

Lost in Translation: Wittgenstein, Training, Education, and *Abrichtung*

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INTRODUCTION: WITTGENSTEIN, LANGUAGE LEARNING AND *ABRICHTUNG*

As a landmark philosopher of language and of mind, Ludwig Wittgenstein is also remarkable for having crossed, with apparent ease, the “continental divide” in philosophy. It is consequently not surprising that Ludwig Wittgenstein’s work, particularly in the *Philosophical Investigations*, has been taken up by philosophers of education in English. Michael A. Peters,¹ Christopher Winch,² Smeyers & Burbules,³ and others⁴ have engaged extensively with the implications of the later Wittgenstein’s philosophy for education. One challenge they face is Wittgenstein’s use of the word “training.” For it appears throughout his discussions of language learning and in his periodic references to education. This is made all the more problematic by realizing that the German term Wittgenstein uses consistently is *Abrichtung*, which refers exclusively to animal dressage or obedience training, and which connotes also the breaking of an animal’s will. I argue that this little-recognized fact has broad significance for many important Wittgensteinian insights into education, effectively meaning that the gap between present and future generations is one marked by coercion and pain, rather than by love and care. This paper sheds light on these implications, and concludes by considering how an unflinching recognition of the implications of Wittgenstein’s word choice might cast him as a pessimistic or tragic philosopher of education and upbringing, rather than as one readily compatible with contemporary, progressive attitudes.

Wittgenstein begins his *Philosophical Investigations* by utterly rejecting the “philosophical concept of meaning,”⁵ which he sees as having underpinned Western thought, at least since Augustine’s famous description of language learning as a kind of pointing and naming. Wittgenstein regards this way of understanding meaning to be appropriate only for a system more primitive or simplistic than what we otherwise know as “language.” Wittgenstein admits that “Augustine ... *does* describe a system of communication,” but adds that “not everything that we call language is this system.”⁶ To sum up what he sees as the limitations of this account of language, he uses a particularly rich metaphor:

Augustine describes the learning of human language as if the child came into a strange country and did not understand the language of the country; that is, as if it already had a language, only not this one. Or again: as if the child could already think only not yet speak.⁷

Wittgenstein sees this Augustinian account of language learning as ultimately circular. It attempts to account for the way in which languages are learned, but it can only do so by assuming that the child already knows another language. This is the language or repertoire of the recognition of meaning itself or, more simply, of pointing and naming. This “other” language then provides the frame of reference through which the “real” language is taught and learned. In other words, August-

tine presupposes what he claims to explain. This problem or question of the initial foundation or starting point for learning language, convention, and “forms of life” is itself foundational to Wittgenstein’s philosophy of language, to language games and rule following, and ultimately, to *Abrichtung*.

Wittgenstein develops his famous notion of the “language game” to begin this foundational exploration. Wittgenstein’s suggestion is that ostensive definition - and other, more playful forms involved in childhood language learning - provide only *one* example of a language game. They are only one game among many that together constitute a much larger game, that is, “the whole process of using words.”⁸ For Wittgenstein, to think of any particular type of language use - whether reporting, describing or pointing - is to think also of an activity, or more simply: “to imagine a language means to imagine a form of life.”⁹ Wittgenstein is able to conceive of a wide range of language games and associated forms of life: “It is easy to imagine a language consisting only of orders and reports in battle. – Or a language consisting only of questions and expressions for answering yes and no. And innumerable others.”¹⁰

Among these other language games, Wittgenstein imagines a language for “a child ... when it learns to talk.”¹¹ Speaking further of this last example, Wittgenstein emphasizes that “here the teaching of language is not explanation, but *training*.”¹² Training, in other words, represents a form of life, a kind of language game, in which “the child learns ... language from the grown-ups.”¹³ Imagining a “society” in which “the only system of language” consists solely of commands made by one type of person to another, Wittgenstein describes such childhood training in his *Blue and Brown Notebooks* as follows:

The child learns this language ... by being trained to its use. I am using the word “trained” in a way strictly analogous to that in which we talk of an animal being trained to do certain things. It is done by means of example, reward, punishment, and suchlike.¹⁴

Although Wittgenstein occasionally uses other words when discussing education - for example, he mentions “instruction” (*Unterricht*) and a type of didactic “provision” (*beibringen*) when discussing ostensive teaching - his insistence on language learning and training through reward and punishment is both consistent and systematic. For example, appealing to the notion of “rule following” in games, Wittgenstein argues that “following a rule is analogous to obeying an order. We are trained to do so; we react to an order in a particular way.”¹⁵ In his *Lectures* (1932-1935), Wittgenstein speaks of training as presupposing “that the subject reacts”:

If the subject does not react in a given case, that is, does not understand. Reference to understanding will then not appear in the description of the training. But nothing is omitted from the description by omitting reference to understanding.¹⁶

Wittgenstein is not only describing training in the austere terms of the subject’s reaction to a trainer “doing certain things;” Wittgenstein is further arguing that any reference to “understanding” in such an account is really just the presence or absence of an appropriate “reaction.”

A final example is found in the *Zettel*, a collection of notes that has long been available in a bilingual edition, and in which Wittgenstein applies his notions of language learning and rule-following to education very broadly. He observes that:

“Any explanation has its foundation in training.” He adds, parenthetically but sentimentously: “Educators ought to remember this.”¹⁷

Moreover, consistent use of terms like drill, orders, reward, and punishment, and references to animal responses and reactions (rather than to, say, “support” or “understanding”), all contribute to the impression that Wittgenstein is *not* presenting training as a highly differentiated or nuanced notion. Indeed, one could say that Wittgenstein goes out of his way to bring the term “training” into relation with the way “we talk of an animal being trained to do certain things.”¹⁸

At the same time, all of these observations are enormously amplified and magnified by careful consideration of the German term *Abrichtung*, the word Wittgenstein uses consistently in reference to “training” in his late German notes, drafts, and texts. The standard German (*Duden*) Dictionary defines *Abrichtung* as directed toward “(an animal, esp. a dog) to train for particular action and abilities; dressage.” *Langenscheidt’s* German-English dictionary provides the following entry for the term: “(animal) train;” also, “teach an animal tricks; (horse) break in.” It also adds these example phrases: to “train an animal to ...” or to “train a dog to attack people.” *Abrichtung* is thus *not* a term used when talking about the family pet, and it carries connotations of “breaking” an animal’s will. A helpful literary illustration is provided in the standard 16-volume Grimms’ *German Dictionary*. It highlights the appearance of *Abrichtung* - as well as its animal associations - in Goethe’s *East-Western Divan*, quoting that the “ass” Christ rode into Jerusalem would “not have been better trained” had it also been “driven to Mecca” (1827 delete, but check date in endnote).¹⁹ Training or *Abrichtung*, in other words, occurs on the level of a beast of burden being driven to its destination. And on these terms, even the most basic theological or cultural differences separating the Abrahamic religions (and their holiest places) would be utterly irrelevant.

Since the time of Goethe and the Grimm brothers, the term appears to have taken on a further popular connotation. For example, when one enters the term *Abrichtung* into Google’s image search, German Shepherds and Rottweilers being “trained” to serve, hunt, defend, and attack are prominently displayed. However, book covers showing women with whips or in bondage constitute the clear majority of the top search results. Even in English, of course, “training” has a similar connotation in sadomasochistic sexual culture as a purposefully slavish and demeaning kind of behavioural conditioning.

TRAINING AND *ABRICHTUNG* AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

One of the very few to confront *Abrichtung* openly and at some length in the literature on Wittgenstein in the philosophy of education, Michael Luntley once remarked: “Any account of Wittgenstein on training must confront this issue and explain what is going on in the text when Wittgenstein assaults the reader with inappropriate language.”²⁰ However, in his later publications on Wittgenstein, Luntley does not provide such a confrontation and explanation. Instead, he bravely *faults* Wittgenstein for a “deficiency”: “Such a notion of training is, on its own, insufficient as a basis for language learning. It is also doubtful that Wittgenstein ever thought that it was.”²¹

I cannot speculate on what Wittgenstein thought, and what alternative basis for language learning he might have had in mind, but his actions and his writings certainly provide clear indications. In examining what Wittgenstein wrote and did, it is important to acknowledge the nature of Wittgenstein's own teaching. There is the biographical reality of his frustrations and angry outbursts recalled by his Cambridge students (see below); more significantly, though, there are the literal and brutal assaults he visited on his young charges while working as a school teacher in the 1920s.²² Johannes Giessinger sums up the situation presented by both Wittgenstein's actions and his words from a German-language perspective:

It is true that learners are often portrayed by Wittgenstein as passive and subservient (*unterwürfig*). This may correspond to Wittgenstein's pedagogical conceptions - as well as to his practice as a school teacher. Seen this way, it is perhaps not accidental that Wittgenstein so frequently uses the word *Abrichtung*, a term that sounds so repugnant to many.²³

As Giessinger concludes, for Wittgenstein, "the progressive educational (*reformpädagogische*) idea of human learning through independent discovery," can only be regarded "as a dangerous illusion."²⁴ What are the implications of *Abrichtung* when we look at recent treatments of Wittgenstein in the philosophy of education? One example is provided in a 2010 text by Paul Smeyers and Nicholas Burbules titled "Education as an Initiation into Practice." This text follows many earlier interpretations of Wittgenstein by carefully differentiating the English term "training" from "conditioning." Highlighting Wittgenstein's references to training as rule following, Smeyers and Burbules say:

Here *training* plays a crucial role in education, but this is in an important sense different from *conditioning* in that the association is structured by a practice that is, according to Wittgenstein, rule governed (or normative) ... Notice that on this account there is no necessary incompatibility between initiation into an existing practice and transforming that practice in some way; indeed, the first is a condition for the second.²⁵

Training in Wittgenstein, according to Smeyers and Burbules, does not entail a unidirectional and arbitrary demand for conformity made by the trainer on the trainee, or by arbitrary convention on the child. It is instead a two-way street. Certainly compelling on its own, this characterization presents difficulties when training is seen to carry the narrow denotative meaning that Wittgenstein himself affirms, as well as the connotations that Wittgenstein makes no apparent effort to suppress.

A second example is provided by Christopher Winch in his 2002 book, *The Philosophy of Human Learning*, which uses "insights derived from the work of Wittgenstein ... [to mount] a vigorous attack on influential contemporary accounts of learning, both in the 'romantic' Rousseauian tradition and in the 'scientific' cognitivist tradition."²⁶ Winch devotes an entire chapter to the question of Wittgenstein's use of "training." At the conclusion of this chapter, Winch argues strenuously for the clear differentiation of animal *conditioning* from a much more nuanced notion of human "training":

[T]raining is to be distinguished from conditioning. It is a form of teaching that, if effective, leads to the confident deployment of skill and technique in a wide variety of situations. In the case of human training, it invariably involves the use of language and rule-following, thus making it more complex and qualitatively different from the most complex forms of animal

training. It can, therefore, promote independence and autonomy. In so far as the case against training rested on a kind of antiauthoritarianism derived from the work of Rousseau, it has been shown to be confused.²⁷

One might also say that no small amount of confusion rests with Winch himself. Despite opening his chapter on training with Wittgenstein's reminder to educators that "explanation has its foundation in training" - and sourcing it directly to the bilingual edition of *Zettel* analyzed above - Winch is apparently unaware of the original German. Winch then imagines a set of meanings and connotations for training much more complex and ambivalent than the term *Abrichtung* could ever meaningfully license. In effect, he is claiming that Wittgenstein's notion of training or *Abrichtung* can apply *only* to humans.

Of course, it goes without saying that I am not taking Wittgenstein's characterizations of training as offering a set of literal prescriptions for educational practice. At the same time, the idea that Wittgenstein's use of *Abrichtung* should be understood primarily in rhetorical terms, or in terms of the broader context or systematicity of Wittgenstein's *oeuvre*, is one of the most frequent objections raised to these arguments.²⁸ Despite his own actions as a teacher, I do not believe that Wittgenstein is literally instructing us to treat our students sadistically or to break their will.

Much of the substance of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* consists of a patient exploration of specific terms, phrases, and situations that are at first suggested as possibilities (often beginning with "Let us imagine..."), and then considered in their individual facets and implications. Rule-following and language games, to mention but two familiar examples, are both explored in this way. Wittgenstein takes us through various games and their rules, and considers examples of signs along a path, or of rules articulated in simplified communicative situations. How might *Abrichtung* be explored in a similarly conjectural, hypothetical manner? One could look to specific instances of *Abrichtung*, just as Wittgenstein considers specific instances of games and rules. One might further examine concrete instances of such training: of how a wild horse can be broken by its rider, a dog made to heel, or how a child might be "trained" not to touch a candle flame or a stovetop element. But taking any of these examples further does not seem to point to an easy escape from the harsh implications of *Abrichtung*. Instead, it is just as easy to imagine how the implications might be intensified and multiplied through further conjectural exploration.

ABRICHTUNG AND VIENNA'S WITTGENSTEIN

To seriously explore what Wittgenstein meant by the German term *Abrichtung*, I believe it is important to examine his German language background. In *Wittgenstein's Vienna*, Alan Janik and one of Wittgenstein's former students, Stephen Toulmin, have done exemplary work to "re-establish the significance of links between Wittgenstein and the Viennese, German-language thought and art of his time."²⁹ Toulmin introduces the analysis with a recollection of Wittgenstein. He and his fellow students in Cambridge "struck Wittgenstein as intolerably stupid. He would denounce us to our faces as unteachable, and at times he despaired of getting us to recognize what sort of point he was trying to get across to us."³⁰ However, the question is whether Wittgenstein might have been *genuinely* frustrated and flabbergasted. Toulmin is

asking, in other words, whether a significant amount of Wittgenstein's thought is "lost in translation."

Janik and Toulmin argue that "much of his [Wittgenstein's] material had origins that his English audiences knew next-to-nothing about, and many of the problems he chose to concentrate on had been under discussion among German-speaking philosophers and psychologists since before the First World War."³¹ These authors take Wittgenstein's 1921 *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* as their principle example:

Yet if we see the publication of the *Tractatus* exclusively as an episode in the history of philosophical logic, one significant feature of the book remains totally mysterious. After some seventy pages apparently devoted to nothing but logic, theory of language and the philosophy of mathematics or natural science, we are suddenly faced by five concluding pages (propositions 6.4 on) in which our heads are seemingly wrenched around and we are faced with a string of dogmatic theses about solipsism, death and "the sense of the 'world' which must lie outside the world."³²

In the concluding section of this paper, I explore the possibility that something similar applies to Wittgenstein's later works as well, particularly when it comes to the question of training or *Abrichtung*.

My "strong" hypothesis is that the coherence and force of Wittgenstein's later thought might become clearer through a similar excursion outside the bounds of what one typically finds in English-language interpretations of Wittgenstein. More humbly, I hope to highlight how the contingencies of accommodating *Abrichtung* in Wittgenstein's later thought might open new or unfamiliar possibilities for conceptualizing learning, education, and upbringing.

The philosophy of education in German-language contexts has not shied away (for better or for worse) from dark, anti-democratic, and deeply pessimistic views of education and upbringing. For example, under the influence of Arthur Schopenhauer, Nietzsche envisioned education in terms strikingly consistent with Wittgenstein's own notion of training and also of "genius."³³ Education, for Nietzsche, begins with the discipline of those educated and culminates in the celebration of the genius of a courageous few. Notably, Nietzsche's articulation of this vision in his "Schopenhauer as Educator" is still considered canonical in German educational theory today.

In 1931, Wittgenstein famously identified Schopenhauer together with Frege, Russell, and a number of German and Austrian pessimists as being "passionately tak[en] up" in his own "work of clarification."³⁴ The German and Austrian inspirations for his work include the satirist and playwright Karl Kraus (author of "The Last Days of Humankind"), secessionist and pedophile Alfred Loos (author of "Ornament and Crime"), Jewish misogynist and anti-Semite Otto Weininger (author of *On the Last Things*) and historian and German nationalist Oswald Spengler (author of *Decline of the West*).

These characterizations and titles suggest a dark view of the world and our place within it. They give the impression of a profound cynicism that appears in English educational discourse perhaps only in moments of the most radical critique or the most callous conservatism (e.g. Katherina Rutschky,³⁵ Joel Spring³⁶ or B.F. Skinner³⁷). Of course, in listing names like Alfred Loos and Oswald Spengler, I am not

suggesting that some nationalist or anti-Semitic animus lurks within Wittgenstein. I am instead attempting to underscore both the relatively unfamiliar and heterogeneous nature of Wittgenstein's inspiration, and also its desultory character.

However, there is one much more familiar figure, a fellow Jewish exile from Vienna in England, who Wittgenstein also includes in his list of deeply engaging, creative, and influential thinkers. This is Sigmund Freud, who as Rush Rhees recalls, Wittgenstein was shocked to (re)discover in 1919, and who he consistently thought "worth reading" afterwards. Rhees quotes Wittgenstein directly:

"I happened to read something by Freud, and I sat up in surprise. Here was someone who had something to say." I think this was in 1919. And for the rest of his life Freud was one of the few authors he thought worth reading. He would speak of himself - at the period of these discussions - as "a disciple of Freud" and "a follower of Freud."³⁸

Although Rhees is speaking of the time prior to the appearance of the *Tractatus*, even in his later work, Wittgenstein engages with Freud critically but seriously, and reaffirms the "cleverness," "originality," even the "brilliance," of his contemporary.³⁹

Let us take for example Freud's *Civilization and its Discontents* [*Das Unbehagen in der Kultur*] written in the aftermath of the First World War.⁴⁰ In it Freud generalized his psychoanalytic insights on neurosis and repression to society or civilization as a whole. In this deeply pessimistic text, Freud develops the conclusion that "civilization is built up upon a renunciation of drives [*Triebverzicht*]."⁴¹ He asserts that "much of it [civilized life] presupposes precisely the non-satisfaction ... by suppression, repression or some other means ... of powerful drives."⁴²

We are members of society, in short, only insofar as we have repressed, sublimated, or otherwise alienated our own deep-seated, "instinctual" natures. According to Freud, these powerful and profound instincts are above all ones of aggression and sexual desire. Civilization counters these though love, community, and security, but only with mixed success.⁴³ In such a civilization or community, according to Freud, we are condemned to always live with guilt, disappointment, repression, and other neurotic symptoms.

As we know, this renunciation and repression arises paradigmatically in childhood –specifically through the intervention of a father or authority figure. Freud explains:

A considerable amount of aggressiveness must be developed in the child against the authority which prevents him from having his first, but none the less his most important, satisfactions, whatever the kind of instinctual deprivation that is demanded of him may be; but he is obliged to renounce the satisfaction of this revengeful aggressiveness.⁴⁴

Freud speaks here of a double renunciation or repression: first, there is the initial denial of the child's first satisfaction – paradigmatically, the mother's breast; and second, the renunciation of the aggressive response to which this initial denial gives rise.

For Wittgenstein, a similar renunciation or, perhaps more accurately, brutalization, is also clearly exemplified in early childhood. However, it does not unfold as an oedipal psychodrama, but rather in terms of the acquisition of everyday language and "forms of life."⁴⁵ Wittgenstein sees a kind of renunciation (or perhaps better, castigation) and self-alienation as required in language learning, and in one's assimilation

to pre-existing forms of life. In this process, for both Freud and Wittgenstein, the child is alienated from his or her own “original” nature. Freud defined this original nature of the child in explicit, sexual, and familial terms: as deeply instinctual and aggressive, even violent. But Wittgenstein defines it only through negative implication. In using a term like *Abrichtung*, Wittgenstein is strongly suggesting that this nature is fundamentally animal, and that it is also profoundly averse to rules and conventions. Wittgenstein’s descriptions also suggest that this nature is intrinsically “responsive” or “reactive” in character.

The world of adults, to highlight still further points of similarity shared by Wittgenstein and Freud, is seen to be largely cultural: it is formed through rules, conventions, and language games. Freud similarly emphasizes communal demands and affirmations. To the child, these conditions represent an artificial imposition, rather than an adaptation of innate or natural circumstances. Rules, reactions, and language games - or civilization itself - present an artifice that must be painfully and forcefully imposed on humans and their original nature.

CONCLUSION: EDUCATION AS LOSS AND RENUNCIATION

Thus, in both Freud and Wittgenstein, education is clearly *not* seen as an affirmation, augmentation, and extension of the student’s or child’s given or natural situation, disposition, or even learning abilities. Instead, the child’s original nature is to be *denied*. And this is done precisely so that those being educated become something quite different from what their given natures would initially dictate. Specifically, they become a part of culture and of forms of life in all of their complexity and artifice. They become players in language games, with their arbitrary and tautological rules and requirements. Of course, this is a view of education that is radically different from both the progressive tradition and the educational prescriptions of cognitivist, and much neurological, work. It is much closer to traditional German theories of education and upbringing. These frequently go under the name of (philosophical) anthropology or pedagogical anthropology, with anthropology understood in the sense used by Kant (e.g., in asking “What is man?”) or Charles Taylor.

Consistent with both Wittgenstein and Freud, these anthropologies tend to emphasize the child’s transformation from a creature of nature into a fundamentally cultural, rule-following, or “conventionalized” being. These accounts often begin with the thesis that human existence and upbringing are fundamentally different from that of animals. Instead of being provisioned with physical means to survive cold nights (e.g., a covering of fur) or to fight off predators (e.g., sharp teeth or claws), humans are marked precisely by the *absence* of such attributes. The human being is thus generally seen as a “deficient being,” a *Mängelwesen* as Arnold Gehlen has put it.⁴⁶ Of all the animals, it seems that human children spend by far the longest time under parental protection and support, stretching from years into decades. This extended time is seen to provide the missing constituents in human “being,” which are above all *cultural* in nature, rather than “natural” or biological. And these are provided precisely through practices of upbringing, education, and enculturation, as Rousseau famously summarizes:

We are born weak, we need strength; we are born totally unprovided, we need aid; we are born stupid, we need judgment. Everything we do not have at our birth and which we need when we are grown is given us by education.⁴⁷

Freud and Wittgenstein, of course, view these processes of “humanization” as necessarily entailing renunciation and brutality.⁴⁸ *Abrichtung* can also be seen as presenting a kind of threshold that separates the “enculturated” adult from the “uncultured” young child. In a broad sense, it can also be seen to separate that which is social, vocal, rule-bound, and coherent from its opposite: that which is asocial, silent, irregular, and incoherent. By undergoing the harsh conditioning implied in *Abrichtung*, the child can be seen to “progress” from a place that is, in a sense, beyond meaning, articulation, and explanation, to one that is clearly integrated, communicable, and articulable. With reference to the later Wittgenstein, the German educationist Klaus Mollenhauer has labelled the experience on the “other” side of socialization and training as that which is “unspoken” or “unspeakable.” Mollenhauer adds that it is precisely this experience that is falsified when it is brought into the rules and conventions of language.⁴⁹ Echoing Freud (but not so much Wittgenstein), Mollenhauer even goes so far as to speculate that within this “unspoken” experience “resides ... the unconscious and ... [the] source of our desires, hopes, fantasies, and utopias ... In art as in [our own and other’s] childhood[s], we seek to interpret such manifestations.”⁵⁰

Of course, educationally speaking, the threshold that separates the unspoken and inchoate from language and forms of life is crossed only in a *single direction*. Education, unlike art, psychiatry, or psychoanalysis, does not typically concern itself with a return *back* to the other side of this dividing line. The deeply educational predicament presented by this unidirectional passage resonates with what Janik and Toulmin have identified as some of the more challenging statements in Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus*: To observe the “limits of my language” as meaning “the limits of my world”⁵¹ may well be to point towards pre-linguistic or non-linguistic possibilities at once clearly delimited yet at the same time closed to sense-making. And, at the risk of sounding clichéd, one might also see the “tragic side” of education-as-renunciation or -brutalization as expressed in Wittgenstein’s famous conclusion: “Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent.”⁵²

The processes of education and socialization, like the whole sphere of adult human activity and articulation, lends itself to endless interpretation and reconsideration. However, that which lies outside of these limits may well be an important, even indispensable, part of human experience. But it is one that we cannot bring to reflection and articulation, and one whose subliminal existence we are often rather unhappy to acknowledge.

In the end, Wittgenstein’s view of education culminates in a tragic paradox, one that most scholars in education, and perhaps even philosophy, would be tempted to avoid or at least minimize: that what makes us human, what brings us into any and all forms of human life, is precisely the inhumanity of our conditioning by and adaptation to them. To openly acknowledge this brutality and inhumanity does not

come easily. However, it can lead to very different understandings of education from jejune progressivist or reductively cognitivist or biologicistic accounts.

In reflecting on education, I believe it is important to (re)introduce what Foucault once described as lying at “the centre of [the] ... limit-experiences of the Western world ... the refusal, the forgetting and the silent collapse of tragedy.”⁵³ I believe that remembering the tragic also suggests possibilities for reinterpreting Wittgenstein’s other key notions, such as “language game,” “explanation,” and “forms of life,” in ways that are both productive and compelling. Again paradoxically, it may be that it is precisely when Wittgenstein is at his most dark, vexing, and alienating that he is also at his most richly rewarding.

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1. For example. see: Michael Peters & James Marshall, *Wittgenstein: Philosophy, Postmodernism, Pedagogy* (Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1999).
 2. Christopher Winch, *The Philosophy of Human Learning* (London: Routledge, 2002).
 3. Paul Smeyers and Nicholas Burbules, “Education as Initiation into Practices,” in *Showing and Doing: Wittgenstein as a Pedagogical Philosopher*, eds Michael Adrian Peters, Nicholas Burbules, and Paul Smeyers (New York: Routledge, 2010).
 4. Pederito A. Aparece, *Teaching, Learning and Community: An Examination of Wittgensteinian Themes* (Rome: Gregorian Biblical Bookstore, 2005).
 5. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1953), 3.
 6. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 3, emphasis in original.
 7. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 13-14.
 8. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 3.
 9. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 8.
 10. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 8.
 11. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 4.
 12. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 4.
 13. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *The Blue and Brown Books* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1958), 77.
 14. Wittgenstein, *The Blue and Brown Books*, 77.
 15. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 81.
 16. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Lectures and Conversations: On Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 102.
 17. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Zettel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 74e.
 18. Wittgenstein, *The Blue and Brown Books*, 77.
 19. The original passage is as follows: “Wenn man auch nach Mecca treibe / Christus Esel, würd’ er nicht / Dadurch besser *abgerichtet*, / Sondern stets ein Esel bleibe.” Wolfgang von Goethe, *West-östlicher Divan* [East-Western Divan] (Berlin: Gustav Hempel, 1872), 113.
 20. Michael Luntley, “Training and Learning,” *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 40, no. 5 (2008): 695-711.
 21. Michael Luntley, *Wittgenstein: Opening Investigations* (New York: Wiley, 2015), 70.
 22. As a school teacher in rural Austria, Wittgenstein regularly pulled the hair and boxed the ears of his pupils, sometimes drawing blood. At one point he struck a boy on the head with sufficient force to cause him to collapse on the floor, unconscious. Wittgenstein’s immediate response was to leave the classroom, his post as a teacher, and the village. Hearings were held at a district court, but the case was suddenly dropped, perhaps through the influence of Wittgenstein’s wealthy family. See: Ray Monk, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius* (London: Penguin, 1991), 224, 232-233.

23. Johannes Giesinger, Die Unmöglichkeit des Lehrens – Augustin und Wittgenstein [The Impossibility of Teaching], in *Philosophie des Lehrens* [Philosophy of Teaching], eds H.G. Koller, R. Reichenbach, and N. Ricken (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2012), 31-45.
24. Johannes Giesinger, Abrichten und Erziehen. Zur pädagogischen Bedeutung der Spätphilosophie Ludwig Wittgensteins [Training and Education: The Pedagogical Meaning of the later Philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein], *Pädagogische Rundschau* [Pedagogical Review] 62, no. 3 (2008): 285-298.
25. Smeyers and Burbules, *Initiation into Practices*, 2010, 185, emphasis in original.
26. Winch, *The Philosophy of Human Learning*, i.
27. Winch, *The Philosophy of Human Learning*, 50-51.
28. For example, Wolfgang Huemer, Personal Email Communication (July 11, 2013).
29. Allan Janik and Stephen Toulmin, *Wittgenstein's Vienna* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).
30. Janik and Toulmin, *Wittgenstein's Vienna*, 21.
31. Janik and Toulmin, *Wittgenstein's Vienna*, 22.
32. Janik and Toulmin, *Wittgenstein's Vienna*, 23.
33. Wittgenstein remarked that “Genius is talent exercised with courage.” He has also noted that “There is no more light in a genius than in any other honest man — but he has a particular kind of lens to concentrate this light into a burning point.” Wittgenstein, *Lectures and Conversations*, 40, 41.
34. Wittgenstein, *Lectures and Conversations*, 16.
35. Katharina Rutschky, *Schwarze Pädagogik: Quellen zur Naturgeschichte der bürgerlichen Erziehung* [Black Pedagogy: Sources for a Natural History of bourgeois Education] (Ullstein: Berlin, 1997).
36. Joel Spring, *American Education* (New York: Routledge, 2015).
37. For example, see: Allan Costall, The Limits of Language: Wittgenstein's Later Philosophy and Skinner's Radical Behaviorism, *Behaviorism* 8, no. 2 (1980): 123-131.
38. Wittgenstein, *Lectures and Conversations*, 41.
39. Wittgenstein, *Lectures and Conversations*, 42, 62.
40. There are a number of things lost (in some cases, mistaken) in the Strachey translation of Freud into English as well. More importantly, it is often noted that *Trieb*, the word for “drive,” is systematically mistranslated by Strachey as “instinct.” I have corrected this with reference to the original German text, otherwise relying on Strachey for rendering Freud into English. I thank Joris Vlieghe for his assistance with this issue.
41. Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents* (New York: Norton, 1962); Sigmund Freud, *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur* (Vienna: Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag, 1930).
42. Freud, *Civilization*, 44.
43. Freud, *Civilization*, 62, 79-81.
44. Freud, *Civilization*, 129.
45. For a similar account of Wittgenstein's understanding of human nature or “anthropology,” see chapter 12 of: Robert Trigg, *Ideas of Human Nature*, Second Edition (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1999).
46. Arnold Gehlen, *Man: His Nature and Place in the World* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988).
47. Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Emile, or On Education* (New York: Basic Books, 1979), 38.
48. However, continental anthropology generally portrays even the earliest processes of enculturation as facilitated by empathic and mimetic affinities between adult and child. German theories in particular also have recourse to the notion of *Bildsamkeit*, which identifies an intrinsic desire on the part of the child to become individual and adult.
49. See: Norm Friesen, “Translator's Introduction,” in Klaus Mollenhauer, *Forgotten Connections: On Culture and Upbringing* (New York: Routledge, 2014).
50. Klaus Mollenhauer, *Forgotten Connections*, 64-65.
51. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

52. Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*, 89.

53. Michel Foucault, *History of Madness* (New York: Routledge, 2006), xxx.