think of the way in which the Ethnographical collections of the British Museum- those dealing with the artefacts of 'primitive' cultures, were for long kept separately from the collections of the art of the great 'civilisations'. Think of the different ways they were studied as well. Anthropology versus History and History of Art.

Links to the idea of description are not difficult to draw. After all, in perspicuous representation, phenomena are described- facts about them are presented- and they are compared to other phenomena- and isn't a comparison a form of description? Think of similes. So we can say that what holds true about Wittgenstein's method of perspicuous representation also holds true about Wittgenstein's method of description- as hinted at in his discussion of Frazer's description of the ritual involving the King of the Wood. If we think back to Wittgenstein's discussion of the description of the ritual of the King of the Wood at Nemi, then we will see that here we have a description that makes us see a ritual in a new light- as something understandable. The point about making us see something in a new, understanding, light is what is important. And whether this is done by a sympathetic description of just the phenomenon or whether the phenomenon is described and then compared to another phenomenon is, for Wittgenstein, irrelevant. It is the end that matters.

It is worth remarking, I think, that Wittgenstein's method is not in itself wholly original. On the one hand, there is the debt to Goethe, which is acknowledged in the following passage from *Logik, Sprache, Philosophie*⁴⁰- a book on which Wittgenstein collaborated with Waismann:

Our thought here marches with certain views of Goethe's expressed in the *Metamorphosis of Plants*. We are in the habit, whenever which he we perceived similarities, of seeking some common origin for them. The urge to follow such phenomena

⁴⁰ Translated into English as *Principles of Linguistic Philosophy* (see bibliography).

back to their origin in the past expresses itself in a certain style of thinking. This recognizes, so to speak, only a single scheme for such similarities, namely the arrangement as a series in time. (And that is presumably bound up with the uniqueness of the causal schema). But Goethe's view shows that this is not the only possible form of conception. His conception of the original plant implies no hypothesis about the temporal development of the vegetable kingdom such as that of Darwin. What then *is* the problem solved by this idea? It is the problem of synoptic presentation. Goethe's aphorism 'All the organs of plants are leaves transformed' offers us a plan in which we may group the organs of plants according to their similarities as if around some natural centre. We see the original form of the leaf changing into similar and cognate forms, into the leaves of the calyx, the leaves of the petal, into organs that are half petals, half stamens, and so on. We follow this sensuous transformation of the type by linking up the leaf through intermediate forms with the other organs of the plant.

That is precisely what we are doing here. We are collating one form of language with its environment, or transforming it in imagination so as to gain a view of the whole of space in which the structure of our language has its being⁴¹. (Pg. 80-81).

According to this passage, Goethe offered a new way of understanding the patterns we find in the world. One way of dealing with these patterns is to try to explain them by reference to some

⁴¹ Quoted by Ray Monk in his biography of Wittgenstein. In this book, Monk traces Wittgenstein's method back- via Spengler- to Goethe.

theory- say some theory that traces the story of the development of these patterns through time. But Goethe offers an alternative way of understanding such patterns- through a synchronic comparison of the similarities and differences. And the understanding that Goethe's method gives us is an understanding that is 'sensuous' and lets us pass seamlessly from case to case. We see the connections, but more than this, we see the phenomena as an intelligible whole.

But there are other ways in which Wittgenstein's method is not original. The activity of describing something in such a way as to make it appear in a new light is a very old one. One might say that this is what poets spend a great deal of their time doing. And, again, when we come to the understanding and appreciating of art- to understanding the *point* of a work of art, which perhaps seems dead and meaningless and unintelligible, it is often by description and comparison that someone will try to get us to 'see what the work is about'. Often the aim will be to 'put the work in context', to *relate* it to other work done previously and at the same time, to place the work in context, so that we can 'see the connections'. So Wittgenstein's claim to originality lies more in the application of his method to new areas, and his privileging of it over other methods such as Frazer's (which in turn can seem analogous to very formal, theoretical ways of explaining the meaning of art).

So we have now examined Wittgenstein's method, and the kind of understanding it achieves. We can now turn to the question of what exactly it is about Frazer's explanations that means they fail to deliver this kind of understanding.

The key to this question lies, I think, in what we said we said about it seeming that Frazer imposes a false and inappropriate model or picture onto rituals. We can now develop this idea. We said that Wittgenstein couldn't be trying to make the point that it is a bad thing to impose false pictures onto phenomena one is trying to explain, because no one would disagree with this. But now we can see that what is wrong with imposing a picture is the very fact that we are prepared to say that we feel that a picture has been imposed. What is wrong with Frazer's explanations is that they do not satisfy us- they do not make the rituals they explain intelligible, *really* understandable. Rather, Frazer *seems* to be imposing a picture onto his rituals. Sometimes the rituals seem quaint or stupid and the explanations implausible. At other times, however, I would say that it feels as if Frazer's explanations are offering some kind of parallel translation of his rituals. It is as if Frazer said- 'This is the description of what goes on in religious ceremonies, but what is *really* going on- below the surface, at the level of explanation- is such-and-such'. And is then that we feel inclined to say that Frazer imposes a false model on reality. This sense that something is being imposed on the phenomena, or the sense that Frazer's explanations are quaint and implausible- this is what means Frazer's explanations fail to satisfy. Or rather they are the signs that Frazer's explanations are unsatisfying.

This fits in with what has been said about Wittgenstein's method of understanding. Wittgenstein manages to avoid any sense of division in his descriptions and by his method of perspicuous representation. It is as if he always keeps what he is describing at the centre of his treatment of it. He as it were describes the phenomena directly, in such a way that we do not get the sense of a parallel translation that

we do in Frazer. His descriptions are of such a kind that they seem natural, and we get a sense in them of almost recognizing a strange phenomenon as familiar. Instead of offering a translation, which is distinct from the phenomena themselves, and which draws attention away from the phenomena, to some hidden level of explanation, Wittgenstein says- look at the phenomena themselves; they resemble such-and-such, and given that, *they themselves* seem understandable (rather than being understandable only by reference to the level of explanation). Thus in Wittgenstein the 'explanation' doesn't lead away from the phenomena and we can feel that we understand the phenomena themselves. Wittgenstein makes the phenomena *appear* intelligible, he changes the way we relate to the phenomena, while Frazer doesn't. If anything he increases the distance between ourselves and the phenomena by adding another layer to them- the layer we can't see but which explains what is going on⁴².

Wittgenstein isn't, of course, anti-explanation *per se*. But he has a keen awareness of the place of explanations (for example, in science, where they are linked to the process of experimentation and subject to the constant possibility of review) and their limitations. But he thinks what we actually want from an explanation of human behaviour like Frazer's- and what we fail to get from it- is a *satisfying*

⁴² It is important to note that we are not concerned here with whether or not Frazer had any particular model in his mind when doing his descriptions. What is important is the effect that Frazer's explanations convey- they are *as if* Frazer had a model in his mind which he then imposed on the rituals. This is the impression that is conveyed to us.

Also, it is quite possible that on reading Frazer prior to Wittgenstein, one found that Frazer's explanations seemed like natural descriptions of 'the things themselves', without invoking any special 'level of explanation'. However, Wittgenstein's critique of Frazer encourages us to see it as explanation- in his sense- rather than description.

Finally, Wittgenstein is not claiming in some very subjective that all that matters is whether we feel that we understand a particular behavioural phenomenon and that 'hard facts' are irrelevant. Rather the point is that we want both in trying to understand phenomena- both justice to the facts, and the making intelligible of a particular form of behaviour.

understanding- we want something to *appear* understandable rather than to have a theory that explains it. This idea is expressed in the following passage, already quoted:

I think one reason why the attempt to find an explanation is wrong is that we have only to put together in the right way what we *know*, without adding anything, and the satisfaction we are trying to get from the explanation comes from itself.

A similar sentiment is expressed in the following passage:

But for someone broken up by love an explanatory hypothesis won't help much. –It will not bring peace.

It is this kind of privileging of satisfaction that is perhaps the most important point about Wittgenstein's discussion of Frazer. Wittgenstein takes the position that there is a certain important way of understanding things that is not primarily dependent on finding out new facts about something, or creating theories, but which is dependent on coming to see something in a new way, an understanding way. The reaction Wittgenstein is looking for with regards to the explanation of behaviour is 'Yes! Now I understand!' This way of understanding things is not new, as has been remarked, but what is, I think, new is the way that Wittgenstein privileges it over explanation. This privileging has its parallels in Wittgenstein's later philosophical writings, too, and it is to these that we shall now turn.

We have now reached the point where we have examined Wittgenstein's treatment of some non-philosophical problems and

have thereby got clearer on many of the main ideas of his later philosophy. We can now turn to Wittgenstein's treatment of philosophical problems. But how can we turn what we've learnt in considering Frazer to account in understanding Wittgenstein's later philosophy as it relates to philosophical explanations? After all, there are important differences between a work like the *Philosophical Investigations* and the *Remarks*- primarily the difference caused by the fact that in the case of philosophical problems we are not dealing with something we may well know nothing about, but rather with those phenomena that are best known to us and that are closest to us- phenomena such as those related to language and emotions, for example. So it would seem hard to interpret Wittgenstein's philosophical works as trying to get us to understand something we didn't understand before.

There are, however, enough points of contact- most importantly in the contrast between two different methods- explanation and description- for us to launch in and sketch out the main lines of Wittgenstein's later philosophy as it relates to philosophical problems. Its analogy with the *Remarks* will allow us to do this relatively easily.

Just as in the *Remarks*, at the centre of the *Investigations* is the distinction between two different ways of understanding- explanation and description (see section 109, quoted above).

And- also just as in the *Remarks*- explanations are associated with pictures or models of how an aspect of the world is⁴³. Wittgenstein

⁴³ The *Investigations* is dominated with discussions of particular pictures, such as the Augustinian picture of language. This appears prominently at the very beginning of the work, where it is summed up in the famous quotation from Augustine.

criticises these in various ways. For example- superficially at least- he draws attention to the way in which they fail to do justice to the facts. He does this by way of his descriptions- descriptions of our practices and the way we use language- and of its grammar⁴⁴.

But there are other ways in which Wittgenstein criticises explanations, not to be found in the *Remarks*, that have more philosophical significance than merely pointing out facts that a theory might have problems dealing with. There are, therefore, discussions of the way in which philosophical language can be meaningless- the result of language 'going on holiday', and being misused. There is no formal theory of language which explains why philosophical language ends up being meaningless, but by descriptions of the way in which philosophical language arises- out of philosophers being dominated by pictures of the way the world is, or tricked into a mistake by misunderstanding the way in which we use our language⁴⁵ - Wittgenstein gets us to see philosophical explanations in a new way, so that we come to doubt things that we thought we understood⁴⁶.

⁴⁴ Sometimes we get 'straight' descriptions of what is involved in some particular practice- reading, for example (see sections 156 and following)- which contradict some explanation based on a false picture. At other times there are hypothetical examples- such as that of the disappearing chair, which shows that there are not exhaustive rules for the use of words, but that this doesn't mean that words don't really have meanings. There are also the language games, which can show us how our language works (see section 130: 'The language-games are rather set up as *objects of comparison* which are meant to throw light on the facts of our language by way not only of similarities, but also of dissimilarities') and which form an important part of the case against the Augustinian picture of language. And there are also elaborate similes that describe the way language is, such as the following: 'Think of the tools in a tool-box: there is a hammer, pliers, a saw, a screw-driver, a rule, a glue pot, glue, nails and screws. - The functions of words are as diverse as the functions of these objects' (section 11).

⁴⁵ This kind of 'psychological' explanation of the motivation that lies behind our captivation by pictures is again an element not found in the *Remarks*. It no doubt helps to account for the idea of philosophy as an illness. We get passages such as the following, which refers to the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, discussion of the ideas of which- either directly or indirectly- takes up a lot of the *Philosophical Investigations*: 'A picture held us captive, for it lay in our language and language seemed to repeat it inexorably' (section 115).

⁴⁶ A good example of this is in section 194: 'When does one have the thought: the possible movements of a machine are already there in it in some mysterious way?- Well, when one is doing philosophy. And what leads us into thinking that? The kind of way in which we talk about machines.'

One might think that Wittgenstein's idea of the meaningfulness of philosophical talk is the sole significant basis of his criticism of philosophical explanations, and that this provides the fundamental insight of the *Investigations*. But I think that this would be wrong. I think there is something else going on in the *Investigations* which is at least as important. I think that there is a positive element to the *Investigations* which goes beyond showing how explanations don't do justice to the facts and showing how philosophical language is meaningless. And this element- closely to what we found in our discussion of the *Remarks*- has to do with the fundamental distinction in Wittgenstein's philosophy between explanations and descriptions.

In the *Remarks* we saw that Wittgenstein was keen to use his descriptions to get us to understand behaviour that was unintelligible to us. But this isn't what Wittgenstein uses descriptions for in the *Investigations*. Nor do I think they are meant simply to draw attention to facts that explanations may have trouble explaining. Instead, the descriptions are meant to describe to us the world in which we live and which we know, but from which philosophy can estrange us. With his descriptions, Wittgenstein tries to bring back into focus the world we already know, and which therefore we will recognize in his descriptions.

We say, for example, that a machine *has* (possesses) such-and-such possibilities of movement; we speak of the ideally rigid machine which *can* only move in such-and-such a way. -What is this *possibility* of movement? It is not the *movement*, but it does not seem to be the mere physical conditions for moving either- as, that there is play between socket and pin, the pin not fitting too tight in the socket. For while this is the empirical condition for movement, one could also imagine it to be otherwise. The possibility of a movement is, rather, supposed to be like a shadow of the movement itself. But do you know of such a shadow? And by a shadow I do not mean some picture of the movement- for such a picture would not have to be a picture of just *this* movement. But the possibility of this movement must be the possibility of just this movement. (See how high the seas of language run here!)'. We might have thought we understood what someone was talking about when they started talking about what kind of thing a possibility is, but in the light of this passage, it becomes more difficult to take such talk seriously.

This view is supported by comments Wittgenstein makes about his own philosophy. Thus, in section 127, we find-

The work of the philosopher consists in assembling reminders for a particular purpose.

Here Wittgenstein talks not merely about collecting facts, but *reminders*- of how the world we live in actually is- of how we know it to be. And in section 128, we find the following:

If one tried to advance *theses* in philosophy, it would never be possible to debate them, because everyone would agree to them.

Why is this the case? Because the theses that Wittgenstein wants to put forward are statements and descriptions of such a kind that we recognize the world in them- we recognise them as describing the world as we *know it*.

Given this, one of the major things wrong with explanations- and what defines them in a similar way to that in which they were defined in the *Remarks*- is the way in which they seem to impose themselves onto the phenomena, introducing a layer of explanation that stops us from thinking about the phenomena themselves. This signals that they do not describe the world the world that we live in and know. This idea is connected with passages like the following:

Philosophy simply puts everything before us, and neither explains nor deduces anything. –Since everything lies open to view there is nothing to explain. For what is hidden, for example, is of no interest to us.

In the case of behaviour, what is important is for behaviour to be intelligible. What is important in the case of phenomena like language and emotions is being reminded of what we already know- being brought back to the world in which we live. Explanations do not do this, and hence are redundant, in so far as they are not relevant to scientific investigation. They offer us nothing, and have a negative effect- especially in so far as their language makes them meaningless.

Just as we saw that Wittgenstein objected to explanations in a non-philosophical context because they didn't provide what was wanted, so I think Wittgenstein rejects them in a philosophical context- at least in part- for a similar reason. Just as they made rituals seem more distant and unintelligible in the one case, so they put the world out of focus, and distance us from the world we live in, in the other. Wittgenstein wants to put us back in touch with this world by describing how things are- how they seem to us, so that we are reminded of the world we live in- whether it be language and the way it is used, the way we talk about sensations, etc. He seeks to free us from the deception of false pictures and take us back to the world we already know- the world we live in. This is one of the major strands- if not the major strand- of the *Investigations*.

We can now see in what way Wittgenstein does not rely on any theoretical basis for his philosophy. He describes the world to us and

relies on these descriptions being recognized by us. He puts explanations down to a particular picture, and relies on us to see this as plausible. He describes why a certain way of talking is senseless, and relies on us to agree with him. The force of Wittgenstein's philosophy depends on how he manages to make us think like him- not in the strength of any arguments as such. Even when it comes to why explanations are bad, there are no general arguments he can advance. It comes down to changing the way we perceive and think about things.

The descriptions of the world that Wittgenstein gives have a very ordinary feel to them. In fact, they often describe the facts that most philosophers take as the starting points of their theorising. But what makes them special is the fact that the path to theorising and explanation is not gone down by Wittgenstein. It is this that gives his descriptions their potency and vividness- we do not pass over the facts that Wittgenstein describes as the mere raw material for theorising.

We have now finished our examination of Wittgenstein's later philosophy, and we have seen what Wittgenstein thought was wrong about philosophy. Now, in the last chapter of this thesis, we will examine Heidegger's philosophy to see how it fits in against this background.

Chapter 5: My Interpretation of the Philosophy of *Being and Time*

In the second chapter of this thesis, I introduced *Being and Time* by way of a brief discussion of the general aim and structure of *Being and Time*, together with remarks on the main theme of the work- Being. Some of the key features of the Being were sketched out, but many problems were raised and left unsolved.

We then considered, in chapter three, why it might be thought that the philosophy of *Being and Time* falls foul of Wittgenstein's critique of philosophy. We sketched two possible lines of attack- two ways in which Heidegger's philosophy might be seen as arising from a false picture of language or a misunderstanding of the grammar of the verb 'to be'. It might be thought that Heidegger has mistaken the verb 'to be' as being like an action verb like 'to swim', or it might be thought that Heidegger's account of Being is motivated by the Augustinian picture of language, according to which every word has some reference which provides its meaning.

We then examined Wittgenstein's philosophy to try and establish the basis of his critique of philosophy. We came to the conclusion that Wittgenstein condemns philosophy when it consists of an explanation that imposes a false picture on phenomena, or when it employs meaningless language, or when imposes a model on reality that estranges us from the world we know and live in.

We will now return to the philosophy of *Being and Time*, and I will attempt to show that it does not fall foul of the later Wittgenstein's

critique of philosophy. I will also attempt to show that the two philosophies have a great deal in common and that Heidegger's philosophy may well be a natural next step for an adherent of the later Wittgenstein.

As I've already said, there is nothing in the last chapter about Wittgenstein's later philosophy that goes against the view expounded in the third chapter of this thesis that the philosophy of *Being and Time* falls foul of the later Wittgenstein's critique of philosophy. In fact, the fourth chapter expands on the third, by explaining in more detail what is wrong with having a picture of language like the Augustinian picture.

So, if Heidegger's philosophy is to be saved from the Wittgensteinian critique of philosophy, we must address the criticisms of chapter three, and try to show that Heidegger does not write with a false picture in mind, or as a result of misunderstanding language's grammar. It must be shown that there is another basis to Heidegger's philosophy; and that this basis is not subject to Wittgenstein's critique of philosophy.

The first thing I will do in pursuit of my aim will be to take up again my examination of the introduction to *Being and Time*, and consider what Heidegger has to say about methodology. This will show us how Heidegger proceeds with his investigation, and this will in turn help us to understand what motivates *Being and Time*.

To begin, then, a brief resume. I said in chapter two of this thesis that the aim of *Being and Time* is to work out the question of the meaning of Being. I also noted that Heidegger, in section two of *Being*

and Time, sets out the formal structure of the question of Being. Every inquiry, says Heidegger, has 'that which is asked about', 'that which is interrogated' and 'that which is to be found out by the asking'. As regards the question of Being, that which is asked about is Being, and that which is to be found out by the asking is the meaning of Being. And the things that are to be interrogated are entities. In particular Dasein is to be interrogated. We looked at some of the reasons for this. And the most important reason was that it is Dasein that understands Being. Finally, we made a few obscure comments on the path that Heidegger's interrogation of Dasein takes. But by what method does Heidegger's investigation proceed?

Heidegger's discussion of his method comes towards the end of the second part of the introduction of *Being and Time*- in section seven. I will now examine this section in detail.

The method that Heidegger employs in *Being and Time* is the method of 'phenomenology'. It is introduced in the following way, near the start of section seven:

With the question of the meaning of Being, our investigation comes up against the fundamental question of philosophy. This is one that must be treated *phenomenologically*. Thus our treatise does not subscribe to a 'stand-point' or represent any special 'direction'; for phenomenology is nothing of either sort, nor can it become so as long as it understands itself. The expression 'phenomenology' signifies primarily a *methodological conception*. This expression does not characterize the what of the objects of philosophical research

as a subject-matter, but rather a the *how* of that research. (Pg. 27).

The phenomenological method, then, is to be thought of as a general method- not a method geared up for some particular set of objects. The meaning of the claim that *Being and Time* does not subscribe to any standpoint or represent any special direction will become clearer later on⁴⁷. But as for the phenomenological method itself, Heidegger spends the rest of section seven explaining it. In the next paragraph from the one just quoted, Heidegger writes:

Thus the term 'phenomenology' expresses a maxim which can be formulated as 'To the things themselves!' It is opposed to all free-floating constructions and accidental findings; it is opposed to taking over any conceptions which only seem to have been demonstrated; it is opposed to those pseudo-questions which parade themselves as 'problems', often for generations at a time.

Here we have a rough initial characterisation of the method of phenomenology. And as methods go, it seems at first sight to be an excellent one. After all, as far as we can tell from this passage, it would seem to consist in paying close attention to the things your investigating, and avoiding arbitrary constructions- or ways of conceiving the world- and pseudo-questions. This is surely excellent advice. And it's even quite Wittgensteinian in feel, what with the idea of concentrating on *things* (as opposed to theories and explanations

⁴⁷ It has to do with the type of description that Heidegger uses to describe his subject matter- a type of description I think Wittgenstein would have approved of.

about things), and the idea of avoiding 'constructions' (surely this is similar to the idea of avoiding pictures?), and the idea of pseudo-questions (see section 109 of the *Philosophical Investigations*, quoted in chapter four).

But there is a problem with the characterisation, in that the language in which it is couched is perhaps a bit too general. It's so general, in fact, that it is hard to imagine anyone disagreeing with it. And Heidegger himself recognises this when he writes:

Yet this maxim, one may rejoin, is abundantly self-evident, and it expresses, moreover, the underlying principle of any scientific knowledge whatsoever. Why should anything so self-evident be taken up explicitly in giving a title to a branch of research?

To grasp fully the idea of the phenomenological method, it looks like we have to deeper into Heidegger's exposition of it, and examine the rest of section seven in detail.

The main body of the exposition proceeds via the typically Heideggerian method of using etymology to get at the basic meaning of an idea. Heidegger breaks the term 'phenomenology' up into its component parts, and then examines these in turn. Thus we have discussions of the meanings of the terms 'phenomenon' and 'logos'.

The discussion of the term 'phenomenon' is, admittedly, not one of Heidegger's most lucid⁴⁸. He identifies various different senses in which the term may be used, and also other terms whose meanings are connected⁴⁹. But at the beginning of the discussion, Heidegger writes as follows:

The Greek expression *φαινόμενον*, to which the term 'phenomenon' goes back, is derived from the verb *φαινεσθαι*, which signifies 'to show itself'. Thus *φαινόμενον* means that which shows itself, the manifest. *φαινεσθαι* itself is a *middle-voiced* form which comes from *φαινω*- to bring to the light of day, to put in the light. *φαινω* comes from the stem *φα-*, like *φως*, the light, that which is bright- in other words, that wherein something can become manifest, visible in itself. Thus we must *keep in mind* that the expression '*phenomenon*' signifies *that which shows itself in itself*, the manifest. Accordingly the *φαινόμενα* or 'phenomena' are the totality of what lies in the light of day or can be brought to the light- what the Greeks sometimes identified simply with *τα οντα* (entities). (Pg. 28).

We have here the definition of the term 'phenomenon' that is relevant to the meaning of the term phenomenology. A phenomenon is something that does- or can- show itself in itself. That is, it is something that is- or can be- manifest and 'in the light of day'. This means it is something that we can come across- or encounter- directly⁵⁰.

⁴⁸ The editors do in fact say, in a footnote to page 29, that the passage on phenomenology 'shows some signs of hasty construction'.

⁴⁹ For example, the terms 'semblance', 'appearance', and 'mere appearance', the meanings of all of which are dependent on the meaning of the term 'phenomenon'.

⁵⁰ Hence, on page 31, Heidegger says: "'*Phenomenon*', the showing-itself-in-itself, signifies a distinctive way in which something can be encountered'.

The idea of 'showing itself in itself' can be understood more clearly in comparison with the idea of 'merely appearing', in a case such as that of the symptoms of a disease. 'Merely appearing' is what may happen when someone is ill; for example, the serious thing that is wrong with one may remain hidden, while superficial symptoms indicate its presence. In this case the symptoms show themselves in themselves. We can come across them directly- look at them and touch them- but what is really important- i.e. what is really wrong- remains hidden⁵¹.

The idea of 'showing itself in itself' can also be understood better by thinking of the Kantian idea that the objects of empirical intuition are like emanations from the 'things in themselves'. On such a model, it is the objects of intuition that would be the phenomena- they are the things we have direct access to⁵².

One final point about phenomena is highly significant. Heidegger says there are various ways in which phenomena can be encountered, as can be seen from the following passage:

⁵¹ See page 29: 'This ['mere appearance'] is what one is talking about when one speaks of the 'symptoms of a disease'. Here one has in mind certain occurrences in the body which show themselves and which, in showing themselves as thus showing themselves, 'indicate' something which does *not* show itself. The emergence of such occurrences, their showing themselves, goes together with the Being-present-at-hand of disturbances which do not show themselves. Thus appearance, as the appearance 'of something', does *not* mean showing itself; it means rather the announcing the announcing-itself by something which does not show itself, but which announces itself through something which does not show itself'.

⁵² See page 30: 'According to him [Kant] 'appearances' are, in the first place, the 'objects of the empirical intuition': they are what shows itself in such intuition. But what thus shows itself (the phenomenon' in the genuine primordial sense) is at the same time an 'appearance' as an emanation of something which *hides* itself in that appearance- an emanation which announces'.

Now an entity can show itself from itself in many ways, depending in each case on the kind of access we have to it. Indeed it is even possible for an entity to show itself as something which in itself it is not'. (Pg. 28).

So phenomena are not just things that simply 'are' and that can- or rather should- be described in some detached objective way. We can encounter them in various ways. This is a point I will come back to.

As for 'logos', Heidegger translates this term into German as *Rede*, or discourse. He says:

Λογος as 'discourse' means rather the same as *δηλουν*: to make manifest what one is 'talking about' in one's discourse. (Pg. 32).

Heidegger develops this idea- that logos means the making manifest of what one is talking about- by discussing logos as *αποφανσις*:

In discourse (*αποφανσις*), so far as it is genuine, *what* is said is drawn *from* what the talk is about, so that discursive communication, in what it says, makes manifest what it is talking about, and thus makes this accessible to the other party⁵³. (Pg. 32).

⁵³ The link between the idea of 'drawing from' and *αποφανσις* depends on the 'απο-' prefix, which in Ancient Greek signifies- among other things- 'from'.

Here two new elements are added to the idea of logos- logos is the *making manifest* of what one is talking about- to oneself and the person one is talking to- by saying things that are *drawn from* the thing one is talking about.

The concepts of phenomenon and logos are put together to explicate the meaning of 'phenomenology' in the following way:

When we envisage concretely what we have set forth in our Interpretation of 'phenomenon' and 'logos', we are struck by an inner relationship between the things meant by these terms. The expression 'phenomenology' may be formulated in Greek as *λεγειν τα φαινόμενα*, where *λεγειν* means *αποφαινεσθαι*. Thus 'phenomenology' means *αποφαινεσθαι τα φαινόμενα*- to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself. This is the formal meaning of that branch of research which calls itself 'phenomenology'. But here we are expressing nothing else than the maxim formulated above: 'To the things themselves!' (Pg. 34).⁵⁴

Thus the method of phenomenology may be summarized as follows. It is a method that consists in letting something be seen, or making something manifest. The kind of things it makes manifest are those things that are encounterable by us- capable of being brought into the light of day. Phenomenology proceeds by way of discourse, and makes its phenomena manifest to those engaged in the discourse. And it makes its phenomena manifest in the way in which

⁵⁴ The phrase 'To the things themselves!' is, of course a quotation from Husserl.

they show themselves- as they truly appear. For phenomena can appear to us in various ways, and have to be described in such a way that they are also interpreted, as is shown by the following passage:

Our investigation itself will show that the meaning of phenomenological description as a method lies in *interpretation*. The λογος of the phenomenology of Dasein has the character of a ερμηνευειν, through which the authentic meaning of Being, and also those basic structures of Being which Dasein itself possesses, are *made known* Dasein's understanding of Being. The phenomenology of Dasein is a *hermeneutic* in the primordial signification of this word, where it designates this business of interpreting.

So we have now briefly examined what Heidegger has to say about his methodology. Is there anything in what he says that might give us hope that he can be defended against a Wittgensteinian critique? I think there is. I think Heidegger's discussion of his methodology allows us a glimpse- though little more- of how he might be redeemed.

After all, phenomenology is about describing phenomena that we encounter. And Heidegger makes it clear that he wants to describe them as they are encountered, rather than relying on any 'arbitrary constructions'. All this sounds properly Wittgensteinian, at least as regards the way in which we which we interpreted Wittgenstein's philosophy in the last chapter. Nor is there any mention here of searching for the referents of words.

But I am fully aware that what has been said that what has been said so far, while perhaps indicative of the way in which Heidegger is to be saved, is inadequate for the purpose. After all, Heidegger is not the first philosopher who has tried to describe the world- or some aspect of it- as it really appears. Heidegger's phrase 'To the things themselves!' is taken from Husserl, as already noted, but I wouldn't want to claim that Husserl can be reconciled to Wittgenstein's critique of philosophy. And think of attempts to describe the world in terms of sense-data. These surely express a desire to break free from arbitrary constructions and to get at 'the things themselves'. But again, it is hard to imagine a better example of what Wittgenstein wants to get away from in philosophy.

But I think there are some hopeful signs in what has so far been said about Heidegger's methodology that Heidegger's descriptions will be of a kind that Wittgenstein would approve of. After all, Heidegger is setting out to interpret phenomena, and to do so in such a way that our understanding of them is made explicit (see the last passage quoted above). Heidegger's philosophy is intended to make explicit the way in which we understand the world, and as such, it is possible to hope that we will recognize in Heidegger's descriptions the world in which we live. And if this is the case, surely we will be able to conclude that Heidegger is not being led in his philosophy by any kind of false picture or grammatical misunderstanding, and that Heidegger not only does not fall foul of Wittgenstein's critique of philosophy, but indeed shares the aim of showing us the world we already know and live in.

So my final task in this interpretation is show that Heidegger's descriptions do actually describe the world in such a way that we

recognise in them the world in which we live. I will begin doing this by citing some 'circumstantial evidence' which I think should encourage us to believe that Heidegger's descriptions are of the right sort. I will then turn to Heidegger's descriptions themselves and examine them in detail. I will also then address the question of Heidegger's talk about Being, and ask how it fits into Heidegger's descriptions and what the significance of the question of the meaning of Being is. After all, we mustn't forget that *Being and Time* is primarily intended to answer this question, and whether *Being and Time* will ultimately stand as a coherent philosophical work that can be accepted by a Wittgensteinian will ultimately depend on what sense can be made of this, and Heidegger's talk about Being.

I will now cite some 'circumstantial evidence', which will also serve as an introduction to my discussion of some of Heidegger's descriptions.

Heidegger's philosophy- like Wittgenstein's- is closely linked with a critical aspect. The *Destruction*⁵⁵ of the philosophical tradition by way of Kant, Descartes and Aristotle formed an important part in the original plan of *Being and Time*, and even in the published part of the work, there are numerous references to other philosophers, and their work is often discussed. Indeed, much of *Being and Time* is, either implicitly or explicitly, a reaction to the philosophical tradition and the pictures and ways of thinking that dominate it. Even when Heidegger doesn't mention names, he reacts. And this fits well with the idea that

⁵⁵ This German term, often unhappily translated as 'deconstruction' has roots in Luther- which Heidegger would have been fully aware of- where it refers to breaking through the scholastic tradition in Christian philosophy to get back to the original well-springs of religious faith. For Heidegger, it meant the return to the original understanding of 'Being'.

Heidegger is trying to describe the world in such a way that we will recognize it in the description. The aim of Heidegger's descriptions can be thought of, like Wittgenstein's, as being to lead us back from those false pictures which distract us from the world we live in.

This reaction is a matter of the language Heidegger uses as much as anything else. Heidegger reacts against ordinary ways of talking, and his language is often poetic and elusive. It isn't just that Heidegger invents a new philosophical vocabulary. Heidegger's language doesn't, I think, convey the impression of being founded on some solid picture of how the world actually is. It seems more slippery than that, and contains much striking imagery- some of which I'll examine shortly. Heidegger's language conveys the impression of a striving towards something that can't really be described in ordinary language⁵⁶.

So much for the circumstantial evidence. It is now time to turn to Heidegger's descriptions themselves, and to ask how Heidegger's talk of Being, and indeed the question of the meaning of Being fits in with them.

⁵⁶ This is, of course, a subjective point. This striving after something that is difficult to describe could just as well be a symptom of muddled thought. But I think following passage is perhaps worth quoting: 'With regard to the awkwardness and 'inelegance' of expression in the analyses to come, we may remark that it is one thing to give a report in which we tell about *entities*, but another to grasp entities in their *Being*. For the latter task we lack not only most of the words but, above all, the 'grammar'. If we may allude to some earlier researchers on the analysis of Being, incomparable on their own level, we may compare the ontological sections of Plato's *Parmenides* or the fourth chapter of the seventh book of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* with a narrative section from Thucydides; we can then see the altogether unprecedented character of those formulations which were imposed upon the Greeks by their philosophers. And where our powers are essentially weaker, and where moreover the area of Being to be disclosed is ontologically far more difficult than that which was presented to the Greeks, the harshness of our expression will be enhanced, and so will the minuteness of detail with which are concepts are formed'. Though Heidegger mentions two philosophers, the mention of a non-philosophical writer is significant. It is almost as if Heidegger thinks of himself as a writer who, like a poet, has to 'do violence' to the language he has inherited, in order to break free from stale clichés and be able to describe the world as he sees it, in a way that will strike a chord with his readers.

But first, I want to briefly examine how Heidegger ties in Being with his method. He does this by presenting Being as the perfect subject for phenomenology.

What is it that phenomenology is to 'let us see'? What is it that must be called a phenomenon in a distinctive sense? What is it that by its very essence is *necessarily* the theme whenever we exhibit something *explicitly*? Manifestly, it is something that proximally and for the most part does *not* show itself at all: it is something that lies *hidden*, in contrast to that which proximally and for the most part does show itself; but at the same time it is something that belongs to what thus shows itself, and it belongs to it so essentially as to meaning and its ground.

Yet that which remains *hidden* in an egregious sense, or which relapses and gets *covered up* again, or which shows itself only '*in disguise*', is not just this entity or that, but rather the *Being* of entities, as our previous observations have shown. This Being can be covered up so extensively that it becomes forgotten and no question arises about it or about its meaning. Thus that which demands that it become a phenomenon, and which demands this in a distinctive sense and in terms of its ownmost content as a thing, is what phenomenology has taken into its grasp thematically as its object.

The idea is that Being can be manifest, and as such can be revealed as it is. But at the same time it is not generally manifest, and in fact is generally hidden- as a semblance in fact. Hence it is worthwhile

trying to uncover this phenomenon and, by describing it, let it be seen as something that shows itself. And this is what *Being and Time* attempts to do- to uncover Being and show what it is. We will eventually have to explain why the phenomenon of Being is for the most part hidden. But for now, the important point is that Being is the phenomenon that will be subjected to phenomenological analysis.

I will now turn to Heidegger's descriptions themselves. And I will start by discussing Heidegger's description of the phenomenon of Being-in. This will lead into my account of the significance of Heidegger's talk of Being. And this will allow us to come to a final conclusion about Heidegger's descriptions, and *Being and Time* in general.

Heidegger deals with the concept of Being-in in two places- chapters two and five of the first division. Here we will concentrate on what he has to say in chapter two.

In section 12, at the start of chapter two, Heidegger introduces the notion of 'Being-in-the-world' as a state of Being which is constitutive for Dasein- that is, it is the way in which Dasein is, in his special sense. This is, Heidegger says, a unitary phenomenon, with the result that 'it cannot be broken up into contents which may be pieced together. However, it can be got to grips with by examining it in three different ways- by bringing out three different items for emphasis. These items are 'in-the-world', the 'entity which in every case has Being-in-the-world as the way in which it is' and 'Being-in'. In the rest of the chapter, Heidegger characterizes 'Being-in'- as he puts it, 'by way of orientation'.

What, then, is meant by the phrase 'Being-in', given the context of Dasein as 'Being-in-the-world'?

Well, we might just say that we are in the world in the same way as, say, a statue is in a box. On this way of conceiving things, 'The World' is like some kind of huge container in which we, a particular type of object, find ourselves. What could be more reasonable than this idea? This way of thinking about things is discussed by Heidegger:

Our proximal reaction is to round out this expression to 'Being-in 'in the world'', and we are inclined to understand this Being-in as 'Being in something'. This latter term designates the kind of Being which an entity has when it is 'in' another one, as the water is 'in' the glass, or the garment is 'in' the cupboard. By this 'in' we mean the relationship of Being which two entities extended 'in' space have to each other with regard to their location in that space. Both water and glass, garment and cupboard, are 'in' space and 'at' a location, both in the same way.

But from Heidegger's point of view, there is a problem with all this:

All entities whose Being 'in' one another can thus be described have the same kind of Being- that of Being-present-at-hand- as Things⁵⁷ occurring 'within' the world.

⁵⁷ In the translation of *Being and Time* that I'm using, the word 'Thing', with its first letter capitalized, stands for the German word *Ding*. Since Heidegger uses this word in a special sense, which I shall

But Dasein doesn't have this kind of Being. Dasein isn't an object like a Thing, like a glass, a garment or a cupboard. So Heidegger rejects this view of the way we are in the world. He thinks of it as based on a false picture- or a misunderstanding of Dasein's Being- rather than a description of how things are.

But what does Heidegger have to say about Dasein's distinctive way of Being-in- the distinctive way in which Dasein is in the world?

At first we have a typical bit of Heideggerian explanation through etymology.

'In' is derived from 'innan'- 'to reside', 'habitare', 'to dwell'. 'An' signifies 'I am accustomed', 'I am familiar with', 'I look after something'. It has the signification of 'colo' in the senses of '*habito*' and '*diligo*'.

And later,

The entity to which Being-in in this signification belongs is one which we have characterised as that entity which in each case I myself am. The expression '*bin*' is connected with '*bei*', and so '*ich bin*' means in its turn 'I reside' or 'dwell alongside' the world, as that which is familiar to me in such and such a way. 'Being', as the infinitive of '*ich bin*' (that is to say, when it is

discuss below, I will follow the practice of my translation and use the word 'Thing' in talking about Heidegger's descriptions.

understood as an *existentiale*), signifies 'to reside alongside...', 'to be familiar with...'.⁵⁸

As examples of etymology, these may or may not be good, but beyond that, what philosophical point do they make? Well, they begin to suggest the way in which Heidegger wants us to think about the way we are in the world. But they don't present any clear, neat picture of the way we are in the world- rather they provide a good example of that 'poetic tendency' that I referred to earlier- they have the character of a groping towards some idea that can't be clearly expressed in ordinary language. In one sense, to say that 'the world' is the place that we are familiar with, live in, etc, is trivial- if we live anywhere, or are familiar with any place- what else that place be other than 'the world'. But I think Heidegger is trying to make a deeper point. He is leading us away from thinking of the way we are in the world according to the picture of objects in a container, and preparing the way for a description of the way we experience ourselves as being in the world.

But what is Heidegger's description of the way we are in the world? It becomes clearer, I think, when Heidegger talks about 'Being alongside'.

'Being alongside' is an *existentiale*⁵⁸ founded upon Being-in. And we told that 'Being alongside' is nothing like being along side in the way in which ordinary objects or Things just happen to be next to each

⁵⁸ The term 'existentiale' denotes a characteristic of Dasein's Being. See page 44: All *explicata* to which the analytic of Dasein gives rise are obtained by considering Dasein's existence-structure. Because Dasein's characters of Being are defined in terms of existentiality, we call them "*existentialia*". These are to be sharply distinguished from what we call "*categories*" - characteristics of Being for entities whose character is not that of Dasein'.

other (there's an obvious parallel here with Being-in). Dasein is alongside other things in a very special way. It is capable of touching other things in a way that simple objects are not able to:

Of course when two things are present-at-hand together alongside one another, we are accustomed to express this occasionally by something like 'The table stands 'by' the door' or 'The chair 'touches' the wall'. Taken strictly, 'touching' is never what we are talking about in such cases, not because accurate re-examination will always eventually establish that there is a space between the chair and the wall, but because in principle the chair can never touch the wall, even if the space between them should be equal to zero. If the chair could touch the wall, this would presuppose that the wall is the sort of thing 'for' which a chair would be *encounterable*. An entity present-at-hand within the world can be touched by another entity only if by its very nature the latter entity has Being-in as its own kind of Being-only if, with its Being-there, something like the world is already revealed to it, so that from out of that world another entity can manifest itself in touching, and thus become accessible in its Being-present-at-hand. When two entities are present-at-hand within the world, and furthermore are *worldless* in themselves, they can never 'touch' each other, nor can either of them 'be' '*alongside*' the other.

Here, then, we have Heidegger's description- or characterization- of the distinctive way in which Dasein encounters the world. Dasein is in a world—or, perhaps, given the passages quoted on the last page, lives in, inhabits a world- and within that world it

encounters things. Significantly, Heidegger gives us this description against the background of another way of thinking about the way in which things can be alongside each other- that according to which for objects to be alongside each other is just for them to be next to each other in space. The implication is that we shouldn't fall into the trap of conceiving of our way of Being-alongside things in a way that may be appropriate for ordinary objects or Things. Instead, we should recognize the way we actually experience our Being- alongside things and describe this as best we can (even though our language is not fitted for such descriptions).

So, we have here Heidegger trying to characterise the way in which we experience ourselves as being in the world, and at the same time trying to avoid false pictures of how we are in the world. I think that Heidegger in this instance has a very significant point to make about the way the world is for us. But it is not an easy point to make, so I will attempt to present the point in other ways, so as to show the power of Heidegger's description.

One way to get to grips with this point is to recall the way in which traditional problems about the existence of the external world are set up. The starting point is usually some picture of the way the world is. For example- imagine that the world consists of objects in space. We too are objects in this world- but we don't observe the world directly- how could we- what would this involve? Instead, we observe colours shapes- we have sensations, and it is reasonable to think that these sensations correspond to objects out there in the external world. But how can we be sure that they do? In this case, the problem of the external world is linked to a particular way of thinking

about the world- with a picture of how the world really is, apart from our experience. But when one thinks about it, this picture- of us in space, surrounded by objects that we have no direct access to- actually has very little relation to the way we experience life. For there is surely in a sense in which we are in direct contact with the world we live in- we do experience objects directly, encounter them, manipulate them, and so on. And it is with the objects that we encounter and use that we are concerned- to quote Wittgenstein- 'what is hidden... is of no interest to us'. This is how the world we live in actually is, even though, when doing philosophy, we may reject this way of characterising the world- the way of characterising that Heidegger follows- and write it off just as naïve realism, which seems closely related, is often written off.

That is how things are, and how we think they are until we are taught how wrong this view is by philosophy, which introduces all sorts of considerations that make us think of our relation to the world in a different way. Just because talking in this way seems clumsy and doesn't fit into any neat philosophical theory, that is no reason to think it wrong. Traditional philosophy likes thinking in terms of nice neat pictures. But Heidegger goes for real descriptions instead- often poetic and difficult, but perhaps truer than neat theories based on false pictures.

Heidegger develops his characterization of Dasein's Being-in with the idea of Dasein as a *Lichtung* or clearing.

When we talk in an ontically figurative way of the *lumen naturale* in man, we have in mind nothing other than the

existential-ontological structure of this entity, that it *is* in such a way as to be its 'there'. To say that it is 'illuminated' means that as Being-in-the-world it is cleared in itself, not through any other entity, but in such a way that it *is* itself the clearing. Only for an entity which is existentially cleared in this way does that which is present-at-hand become accessible in the light or hidden in the dark. By its very nature, Dasein brings its 'there' along with it. If it lacks its 'there', it is not factually the entity which is essentially Dasein; indeed, it is not this entity at all. *Dasein is its disclosedness.*

Dasein is the clearing where entities are revealed, encountered, where they *impinge* upon us. The word *Lichtung* is with connected with the word *Licht*, or light, emphasising the way in which entities are *revealed* for Dasein.

I have now finished my examination of what Heidegger has to say about Dasein's Being-in. And in discussing it I have tried my best to show that in his discussion, Heidegger describes an aspect of our experience of the world in which we live in a way that rings true. Heidegger describes successfully the world in which we live, and so succeeds in drawing us away from false ways of conceiving the world, and gets us to concentrate on the way the world is for us.

In so far as I have succeeded with my task, Heidegger has been shown to at least partially escape Wittgenstein's critique of philosophy. For Wittgenstein criticises- according to what was said in the last chapter- philosophy that seeks to explain the world with reference to false pictures that draw us away from the world in which we live and

which we know. But the problem of Heidegger's talk about Being still remains. In my discussion of Being-in, I dodged this problem, and treated Heidegger as simply concerned with the way in which we can be said to be in the world. But if *Being and Time* is to be saved as a coherent whole, rather than a series of characterisations- which would nevertheless be valuable- we must address the problem of what Heidegger means when he talks about Being.

I think that the problem of Heidegger's talk of Being can best be solved by returning to his description of Being-in.

In this description, two ways of conceiving the world were contrasted. On the one hand, there was the way of conceiving the world according to which there are things which just are just exist- in space. We are things pretty similar to others, and can take up various relations to other things in much the same way as other ordinary things take up relations to each other. According to this view, there is no special kind of activity or state of Being that needs to be dealt with.

But this way of conceiving the world was found inadequate, because it failed to do justice to our experience of being in a world in which we encounter objects directly, manipulate those objects directly, and so on. It represented, as it were, a detached view of what the is like, almost Platonic in the way in which the entities it hypothesised are thought of as detached from our experience. In the place of this way of conceiving the world, we have Heidegger's- where Dasein directly encounters entities, which impinge upon us.

But how is this connected to Heidegger's talk of Being? It is connected because, in presenting his picture of how the world is, Heidegger is kicking against the idea that entities- including Dasein- 'just are'. It isn't the case that things 'just are' in such a way that we can take them for granted. Rather, they impinge upon us, and are encountered by us. Instead of things 'just being' they '*are there before us*', and I think Heidegger's talk of Being- together with his special, italicised use of the verb 'to be'- is meant to remind us of this. By talking as *if* there is such an activity as Being and as *if* 'to be' describes this action, brings out the way in which the way in which things are is an issue for us- they impinge on us, and we encounter them.

Therefore, I don't think that Heidegger does actually think that there is any such state or activity as Being, or that Being is in some sense the referent of the verb 'to be', as Philippe's critique of Heidegger had it (see chapter two). Heidegger hasn't been captured by any picture of the way language works. Instead, I think he talks as if there were a referent of the verb 'to be', in order to remind us that the world we inhabit isn't 'just there'- in the sense of existing in space and cut off from us. It is '*there before us*', in the clearing that Heidegger describes Dasein as being.

But, one may ask, where does the search for the meaning of Being fit in. My answer is that, given that entities exist before us in the world, encountered by us, it is possible to ask *how* we encounter entities, how they are before us- what meaning it has for us. And this is what Heidegger asks about when he asks the meaning of Being- the meaning of the way things are. This is something we are quite used to doing in certain circumstances. For example, we are quite used to

asking *how* a certain work of art strikes us. And writers and poets are used to describing *how* things appear them. But we may often feel that this kind of activity has a subjective quality- it doesn't describe how things *really* are. But Heidegger, with his concern for the world we live in, and his disregard for anything beyond it, doesn't see this kind of description as at all subjective.

In order to further illustrate my interpretation of Heidegger, I will discuss one more of his descriptions of a type of Being. The type of Being in question is 'readiness-to-hand' (*Zuhandenheit*).

Having explained a little of what he means by Being-in in chapter two, Heidegger turns in chapter three to the phenomenon of the world- the world we find ourselves in. How are we to characterise the world find ourselves? Well, one way might be to be simply to enumerate the things that are in the world. This would be to follow a well-worn philosophical path (think of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, though admittedly the things that this work would have us believe the world is made up of are of a very peculiar kind). But it would be to fail to do justice to our experience of the world, and would instead be in accordance with a false picture of how the world is- according to which the world consists of things that 'just' are:

To accomplish this task [of making Being-in-the-world 'visible with regard to that item of its structure which is the 'world' itself'] seems easy and so trivial as to make one keep taking for granted that it may be dispensed with. What can be meant by describing 'the world' as a phenomenon? It means to let us see what shows itself in 'entities' within the world. Here the first step is

to enumerate the things that are 'in' the world: houses, trees, people, mountains, stars. We can *depict* the way such entities 'look', and we can give an *account* of occurrences in them and with them. This, however, is obviously a pre-phenomenological 'business' which cannot be at all relevant phenomenologically. Such a description is always confined to entities. It is ontical. But what we are seeking is Being.

So the mere enumeration of things is ruled out. After all Heidegger is concerned with Being- how we experience the world- how it appears to us. How is Heidegger to do this? He says:

In the domain of the present analysis, the entities we shall take as our preliminary theme are those which show themselves in our concern with the environment.... [T]hey are simply what gets used, what gets produced, and so forth.

So Heidegger is going to concentrate on those entities by which we are most commonly surrounded- those entities that are present throughout most of our lives- in order to answer the question of how we by and large experience the world. But what kind of entities are we here dealing with? Again, one answer springs readily to mind:

One may answer: "Things." But with this obvious answer we have perhaps already missed the pre-phenomenological basis we are seeking. For in addressing these entities as 'Things' (*res*), we have tacitly anticipated their ontological character. When analysis starts with such entities and goes on to enquire about Being, what it meets is Thinghood and Reality.

But again, it would be the wrong answer. The alternative view that Heidegger is here criticising is again the view that thinks of entities as 'just there'. The word 'Thing' translates the German word 'Ding'. This word is particularly associated in Heidegger with the view that things 'just are', and that nothing more need be said about them. This view doesn't address Being- the way we encounter things. And it is in turn associated with the tendency of philosophers to think of things primarily as present-at-hand- i.e. merely occurring- as they are in certain circumstances. But what is Heidegger's alternative? The ground for it is set in the following passage:

The Greeks had an appropriate term for 'Things': *πραγματα*- that is to say, that which one has to do with in one's concerned dealings (*πραξις*). But ontologically, the specifically 'pragmatic' character of the *pragmata* is just what the Greeks left in obscurity; they thought of these 'proximally' as 'mere' Things'. We shall call those entities which we encounter in concern "equipment"⁵⁹. (Pg. 68).

This is the starting point for Heidegger's characterisation of the world we live in proximally and for the most part. In the world in which we live, there aren't simply things that 'just are'. We live in a world of things of certain types, with their own roles and uses, and we encounter them as being of these types. This idea is very

⁵⁹ 'Equipment' translates 'das Zeug'. The editors' note on this word runs as follows: 'The word 'Zeug' has no precise English equivalent. While it may mean any implement, instrument, or tool, Heidegger uses it for the most part as a collective noun which is analogous to our relatively specific 'gear' (as in 'gear for fishing') or the more elaborate 'paraphernalia', or the still more general equipment.... For the most part Heidegger uses the term as a collective noun, so that he can say that there is no such thing as 'an equipment'; but he still uses it occasionally with an indefinite article to refer to some specific tool or instrument- some item or bit of equipment'. (See the footnote to page 68).

Wittgensteinian. Heidegger rejects a picture of the world which distracts us from what the world we live in- a picture according to which there are 'just Things' in the world, and instead offers us a description of the world as made up of tools and the equipment of everyday life. Surely this is a better account of the world we live in, and the world we know.

And it is one that Heidegger develops in more detail with the idea of a there being a meaningful structure, between different bits of equipment, of assignments or references. We don't just experience bits of equipment as being of a certain kind. We at different times experience them as being for a particular purpose, or for making a particular item⁶⁰. And the meaningful structure of references doesn't stop there. It includes the things we make⁶¹ and Nature⁶², and even ourselves⁶³. Everywhere we look we experience things as being for a

⁶⁰ 'Taken strictly, there 'is' no such thing as *an* equipment. To the Being of any equipment there always belongs a totality of equipment, in which it can be this equipment that it is. Equipment is essentially 'something in-order-to...'. A totality of equipment is essentially 'something-in-order-to...'. A totality of equipment is constituted by various ways of the 'in-order-to'.... In the 'in-order-to' as a structure there lies an *assignment* or *reference* of something to something'. (Pg. 68).

⁶¹ 'The work to be produced, as the "towards-which" of such things as the hammer, the plane, and the needle, likewise has the kind of Being that belongs to equipment. The shoe which is to be produced is for wearing (footgear); the clock is manufactured for telling the time. The work which we chiefly encounter in our concerned dealings- the work that is to be found when one is "at work" on something- has a usability which belongs to it essentially; in this usability it lets us encounter already the "towards-which" for which *it* is usable'. (Pg. 70).

⁶² But the work to be produced is not merely usable for something. The production itself is a using *of* something for something. In the work there is also a reference or assignment to 'materials': the work is dependent on leather, thread, needles, and the like. Leather, moreover is produced from hides. These are taken from animals, which someone has raised. Animals also occur within the world without having been raised at all; and, in a way, these entities still produce themselves even when they have been raised. So in the environment certain entities become accessible which are always ready-to-hand, but which, in themselves, do not need to be produced. Hammer, tongs and needle, refer in themselves to steel, iron, metal, mineral, wood, in that they consist of these. In equipment that is used, 'Nature' is discovered along with it by that use- the 'Nature' we find in natural products. (Pg. 70).

⁶³ '...[U]nder simple craft conditions it [the work produced] also has an assignment to the person who is to use it or wear it. The work is cut to his figure; he 'is' there along with it as the work emerges. Even when goods are produced by the dozen, this constitutive assignment is by no means lacking; it is merely indefinite, and points to the random, the average. Thus along with the work, we encounter not only entities ready-to-hand but also entities with Dasein's kind of Being....' (Pg. 70-71).

particular purpose, or a particular person, or as made out of a certain material.

To me, this does describe an element of the way the world is. It describes a particular way of experiencing entities- not the only one available to us, but that way which is associated with Heidegger's term *Zuhandenheit*. Heidegger's full characterisation of this type of Being- or way in which things appear to us, on my interpretation- is more sophisticated and subtle than I have explained it- but hopefully enough has been said to lend some support to my interpretation of Heidegger's talk of Being.

And so we've completed my account of Being. And, setting alongside this what I said earlier about Heidegger's description of Being-in, and about Heidegger's technique and method, I think that we can see that Heidegger does not fall foul of Wittgenstein's critique of philosophy. He is not motivated by a false picture of language. Nor has he been captivated by the verb 'to be'. On the contrary I think that Heidegger's talk of Being is part of a deliberate attempt to escape from ways of thinking about the world that do not do justice to the way we experience it. And Heidegger attempts to describe the world as we experience it, in such a way that we will recognise our experience in his descriptions.

And because of this, I think Heidegger shares a deep affinity with Wittgenstein- both philosophers seek to describe the world in a way that we will recognize, and both in a sense reject philosophies that obscure the way the world actually is. Wittgenstein rejects philosophies that impose a picture on the world we live in, and seek to explain it at

an invisible level of explanation, while Heidegger rejects philosophies that do not do justice to the way we experience ourselves as living in the world, and which seek to explain the world by reference to abstract pictures rather than descriptions of experience.

But having said this, there are still a few matters to clear up, particularly in regard to my interpretation of *Being and Time*.

Given my account of Being, I think it is now possible to see the link between the verb 'to be' and Being. Whenever the verb 'to be' is used, it is possible, on my interpretation, to substitute the standard form of the verb for the italicised, Heideggerian form- the form that reminds us that we can't be content with just talking about 'Things'. We encounter them, and as such they must be thought of- in part at least- as things that we encounter, rather than just things existing independently in space.

And we can see that it isn't important that *Being and Time* isn't finished. If we are to try and interpret the way in which we encounter entities- ourselves included- why should there be any end? Any more than there need be an end to the way in which a work of art can be described and redescribed, with different aspects constantly being brought out.

We have already covered the sense in which the Being of entities can be thought of as having a meaning. And we can thus see the point that Heidegger was trying to make when he said that our understanding of the question of the meaning of Being had to be reawakened: we forget the strange way in which we live in a world

where we are confronted by objects- we are lulled into complacency by 'obvious' ways of thinking of the world- as made up of objects in space.

In a similar way, when Heidegger talked about how we live in an understanding of Being, but that the meaning of Being is veiled, he is surely talking about the way in which we live in a world where we are confronted by entities, but take this for granted and even constantly pass over the fact, instead conceiving the world as made up of isolated objects in space.

And Heidegger's talk of our understanding of Being simply refers to the way in which we can be said to understand the entities we encounter- just as we can be said to understand works of art.

One last thing. I said that *Being and Time's* philosophy offered a natural next step to an adherent of the later Wittgenstein. But I don't think it is a necessary step. After all, we are dealing here with descriptions- and descriptions that aim to describe the world in such a way that we recognize the world in them. This is a subjective matter, and Heidegger adopts such an extreme method of description that it would be hardly surprising if someone found both him and his style of language inimical- both to read and to adopt. However, I think that Heidegger gives so many very powerful descriptions of our experience of the world in *Being and Time* that I would be surprised if someone failed to get anything from him, once the hurdle of his talk about Being has been overcome.

To finish, I would like to quote from a work by Heidegger that postdates *Being and Time* by quite a while (it's from the 1950's), but which I think conveys an idea close to both the later Wittgenstein and to Heidegger- that in philosophy our starting point should be the world we live in and know, and that we should avoid ways of thinking that estrange us from it:

We stand outside of science. Instead we stand before a tree in bloom, for example- and the tree stands before us. The tree faces us. The tree and we meet one another, as the tree stands there and we stand face to face with it.... This face-to-face meeting is not, then, one of these 'ideas' buzzing about in our heads. Let us stop here for a moment, as we would to catch our breath before and after a leap. For that is what we *are* now, men who have leapt, out of the familiar realm of science and even, as we shall see, out of the realm of philosophy. And where have we leapt? Perhaps into an abyss? No! But on that soil upon which we live and die, if we are honest with ourselves. A curious, indeed unearthly thing that we must first leap onto the soil on which we really stand⁶⁴.

⁶⁴ From *What is Called Thinking?*, fourth lecture, part 1 (see bibliography).

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