


# Wittgenstein in the 1930s

Between the *Tractatus* and the  
*Investigations*

Edited by David G. Stern







## *Wittgenstein in the 1930s*

Wittgenstein's "middle period" is often seen as a transitional phase connecting his better-known early and later philosophies. The fifteen essays in this volume focus both on the distinctive character of his teaching and writing in the 1930s, and on its pivotal importance for an understanding of his philosophy as a whole. They offer wide-ranging perspectives on the central issue of how best to identify changes and continuities in his philosophy during those years, as well as on particular topics in the philosophy of mind, religion, ethics, aesthetics, and the philosophy of mathematics. The volume will be valuable for all who are interested in this formative period of Wittgenstein's development.

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*University of Iowa*



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## *Walking with Wittgenstein*

*My father was equable and mild. Not so  
Was Ludwig Wittgenstein. His lean  
Body twitched nervously and his musician's  
Hands never ceased from movement, nor his bony  
Ankles and feet. He never would sit still,  
As though the violence of his thoughts made slow  
Deliberate movement quite impossible.  
Yet there were times his nervous face went stony  
And quiet as he brooded on the green  
Meaning of things. His thoughts resembled flowers  
Drawn by a delicate hand. In golden showers  
They flickered silently across his face.  
Anxiety kept to his bodily conditions,  
His knitted brows, his knotted legs. His thoughts had grace.*

*Walking with Wittgenstein was like a race,  
But a race for hobbledehoys, three-legged dwarfs,  
Fantastic wizards. Nothing went by halves.  
He strode ahead, all joints, his noble face  
Swept by the wind, his eyes darting about,  
Observant and perceptive as his mind,  
And just as nervous, earnest, and devout  
In seeking truth, and also just as kind.  
But often he saw nothing but the river  
Of his own thoughts, the nervously twitching veins  
Of fine distinctions, philosophic gains  
And losses, victories, defeats.  
For, while he loved the people in the streets,  
Philosophy alone rushed on forever.*

Nicholas Moore, poet and son of G. E. Moore





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## Abbreviations

AWL	<i>Wittgenstein's Lectures, Cambridge 1932–1935</i> , edited by A. Ambrose
BLBK	<i>The Blue Book</i>
BRBK	<i>The Brown Book</i>
BT	<i>The Big Typescript</i>
CPJ	Kant, <i>Critique of the Power of Judgment</i>
CPR	Kant, <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i>
CV <sup>1</sup>	<i>Culture and Value</i>
LC	<i>Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief</i>
LE	“A Lecture on Ethics” (In PO)
LFM	<i>Wittgenstein's Lectures on the Foundations of Mathematics, Cambridge 1939</i>
LWL	<i>Wittgenstein's Lectures, Cambridge 1930–1932</i> , edited by D. Lee
M	<i>Wittgenstein: Lectures, Cambridge 1930–1933, From the Notes of G. E. Moore</i>
MS	Manuscript in <i>Wittgenstein's Nachlass: The Bergen Electronic Edition</i>
Ms-	Manuscript in <i>Wittgenstein Source Bergen Nachlass Edition</i>
MWL	Moore, G. E. “Wittgenstein's Lectures in 1930–33” (In PO)
NB	<i>Notebooks 1914–1916</i>
OC	<i>On Certainty</i>
PG	<i>Philosophical Grammar</i>
PI	<i>Philosophical Investigations</i>
PO	<i>Philosophical Occasions</i>
PPO	<i>Ludwig Wittgenstein: Public and Private Occasions</i>

<sup>1</sup> References to *Culture and Value* are cited from both the 1980 English translation edition and the 1998 revised second edition; e.g., the 1930 “Sketch for a Foreword” is cited as CV, 1980: 6–8; 1998: 8–11.

PR	<i>Philosophical Remarks</i>
RFM	<i>Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics</i>
RLF	“Some Remarks on Logical Form” (In PO)
RPPH	<i>Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology</i> , vol. II
TLP	<i>Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus</i>
TS	Typescript in <i>Wittgenstein’s Nachlass: The Bergen Electronic Edition</i>
Ts-	Typescript in <i>Wittgenstein Source Bergen Nachlass Edition</i>
VW	<i>The Voices of Wittgenstein. The Vienna Circle</i>
WC	<i>Wittgenstein in Cambridge: Letters and Documents 1911–1951</i>
Wi3	<i>Wiener Ausgabe Band 3</i> [MSS 109–110]
Wi4	<i>Wiener Ausgabe Band 4</i> [MSS 111–112]
Wi5	<i>Wiener Ausgabe Band 5</i> [MSS 113–114]
WWCL	<i>Wittgenstein’s Whewell’s Court Lectures, Cambridge 1938–1941</i>
WWK	Waismann, <i>Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle</i>
Z	Zettel





# *Introduction: Wittgenstein between the Tractatus and the Investigations*

DAVID G. STERN

## 1. The “Middle Wittgenstein”

The aim of this collection of 15 previously unpublished essays is not only to provide a wide range of fresh perspectives on Wittgenstein’s philosophical writing and teaching during his so-called “middle period” (roughly 1929–1936), but also to make the case for its interest and importance for our understanding of his philosophy as a whole. The exact dating of this stage of his work is itself debatable, precisely because it is understood as picking out the years after he began to rework his early philosophy, as set out in the *Tractatus*, and before he had arrived at the definitive formulation of his later philosophy in the *Philosophical Investigations*. For present purposes, we can regard it as beginning with Wittgenstein’s return to Cambridge, and full-time philosophical writing, in early 1929, and ending in late 1936, when he drafted an early version of the *Investigations*.

Contributors to this collection include representatives of a number of very different approaches to Wittgenstein interpretation, address a wide range of themes and topics, and often make strong claims that are challengingly incompatible with the views of other contributors. Nevertheless, they generally agree that the old schematic interpretations on which those years were a time of “disintegration and reconstruction”<sup>1</sup> in Wittgenstein’s philosophical development are misleadingly simple, and that the truth is not only much more messy and complicated, but also much more interesting. At first, these years were approached as little more than a period of transition between Wittgenstein’s early and later work, and the focus of discussion was usually the single “fixed

<sup>1</sup> The title of [chapter 5](#) of Hacker 1986 (and [chapter 4](#) of the first edition of that book).

point” or “pivot” on which the entire movement from the earlier to the later philosophy supposedly turned.<sup>2</sup> More recently, as previously unpublished material has become more readily available, there has been a growing recognition that the path from the *Tractatus* to the *Philosophical Investigations* was a long and complicated one, with many turning points and branching paths along the way.

Over 40 years after scholars began to give serious attention to this stage of Wittgenstein’s career, the notion of the “Middle Wittgenstein” has become well established. But his work during those years remains much less well understood, or widely appreciated, than his earlier and later philosophy. We are still at a relatively early stage in identifying the principal features of Wittgenstein’s work during these years, and relating them to the main lines of his early and late masterpieces, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* and *Philosophical Investigations*. In large part, this is because the 1930s were a period of rapid change for Wittgenstein. As a result, none of the publications from those years, each put into final form after his death, has the settled and polished character of a fully finished work. The middle Wittgenstein did not create a masterpiece comparable to the *Tractatus* or *Investigations* that can serve as a point of reference.

In view of this lack of agreement on such basic matters as to what to count as Wittgenstein’s principal work or works during these years, let alone a settled frame within which to map out the lay of the land, the principal purpose of this introduction is to place the discussion in *Wittgenstein in the 1930s* against the backdrop of previous work on the topic. [Section 2](#) provides a brief outline of Wittgenstein’s teaching and writing during these years, and their relationship to the posthumously published selections from his papers that are usually relied on as the basis for interpreting his philosophical work during those years. [Section 3](#) outlines some of the principal interpretative approaches to Wittgenstein’s philosophical evolution, and asks why so much discussion of the “Middle Wittgenstein” has focused on the nature of his relationship to his earlier and his later selves. [Section 4](#) challenges the view, first put forward by Wittgenstein himself, that he was a solitary thinker, reviewing some of the wide range of writers that he quoted or discussed during these years. Finally, [Section 5](#), an introduction to the individual chapters, includes a short summary of each one, with

<sup>2</sup> PI, §108.

particular attention to the areas where the collection as a whole makes a distinctive contribution to our understanding of Wittgenstein in the 1930s.

## 2. Wittgenstein's Teaching and Writing in the 1930s

When Wittgenstein moved to Cambridge in January 1929, he was returning to the place where – over 15 years before – he had studied under Bertrand Russell, engaged in discussions with G. E. Moore, and begun to develop his early philosophy. Returning to Cambridge and reengaging in philosophical activities marked a significant new phase in his philosophical career. The manuscripts from 1929 record his first steps away from the *Tractatus*; by the end of 1936, he had written an early version of the *Philosophical Investigations*, although the book did not take on its final form until the mid-1940s.

Upon returning to Cambridge, Wittgenstein received a research position at Trinity College and immediately began to draft new philosophical work. On February 2, 1929, Wittgenstein began writing – in the first of a series of large, hard-bound manuscript volumes – a sequential record of selected work in progress, often culled from smaller first-draft notebooks.<sup>3</sup> In January 1930 he also began to give lectures, in which he further developed the themes of his ongoing research. From 1929 to 1936, he usually spent half the year in Cambridge and most of the rest of the time in Vienna. In addition to writing, revising, and rearranging the many thousands of pages of manuscripts and typescripts from these years that make up a large part of his *Nachlass*, and his collaboration with Waismann while in Vienna,<sup>4</sup> Wittgenstein also devoted a great deal of time and energy to his teaching in Cambridge. Thanks to

<sup>3</sup> Thanks to the detailed indexes to the *Philosophical Remarks* and *The Big Typescript* in the Vienna edition of Wittgenstein's writing from this period, it is very easy to date each of the remarks in those books and track any given remark's context in the source manuscripts. All of this material is available in *Wittgenstein's Nachlass: The Bergen Electronic Edition* (Wittgenstein 2000) and the online edition *Wittgenstein Source Bergen Nachlass Edition* (<http://wittgensteinsource.org>). Much of it has also been published in the Vienna edition of Wittgenstein's writing from the early 1930s (Wittgenstein 1993).

<sup>4</sup> Waismann's notes of their meetings, the manuscripts based on his work with Wittgenstein, and the book that he ultimately wrote based on this collaboration provide us with a detailed record of various stages of their relationship. See Waismann 1967, 1997, VW. Baker 1979 is an informative introduction to their relationship.

Moore, who attended his lectures from January 1930 to May 1933, we have an almost verbatim record of what Wittgenstein said in those classes.<sup>5</sup>

The following term, Wittgenstein decided that his class had become too large and instead began to dictate what we now know as *The Blue Book* (1933–1934) and then *The Brown Book* (1934–1935) to a small group of students; this material then served as the basis for discussion with the class as a whole. One member of this group was Francis Skinner, a close friend of Wittgenstein's who was a graduate fellow in mathematics at Trinity from 1933 to 1936. Skinner took many other lecture notes in the mid-1930s, and the two of them worked on revising and rearranging those notes into more polished texts. In 1935–1936, they studied Russian together and talked of moving to the USSR. Skinner died of polio in 1941, with Wittgenstein by his side. Shortly afterward, he gave Skinner's lecture notes and related manuscripts—the “Skinner Archive”—to a mutual friend, Reuben Goodstein, who kept it secret. The Archive was rediscovered in 2000, during a valuation of the Mathematical Association's materials stored at the University of Leicester, and it is currently held on loan at the Wren Library, Trinity College, where work is in progress on an edition of these materials.<sup>6</sup> An edition of extensive notes taken by Smythies at Wittgenstein's lectures in the late 1930s and early 1940s is now also available.<sup>7</sup> Once Skinner's notes are published, we will have a remarkably detailed record of Wittgenstein's teaching in English throughout the 1930s.

Wittgenstein's manuscript volumes played a number of different roles in his philosophical writing. First of all, they served as a diary-like record of new work. Later on, he used the manuscript volumes to rewrite, rearrange, or criticize his own earlier work. The manuscript

<sup>5</sup> For Moore's analysis and summary of those lectures, see MWL. For Moore's original lectures notes, see M. As almost all of Wittgenstein's manuscript volume entries from these years and Moore's lectures notes can be precisely dated, it is possible systematically to compare and draw connections between the topics that he covered in his lectures and what he said about them, and what he wrote at the time. A number of the papers in this collection use this information to explore the multifaceted relationship between Wittgenstein's writing and teaching. See notes 41 and 42 on page 16 for references to examples.

<sup>6</sup> They include a draft of a continuation of *The Brown Book* on topics in the philosophy of mind, and other previously unknown lecture notes and polished manuscripts. See Gibson 2010.

<sup>7</sup> WWCL.

volumes also served as a source from which he would select remarks that he would dictate to a typist, thus yielding several carbon copies of a chronologically ordered typescript, one of which could then be cut up, rearranged and retyped to produce a topically organized draft. Wittgenstein's principal posthumous publications from the early 1930s, the *Philosophical Remarks*, *The Big Typescript*, and *Philosophical Grammar*, were constructed by selecting, and then rearranging and revising, material taken from his manuscript volumes.<sup>8</sup>

The *Philosophical Remarks*, typed up in the spring of 1930, and assembled in its final order later that year, is the first synoptic collection and arrangement of material that Wittgenstein made from his manuscript volumes during the 1930s. It is likely that the initial typescript (TS 208), in which the remarks are arranged in the order they were composed, was only produced in order to provide Russell with material that he could consult in order to write a report on Wittgenstein's progress, and put in its published order as part of his application for the Trinity fellowship he held during 1931 to 1936. However, it does provide a convenient review of the work that Wittgenstein had done during the first year or so of post-*Tractatus* writing. One can trace a path that leads from the opening chapters of the *Philosophical Remarks*, via the treatment of those topics in *The Big Typescript*, *The Blue Book* and *The Brown Book*, leading up to the material we now know as the Early, Intermediate, and Late versions of the *Philosophical Investigations*, dating from the late 1930s, early 1940s, and mid 1940s respectively.<sup>9</sup>

While one can argue about the extent, and significance, of the similarities and dissimilarities between any two of these items, there can be no doubt that the *Philosophical Remarks* addresses many of the themes that would preoccupy Wittgenstein throughout the following decade. In retrospect, we can see it as a very early stage in a process of revision and rearrangement that would ultimately result in the production of the *Philosophical Investigations*. Yet, at the same time, there is an enormous distance that separates the two texts. Part of the difficulty in assessing the nature of this distance is that the *Philosophical*

<sup>8</sup> They also involve a substantial editorial contribution. For further discussion of how Wittgenstein's editors have shaped perceptions of his writing, and the construction of the books published under his name after his death, see Kenny 1976 and 2005, Hintikka 1991, and Stern 1996.

<sup>9</sup> See Wittgenstein 2001.

*Remarks*, like *The Big Typescript*, is a transitional collection of writing from Wittgenstein's manuscripts, in which a wide variety of ideas are explored in a highly provisional way. Seen in hindsight, it is easy for us to read it as setting out a much more worked out and coherent position than the text in question actually supports, for we can hardly help reading it as anticipating, or outlining, positions that have since become familiar. It is only too easy to read those books as early versions of the familiar positions that are usually attributed to the *Philosophical Investigations*. For this reason, we need to interpret these writings not only by means of the standard philosophical strategy of identifying the first formulation of views we recognize from the later work, but also by identifying the conflicting and often contradictory impulses at work in Wittgenstein's writing from the 1930s.

### 3. Debates over the "Middle Wittgenstein"

The great majority of the books and articles that have been written on the middle Wittgenstein take one side or another in a series of running debates over the relative importance of the many new themes that emerged during those years, with a particular focus on identifying certain turning points, such as the transition from the early to the later philosophy, or alternatively, the beginning and end of the middle period. However, in retrospect, the substance of those disagreements is much less significant than the fact that there was widespread, if tacit, agreement that interpreting the "Middle Wittgenstein" was a matter of giving an account of the *development* of his philosophy during those years.<sup>10</sup> Talking of the "Middle Wittgenstein," or of the development of his philosophy, may seem like a neutral way of describing this stage of his career. However, those very expressions lend themselves to thinking of Wittgenstein's writing and teaching during those years as structured in a certain way, as developing *from* a starting point *to* an end point, *from* the early philosophy *to* the later philosophy, or *from* the *Tractatus* *to* the *Philosophical Investigations*. The work done in between, whether in his manuscript volumes, or the various collections of remarks assembled in other manuscripts or typescripts, or in his

<sup>10</sup> Leading examples include Hacker 1972, Kenny 1973, Hintikka and Hintikka 1986, Nyíri 1986 and 1992, Hilmy 1987, Pears 1987 and 1988, Monk 1990, Rothhaupt 1996, Sedmak 1996, and Kienzler 1997.

lectures, will then be seen as a matter of his taking a path that leads away from the earlier masterpiece and toward the later one.

Joachim Schulte is one of the few writers on this topic to have drawn attention to the particular difficulties that stand in the way of giving one's full and undivided attention to any one part of Wittgenstein's writing, and especially those texts written after the *Tractatus* and before the *Philosophical Investigations*. He frames this challenge in the following terms:

A general problem of reading and interpreting Wittgenstein [is] that it is enormously difficult to read a text as a complete and unified work and at the same time as a transitory stage within the author's oeuvre as a whole. Early or intermediate stages will appear as something superseded by later insights. The first and last versions will be allotted special status while what happened in between will appear to be of minor relevance.<sup>11</sup>

It is particularly difficult to give one's full and undivided attention to any one part of Wittgenstein's writing from the 1930s, without seeing it as an intermediate step between a well-known point of departure and an equally familiar destination. It is only too easy to assume that what he wrote during these years must either consist of steps toward familiar ideas in the later work, or sets out transitional views that would soon be discarded.

However, during the first half of the 1930s, Wittgenstein frequently explored ideas that he would later reject, and often made use of methods and techniques that are neither Tractarian, nor characteristic of Wittgenstein's later philosophy in general, and of the *Philosophical Investigations* in particular. Indeed, in addition to the specific danger Schulte identifies in the passage quoted above, that of seeing the intermediate stages as superseded by later insights, we also have to beware of the complementary pitfall of approaching the work from the 1930s as a summary or outline of central ideas in the later work. Striking examples of such "transitory stages" in Wittgenstein's work in the 1930s that are discussed in this collection include the notions of the calculus conception of language,<sup>12</sup> the "logical structure" of a hypothesis,<sup>13</sup> "committing oneself" or "being committed" by one's use of

<sup>11</sup> Schulte 1998, 380.

<sup>12</sup> See in this volume: Stern, ch. 1; Pichler, ch. 2; Boncompagni, ch. 4; Biletzki, ch. 10.

<sup>13</sup> See in this volume: Engelmann, ch. 3.

language,<sup>14</sup> and the distinction between the use of “I” as subject, and as object.<sup>15</sup>

One group of Wittgenstein interpreters, including the early Baker, Hacker, and Glock<sup>16</sup> maintain that Wittgenstein’s later philosophy emerged in the early 1930s, and that it is already clearly stated in works by Wittgenstein and Waismann from 1932 to 1934.<sup>17</sup> On this reading, we can already find robust formulations of many central commitments of the later Wittgenstein in his “middle period” writings. If one draws a dividing line in the early 1930s, then one will presume that, other things being equal, all material written after that point states the views of the “later Wittgenstein” and can be mined for statements of the later Wittgenstein’s philosophical methods and his views about the nature of grammar and rules of language. This will lend substantial support to a reading of the *Philosophical Investigations* on which the identification of grammatical rules, and their use, in a memorable turn of phrase, to police the bounds of sense, plays a central role.<sup>18</sup>

If we follow Hacker’s reading we will construe Wittgenstein, not only in the early 1930s, but also throughout the rest of his career, as a philosophical grammarian, using the rules of our ordinary language to make clear the bounds of sense and so rule out certain philosophical claims and theories as mistaken. In that case, we will be inclined to draw a sharp line between scenarios that are logically possible, and thus conceivable, on the one hand, and those that are logically impossible, ruled out by the grammar of our language, on the other. Traditional philosophy makes claims that may appear attractive, but on closer examination they prove to be nonsense, for they break grammatical rules. The task of the Wittgensteinian philosopher is, accordingly, to provide arguments that make these errors clear.

At first sight, Cora Diamond’s much-discussed reading of Wittgenstein,<sup>19</sup> with its stress on the unity of his philosophy, and the “resolute” interpretations of Wittgenstein’s work it has inspired may

<sup>14</sup> See in this volume: Boncompagni, ch. 4.

<sup>15</sup> See in this volume: Sluga, ch. 7; Child, ch. 8.

<sup>16</sup> Baker and Hacker 1980, 1980a, 1985; Hacker 1972, 1990, 1996, 2012; Glock 1990, 1996, 2001a, 2007.

<sup>17</sup> See Baker’s preface to VW.

<sup>18</sup> Baker later described the view that he had once shared with Hacker as one on which “Wittgenstein polices the bounds of sense” (Baker 2004, 94).

<sup>19</sup> See e.g. Diamond 1991, Crary and Read 2000.



appear to be contradicted by the fact that a significant part of his writing from the 1930s turns on his criticism of his earlier views. Early critics of her reading, including Hacker, observed that “defenders of Diamond’s interpretation have produced no evidence at all from the post-1929 documents to support their view.”<sup>20</sup> Those critics also argued that there was no trace of the argumentative strategy Diamond attributes to the *Tractatus* in the *Nachlass* materials from 1929 and the early 1930s. Diamond has since replied that an insistence on the unity of Wittgenstein’s philosophy can be reconciled with a recognition that it did change and develop in crucial respects, especially his conception of clarification.<sup>21</sup> This approach, which Conant has dubbed “mild mono-Wittgensteinianism,” faces, as he puts it, the challenge of both doing “full justice to the profound discontinuity in Wittgenstein’s thinking without neglecting . . . the extent to which it is folded within a fundamental continuity in his philosophy” while also doing “full justice to the profound continuity in his thinking without minimizing . . . the extent to which it is folded within a fundamental discontinuity in his philosophy.”<sup>22</sup> With this acknowledgment of the complex interplay of continuity and discontinuity in the development of Wittgenstein’s philosophy, by not only Diamond and Conant, but also other resolute readers such as Kuusela and Cahill, we have moved a considerable distance from the radically unitary reading that Diamond and other New Wittgensteinians originally seemed to be advocating. Instead, we are back where we started, with the task of mapping out the similarities and dissimilarities between Early, Middle, and Later Wittgenstein, and looking for turning points in his writing.

On the other hand, if we follow Diamond and Cavell<sup>23</sup> in reading Wittgenstein as giving up the idea that it is the rules of our ordinary language that enable us to demarcate sense and nonsense, we also have to give up the correlative notion that there is a clear boundary between sense and nonsense. Whether or not a particular form of words makes sense does not simply depend on the rules of our language, but on the particular circumstances in which we are drawn to utter them, and the reasons we have for finding them attractive. Our attention turns from the question of whether the words under examination are

<sup>20</sup> Hacker 2001, 139; see also 126–140.

<sup>21</sup> Diamond 2004; see also Conant 2007, 2011, Kuusela 2008, 2011, and Cahill 2011.

<sup>22</sup> Conant 2007, 31–32; see also notes 19 and 136. <sup>23</sup> Cavell 1962, 1979.

grammatically well-formed to the fantasies, or illusions, that motivate us to say such things, and lead us to offer another form of words when it turns out that our first formulation misfires.

In a discussion of the relationship of Wittgenstein's teaching during 1932–1935 to his earlier and later philosophy, Alice Ambrose observed that both of the standard approaches to Wittgenstein's philosophy—the one-Wittgenstein view on which “Wittgenstein's concerns, earlier and later, are conceived as being the same” and the two-Wittgensteins view that there is a “discontinuity between the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations*” – “ignore the iconoclastic ideas which came out in lectures, dictations and discussions” during those years.<sup>24</sup> To regard Wittgenstein's philosophy as fundamentally continuous is to fail to recognize that a “quite new conception of philosophical statements was being formulated, and was illustrated in the treatment of certain problems.”<sup>25</sup> But to see Wittgenstein as the author of two very different philosophies, an early one set out in the *Tractatus* and a later one in the *Philosophical Investigations*, still has the effect of pushing the work he did during those years out of sight, she contended. If one only reads the lecture notes, dictations, and other writings from that period for those places where he criticizes his own earlier work, or moves toward his later philosophy, one will miss much of what is most interesting, and distinctive, about his teaching in the first half of the 1930s. As Volker Munz argues in his contribution to this collection, it is “misleading to only approach the middle period as a link between the early and later Wittgenstein” because he not only rejected central Tractarian views and began to introduce new ideas and methods. He “also developed and discussed issues in a very different way from anything in his later writings. Such topics include his treatment of solipsism, the ‘I’, the concept of pain, and the relation between rules and general descriptions of human behaviour . . . The middle period must, therefore, be seen as a phase in its own right, and not merely as a transition from the early to the later Wittgenstein.”<sup>26</sup> Many other contributors to this collection also make the case that Wittgenstein's discussion of philosophy of their chosen topic in the early 1930s has a distinctive character that is significantly different from anything found in his earlier or later work.

<sup>24</sup> Ambrose 1972, 16–17. In Flowers 1999, 2, 266–267; 2016, 2, 553.

<sup>25</sup> Ambrose 1972, 17. In Flowers 1999, 2, 266; 2016, 2, 553.

<sup>26</sup> See Munz, this volume, ch. 9, section 1.

Mauro Engelmann is the principal contemporary advocate for an approach to the middle Wittgenstein on which his work during these years is distinctively different from both the early and the later philosophy. In *Wittgenstein's Philosophical Development: Phenomenology, Grammar, Method, and the Anthropological View* (2013), he argues that Wittgenstein developed several very different philosophies in the early 1930s. On his reading, each successive philosophy is best understood as the product of a sequence of important changes, or breaks, from his previous view, each of which marks a different stage in a complex process of adaptation of the preceding position. Consequently, he has proposed a much more fine-grained account of Wittgenstein's intellectual journey during these years, on which it is best understood as moving between several different philosophies, each set out in a focal unfinished work (RLF, PR, BT, PG, BLBK, BRBK, etc.) within the period from 1929 to 1936.

Like Munz, Engelmann, and a number of other contributors to this collection, I believe that the "middle period" is best understood as a distinctive phase in Wittgenstein's work from the first half of the 1930s that cannot be accounted for in terms of the dissolution of the Tractarian approach to philosophy and the emergence of the "Later Wittgenstein." Because Wittgenstein's thought was changing rapidly and repeatedly during the first half of the 1930s, his writing from this period is a highly unreliable guide if it is taken as setting out his "later views."<sup>27</sup> While it can tell us a great deal about Wittgenstein's outlook at the time, it is not a settled set of convictions that he maintained in later years. Wittgenstein was drawn, during this transitional period in the early 1930s, toward a calculus conception of philosophy, on which its aim is to clarify, in a systematic way, the rules of our language in a philosophical grammar. However, by the time he composed the first draft of the *Philosophical Investigations* in 1936 he had given up this conception of philosophical grammar in favour of piecemeal criticism of specific philosophical problems.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Concentrating on continuities in wording, and especially on early formulations of key passages in the later work, as Hacker does, can lead one to overlook deep discontinuities between the use of those words in earlier and later contexts.

<sup>28</sup> Versions of this reading can be found in Stern 1991, 2004, ch. 5.2, 2005, 2010, 2010a, and 2017; Schulte 2002, 2011; Pichler 2004, 2007; and Engelmann 2011, 2013. See also Szelzner 2013, which argues that Wittgenstein moves from talk of grammar in a very general way in *The Big Typescript* and *Brown*

Like Fogelin and Sluga, I believe that if we are to do justice to the full range of positions set out in Wittgenstein's writing, we must acknowledge that Wittgenstein was continually moving back and forth between proto-philosophical theorizing and Pyrrhonian criticism of such theories, not only in his middle period, but from first to last.<sup>29</sup> As a result, one can selectively marshal texts from every stage of his career that show him defending philosophical theories, and one can also construe those texts as attacking such theorizing. This, in turn, is why defenders of a traditional reading, such as Hacker, have amassed so much evidence that Wittgenstein was always committed to setting out the rules of our language, yet defenders of a "resolute" reading, such as Diamond, draw a diametrically opposed conclusion. Rather than settling for one or the other of these two opposed readings, or looking for a decisive dividing line that clearly separates an earlier Wittgenstein who proposed various philosophical theories, and a later Pyrrhonian Wittgenstein who resolutely criticized such theories, we need to recognize that Wittgenstein felt the pull of both these impulses – the attractions of philosophical theorizing, and the critical attack on those theories – throughout his life. We can see the dialectic between these impulses at work in every stage of his career, from his 1914–1916 notebooks to the manuscripts written in the last years of his life. However, it takes on a particularly central role in the transitional period that begins with his return to Cambridge in 1929 and ends with the composition of the *Early Investigations* in Norway in 1936–1937.<sup>30</sup>

#### 4. Wittgenstein's Influences in the 1930s

It is often taken for granted that after Wittgenstein moved to Cambridge in 1929, he was, for the most part, a solitary philosopher who was not much influenced or affected by his contemporaries. For instance, G. H. von Wright contrasted the young Wittgenstein who had

*Book*, to considering specific examples of usage in his later discussion of grammar.

<sup>29</sup> See Fogelin 1987, ch. 15 and 1994, 3–12 and 205–222; Sluga 2004; Stern 2004, ch. 2, and 170.

<sup>30</sup> Most of the first three sections of this introduction are based on Stern 2018; a number of expository paragraphs are taken from the editorial introduction to *M*.

learned from Frege and Russell, and whose “problems were in part theirs” with the later Wittgenstein, who had, he thought,

no ancestors in the history of thought. His work signals a radical departure from previously existing paths of philosophy . . . The later Wittgenstein did not receive an inspiration from outside like that which the earlier Wittgenstein obtained from Frege and Russell.<sup>31</sup>

Certainly, if one approaches the question of a philosopher’s relationship to other philosophers as a matter of “ancestry,” or a family tree of the principal relations between philosophical generations, then it is true that no-one influenced Wittgenstein after his return to Cambridge in 1929, in the far-reaching and comprehensive way that Frege and Russell inspired him when he was a student there before the First World War. However, one important qualification to von Wright’s claim that no-one influenced the later Wittgenstein in the way that Frege and Russell influenced the early Wittgenstein is that those philosophers still played the role of father figures for the later Wittgenstein. Wittgenstein’s “departure from previously existing paths” is most often a departure from paths mapped out by Frege and Russell. Furthermore, there are many ways in which a philosopher can be part of a philosophical community, or intimately connected with and dependent on other philosophers, that are not a matter of “ancestry” in von Wright’s sense of the term. It is unfortunate that von Wright’s otherwise excellent essay on Wittgenstein’s life and work greatly overstated the extent to which Wittgenstein was isolated from his contemporaries, and served to foster the myth that they did not have a significant impact on his thought.

Of course, Wittgenstein himself was the first person to speak of his life in Cambridge as though it were entirely self-contained. Con Drury remembered a discussion with Wittgenstein in 1931 in which Wittgenstein told Drury that it was essential that Drury get away from Cambridge at once, because “There is no oxygen in Cambridge for you. It doesn’t matter to me, as I manufacture my own oxygen.”<sup>32</sup> Like most metaphors, Wittgenstein’s was literally untrue: Wittgenstein had breathed the Cambridge air for each Cambridge term from Lent 1929 onward. But it was also deeply misleading. Wittgenstein was materially supported by Trinity College, which had provided him

<sup>31</sup> von Wright 1984, 14, 15.    <sup>32</sup> Drury 1984, 121; 1999, 209.

with a five-year research fellowship, room and board, and by the Moral Sciences Faculty, which gave him the opportunity to lecture as he chose. Littlewood and Hardy, the two leading mathematicians in Cambridge, wanted him to teach their students; Moore, the most distinguished philosopher in Cambridge, attended his lectures and met with him weekly to discuss philosophy. On his arrival, Wittgenstein had attracted the attention of Cambridge philosophy students, and many of them took a lively interest in his work, so much so that other faculty began to worry whether his influence was for the best.

Many of the chapters in this collection draw our attention to the variety of ways in which Wittgenstein was influenced in the 1930s, not only by his reading of a remarkably wide range of authors, both contemporary and historical, but also by his interaction with those around him. Kienzler, Sluga, and Stern, all give extended attention to Wittgenstein's connections with Moore; Boncompagni, Goldfarb, Schulte, and Stern, all discuss his relationship with Ramsey. Engelmann considers Wittgenstein's response to Russell's discussion of the skeptical scenario in which the world was created five minutes ago in his *Outline of Philosophy* (1927); Sluga discusses Wittgenstein's reaction to Russell's *Analysis of Mind* (1921). Biletzki and Schulte both look at Wittgenstein's reading of Frazer's *Golden Bough*; Kienzler and Schulte both discuss Wittgenstein's focus on Spengler in the early 1930s; Goldfarb and Kienzler both look at Wittgenstein's relationship to Schlick. Boncompagni reflects on the ways in which Wittgenstein's philosophy of mind is in dialogue with Ogden and Richards' causalist account, and William James's pragmatism. Appelqvist follows a long tradition of reading Wittgenstein as influenced by Kant, but concentrates her attention on the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, rather than the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Boncompagni, Kienzler, Marion and Okada, and Sluga, each consider different ways in which Wittgenstein responds to Hertz. Wittgenstein's responses to themes from two symposia at the Joint Session of the Aristotelian Society and the Mind Association in July 1932 – "The Limits of Psychology in Aesthetics" (Louis Arnaud Reid, Helen Knight, and C. E. M. Joad), and "Is Goodness a Quality?" (Moore, H. W. B. Joseph, and A. E. Taylor) – are discussed by Appelqvist and Richter respectively. The chapters by Goldfarb and Marion and Okada both examine Wittgenstein's reading of the opening of an important paper by Skolem (1967b) and its significance for understanding his work on mathematical induction.

The historical context of Wittgenstein's work in the philosophy of mathematics, including his relationship to figures such as Frege, Russell, Dedekind, and Poincaré, is also a central topic in both of their contributions. Marion and Okada also explore Wittgenstein's influence on his student Reuben Goodstein, who made use of Wittgenstein's ideas about induction in his own later mathematical work.

## 5. The Chapters in This Volume

Most of these essays were first written for a seminar in May 2015 at the University of Iowa on Wittgenstein between the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations*, taking the text of Moore's notes of Wittgenstein's 1930–1933 Cambridge lectures, coedited by myself, Brian Rogers, and Gabriel Citron, as our point of departure.<sup>33</sup> Contributors were asked to write a short chapter on whatever aspect of our edition of Moore's lecture notes they found most interesting and place it in the broader context of Wittgenstein's philosophy in the 1930s. So while the book was occasioned by our edition of the Moore lecture notes, and can be read as a companion to that volume, it is also a much more wide-ranging discussion of Wittgenstein's philosophy in the 1930s, and its relationship to his early and late philosophical masterpieces, the *Tractatus* and *Philosophical Investigations*.

Moore's lecture notes are a particularly valuable point of departure for those interested in charting not only the changes and continuities in Wittgenstein's philosophy as a whole in the 1930s, but also his treatment of particular philosophical topics. For Moore's notes provide us with an extraordinarily comprehensive and thorough record of the first few crucial years of Wittgenstein's teaching in Cambridge. In his lectures, Wittgenstein not only presented a number of the central themes of his current work, but also issues that he was currently exploring in his manuscripts, and ideas that arose during his lecturing and his discussion with members of the audience.<sup>34</sup> Moore himself described the notes as "very full,"<sup>35</sup> and said he had "tried to get down in my notes the actual words he used."<sup>36</sup> Moore's own summary of the

<sup>33</sup> *Wittgenstein: Lectures, Cambridge 1930–1933, From the Notes of G. E. Moore* (M).

<sup>34</sup> See sections 2 and 3 of the editorial introduction to M for a much more detailed discussion of Moore's note-taking at the 1930–1933 lectures.

<sup>35</sup> MWL, 49. <sup>36</sup> MWL, 50.

lectures was published in the mid-1950s.<sup>37</sup> Two sets of student notes were published 25 years later.<sup>38</sup> But these each involve substantial editorial reconstruction, selection, and rearrangement, while our edition of Moore's notes does not.

Furthermore, the extensive notes Moore wrote down in the lectures are not simply more detailed than these earlier reports on the lectures. They contain whole discussions that cannot be found in the students' editions of Wittgenstein's lectures from the early 1930s, or Moore's own published summary.<sup>39</sup> So unlike those previously published reports, they provide us with an almost verbatim record of what was said at the time. Yet more important, Moore was not only one of the most distinguished philosophers of his time, but he was also an old friend and teacher of Wittgenstein's. Indeed, a number of students at those lectures had the "impression that a kind of dialogue was going on between Moore and Wittgenstein, even when Moore was least obviously being 'brought in.'"<sup>40</sup>

For the first time, then, we have a detailed and reliable real-time record of Wittgenstein's first few years of teaching, a record that enables us to reflect on which aspects of his philosophy he chose to present to his auditors in those classes, how he presented them, and in what order, and the immediate effect on Moore himself.<sup>41</sup> That chronological record of his teaching also allows us to compare remarks there with parallel, or related, remarks in Wittgenstein's manuscripts or typescripts, and many of the contributors to this collection explore such connections.<sup>42</sup> Unlike his writing, which perforce amounted to a provisional choice of words that could always be revised or rearranged, his lectures amounted to a definite choice of words, delivered to a particular audience on a particular occasion, though often inspired by his manuscripts. During the 1930s Wittgenstein was continually failing to bring to completion a publishable work in the standard sense of that

<sup>37</sup> MWL.    <sup>38</sup> AWL and LWL.

<sup>39</sup> This includes a number of the discussions of religion, ethics, and aesthetics that are discussed in the papers in Part III of this collection.

<sup>40</sup> Britton 1955, 1071. In Flowers 1999, 2, 205; 2016, 2, 491.

<sup>41</sup> See in this volume: Klagge, ch. 6, and Munz, ch. 9, section 1, for further discussion of the distinctive character of Wittgenstein's teaching in the 1930s, and its relationship to his philosophical writing.

<sup>42</sup> See in this volume: Kienzler, ch. 5, passim; Pichler, ch. 2, section 2; Boncompagni, ch. 4, section 2; Munz, ch. 9, sections 3–4; Marion and Okada, ch. 15, sections 4–5.