

POSTSCRIPT

by Gilbert Ryle

Professor Kolenda generously offered me the chance of having, in this volume of our Proceedings, whatever last words I liked. With two exceptions, I am renouncing this privilege. We all had in our *viva voce* discussions in Rice University every opportunity of trying to justify ourselves. If we failed then, it would be unfair for just one of us to fire, with impunity, extra parting shots now.

My two exceptions are these: I) Owing to his removal to hospital, Professor Kolenda's contribution could not be orally delivered to us, or therefore debated by us. So I say in print now what I think I would have said *viva voce* then, had this been possible. I am, in intention, not having the last word, but belatedly having merely my allotted second word.

II) Professor Bouwsma's contribution was a comparison between Ryle and Wittgenstein; and this contribution we did discuss *viva voce*, even with some heat. I have no wish to fire, at this stage, any more parting shots on Ryle's behalf. But I do want to challenge in print Bouwsma's general survey of the *Philosophical Investigations*, on behalf of the philosopher Wittgenstein himself.

Not many of us philosophers who are alive today are old enough to remember the differences made by Wittgenstein to the air that we were breathing in the 1920's, the 1930's, or even the 1940's. So if, as is bound to happen, our memories and estimates of these differences are not unanimous, it is of some historical importance that these discrepancies be recorded. It would be worse than a pity if the *Philosophical Investigations* were to be read only through Bouwsma's spectacles—or only through Ryle's.

I. PROFESSOR KOLENDA

Apart from a few trivialities and one quite important matter of emphasis, I gladly accept Kolenda's Ryle-survey. In particular I welcome his conspectus of Austin, Melden, Louch, Dray, Walsh, Stigen, and Ryle. Kolenda is surely

right in finding us all aiming at contiguous, even overlapping targets. Sometimes, perhaps, we are inadvertently hitting one another's targets.

There remains the one matter, maybe one only of intellectual biography, about which Kolenda seems to me unwittingly to overemphasize one thing and to underemphasize another. His title, "The Recovery of the Human," plus a few incidental remarks, could give the impression that the Ryle of *The Concept of Mind* was engaged in a task of heroic knight-errantry on behalf of the oppressed concept of Man. Dragons had to be killed in order that Merit might be saved.

My trouble is that it did not, at the time, feel at all like that. I did not seem to myself to be a dialectical Galahad or Quixote. I did indeed hope to disembowel Cartesian duplicationism side by side with Hobbist or Watsonian reductionism; but this hope derived much less from a chivalrous ambition to rescue any conceptual damsel in distress than from an experimentalist's desire to try out on eligible guinea pigs a new anatomical technique. Kolenda underestimates the extent to which would-be philosophers of my generation were captivated by metaphilosophical or toolshop questions about the proper methods and objectives—if any—of philosophy itself. I say "if any," since philosophy's recent severance from Psychology or Mental Science, and its recent awakening from the (usually) theological dream of Transcendent Ontology or Metaphysics had made plenty of us quite nervous about philosophy's pretensions to exist at all. If philosophy was not Science or even a science, there seemed nothing else respectable for it to be. Only Science is respectable.

Kolenda's *Section I* begins: "The search for a correct account of human experience has always been accompanied by a parallel or concomitant question: What is philosophy?" As an historical generalization, this seems to me not to be true. But anyhow in my own case I am sure that this latter question was not an offshoot of the former search. On the contrary, at least my study of Phenomenology's "account of human experience" was partly motivated by a critical interest in Husserl's special—and erroneous—answer to our metaphilosophical question. I can concede to Kolenda that I wrote about "the systematic elusiveness of 'I'" partly to block one variety of Determinism; but I also wanted to show that Russell's esotericisms about selfmembership and selfreference had unexpected exoteric applications. My thoughts about the contrived paradox of Heterologicality had, I fancy, no Philanthropic attachments.

We need to remember nowadays that it was once a huge relief and encouragement that we could find, or expect to find, ways of finally disposing of such specialist riddles as those of Heterologicality and Tomorrow's Sea-Battle. They showed, if only from the periphery, that we philosophers had, after all, a *métier* of our very own. To put my main point in another way: Kolenda slides rather casually past the Russellian notion of the nonsensical

versus the true-or-false; and past Wittgenstein's derivative and diversified notion of what is and what is not in breach of "logical grammar." But for some of us these notions not only affected the procedures of our thinking; they were also constant and central topics of our thought. I hope that we were, quite often, conceptual Philanthropists; but we were also, very often, aspiring philosophical technicians.

II. PROFESSOR BOUWSMA

Like us, Bouwsma has his own Wittgenstein. 1) He ends by assimilating the Wittgenstein of the *Philosophical Investigations* to the psychoanalyst. Now Wittgenstein did at one stage ply this model. But the *Investigations*, outside 254–255 and perhaps 133, does not use it. Moreover, for Bouwsma himself the *Investigations* is a manual of philosophical skills; but abilities to extricate oneself from conceptual tangles are acquired sagacities, not convalescences.

2) The *Investigations* does indeed coach us in the arts of conceptual disentanglement. Its accents are occasionally quite governessy. But Bouwsma forgets that behind the mentor there was the philosopher. The knots which Wittgenstein shows us how to untie are knots which he himself had first to find out how to untie. It is the *Notebooks* especially that exhibit to us the philosopher eagerly or despondently exploring his own flybottles from inside. For those undocile souls who respond less emulously to solicitous shepherdings than to live examples of pioneering, Bouwsma should have vouchsafed something about Wittgenstein the explorer. Though we hear much of our warfare against confusions, no particular pocket of confusion gets pinpointed, or the appropriate way of conquering it specified.

We are told with pathos that Wittgenstein "sought to bring relief, control, calm, quiet, peace, release, a certain power." Well! — what of the Wittgenstein who got us interested, fascinated, excited, angry, shocked? He electrified us. Whom did he ever tranquilize?

3) Like Wittgenstein, Bouwsma shudders at the idea that the philosopher has theories. Very well, let us relinquish to the Royal Society this vulgar noun. But Bouwsma's primness gets the better of him when he, abetted by Wittgenstein, says of the *Philosophical Investigations*: ". . . not at all as a theory of mind, in fact as no theory at all. . . . It contains no arguments at all. There are no proofs. It rectifies nothing. There is nothing to rectify. There are no refutations. . . ." Later, he prefers the phrase "the art of discover[ing] and dispelling confusion," to the coarser locution "the correction of mistakes." No theory of mind? Yet in the book's last paragraph we read "our investigation of psychology." No refutations or corrections of mistakes? Yet Wittgenstein often declares that quite definite mistakes had been committed by St. Augustine, Russell, and the author of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Nothing to rectify? Yet Bouwsma quotes: "The philosopher's treatment of

a question is like the treatment of an illness" (255). No arguments? Not even arguments about the privacy of sensations versus the imputed privacy of sensation-concepts? No arguments? Yet: "That is to confound the meaning of a name with the bearer of the name. When Mr. N. N. dies one says that the bearer of the name dies, not that the meaning dies. And it would be nonsensical to say that, for (*denn*) if the name ceased to have meaning it would make no sense to say Mr. N. N. is dead" (40).

No arguments? Yet: "You say the point isn't the word, but its meaning, and you think of the meaning as a thing (*Sache*) of the same kind as the word, though also different from the word. Here the word, there the meaning (*Bedeutung*). The money and the cow that you can buy with it. (But contrast, the money and its use.)" (120).

No arguments? Yet: "I remember having meant (*gemeint*) *him*. Am I remembering a process or state? — When did it begin, what was its course, etc.?" (661).

No arguments? But lots of Wittgenstein's wearisome interrogatives are, like this last one, the rhetorically barbed conclusions of *reductio ad absurdum* arguments.

The clang of Wittgenstein's metal against the metals of Frege, Russell, Ramsey, Brouwer, Moore, and the author of the *Tractatus* is here muted to a soothing bedside murmur.