

37 ways of looking at the Wittgensteins

1. The hut/shack in Norway. Not as a place of something akin to pilgrimage but instead somewhere that people/characters wind up/stumble across, i.e.
 - a couple out courting/on honeymoon/rekindling
 - someone lit/fig running from i.e. personal damage/the law and holing up there to maybe, ostensib/ively, recover through i.e. nature (looking at stars, fresh air, frost in mornings, etc.) but ultimately not surviving a winter
 - the hut as place of recreational frenzy for disenchanted fjordal youth/acts of vandalism and repair
 - an artist who unintentionally shed-boat-sheds the thing

The concatenation of these events into a semblance of narrative, with every character ultimately a minor character, as Ludwig was himself but a minor character in the life of his thought.

2. ? sitting for a portrait for Klimt (nature of representation, what it means to be represented etc.), marriage + building of the house & Ludwig's help/designwork on this (how she represents Ludwig/ how Ludwig is formed in her – the elder sister's – mind). Different attitudes to wealth, her worries about his attitude to wealth. Difficulty of inhabiting a female character. Was it the same one who managed to get to Switzerland – if not then maybe just fiction them together?

3. That which might have become of the children Ludwig taught/girl he slapped, etc. Living through the century and its calamities. Would any of them remember his lessons, remember him at all?
4. Paul, from time in POW camp onwards. Beginning, pretty much, with his relearning of the piano, keys traced out in the dirt. *He awoke to find a stump, phantom pain,* etc.
- 4.1. A Sebaldian jolly with Paul as a starting or centrifugal principle. So, i.e.
 - hands – Van Gogh writing to his brother and saying that if he works at it for five (?) years he should be able to draw them – *On Certainty* – Hoekney's ~~twonky~~ ~~shonky~~ hands – the training that rock-climbers endure to strengthen their fingers, such attention paid to the skin
 - POW camps – who was it who wrote (began writing) his memoirs, only for them to be discovered/destroyed – Albert Speer – those studies of redstarts, and going on to set up the observatory on Fair Isle (could voluntary warden as part of research?) – exploration of i.e. migration/ganseys, patterns passed like mitochondrial DNA from mother to daughter – that lady in Robin Hood's Bay with her thousandfold collection – the Flamborough patterns – shipwrecks of the Yorkshire coast – sitting in the wreck of the *Sarb-J*, the only place where I could then find something akin to peace – fulmars – the other tubenoses of the world

best NOT have it as a series of perambulatory concerns/idle thoughts when near water. Does the world really need another Sebaldian jolly?

5. The possibilities of Ludwig meeting Ramanujan. In Cambridge, or with Ludwig as a porter when Ramanujan was hospitalised. Conversations, etc. clash of culture upon clash of culture upon, what might have happened had two such minds actually met – how to explore so many possibilities/multiverse.
6. *Wittgenstein, P.I.* – a builder/'s mate chances across a copy of the *Investigations* on a bus/in a sandwich shop, becomes entranced, sets up as private detective, with a methodology based on his (mis-)understanding of Ludwig's later principles. Probably never solves a case/gets a client even.
- 6.1. The P.I. (not necessarily from a construction background) comes up against a criminal mastermind, also versed/articulate in the study of Ludwig. Case toing-and-froing (words that look ugly, mispronounced upon the page) upon language games, the 5.6's, whether C.K. Ogden or McGuinness and Pear's translation of the *TLP* is being consulted, culminating in a car chase about the word *bedeutung*. Such could represent part/book 1, with 2 centring upon the trial etc., the criminal mastermind using *On Certainty* as a key principle in his defence within this the trial of the century, expert witnesses being called out of their academic cupboards etc. Upon acquittal goes travelling/retires to Marbella.
7. Children's story, set in a farmyard. The friendship, affection, ultimately the love between a duck and a rabbit.
8. Novelistic adaptation of Llorenz Riber's theatre production of the *Philosophical Investigations*.
- 8.1. An amateur dramatic group's pitfalls when trying to stage a production of Riber's adaptation of the *Investigations*. Struggle to find suitable venue etc. Clash of egos re., i.e. how best to stage the thing, whether Ludwig did really turn his back on

solipsism, whether the misreading of Augustine's *Confessions* is wilful or not. Probably need an affair or two to keep things spicy.

- 8.2. The travails of a chorus girl in a touring musical adaptation of Riber's famous production. Cold hotel rooms, poor diet. Late nights alone and drinking, alone except for the bottle. Allowance from uncle/father cut. Money troubles. Some always doomed romance with an older man.
9. From within the churning depths of a fever a struggling poet/artisan baker/retired math's teacher is graced by a hallucinatory apparition, a spectre of Ludwig his/her bedside companion/mentor from then on, or, better, the baker/bus conductor/disillusioned goalkeeper begins to hallucinate the philosophy of Ludwig, all of it in simultaneous jumble, believing i.e. that roses have teeth, objects cannot be named, everybody does indeed carry a box with *beetle* written on it, perhaps even experiencing the visual hallucination of a lion, (to no avail) attempting to hold a conversation w/it.
 - 9.1. Ludwig's lion vs. Sartre's lobster. A deathmatch.
10. Straight narrative. Karl, from when he first ran away from the family home. Getting himself expelled from school for writing an essay denying the immortality of the soul. Arrival in New York w/nowt but a violin for company, those years of daring spent in the city, eking a living as waiter, musician, teacher of disparate subjects. Return to Vienna. How the time in New York no doubt prepped him towards success as an industrialist. End i.e. with Ludwig/Paul *in utero*.
11. A bibliography (in the novel format) of all that reading which would have to go into a novel/theatre production in some way about the Wittgensteins.

12. The family's attempt to have itself reclassified under the Nuremberg Laws. Identity, deception, etc.
13. The Yorkshire Moors. Isolated and bereft, autodidactic scientist Jeremy Hieditch-Smieditch splices duck and rabbit together splices rabbit and duck together and releases such chimeras at i.e. Top Withens, Roseberry Topping (for the name + shape of hill, view out to sea), Barden Fell, Heptonstall. Believes he manufactures his own oxygen, or does he? Solipsism.
14. A subtle homage to the *Order of the Finnegans*. Someone, perhaps 2 or 3 people going about the thing independently, who attempt to mirror/shadow/replicate the life of Ludwig as a means of coming towards an understanding of his thought, that thought besides which he was himself but a minor character. Could begin with someone struggling with a P.G.C.E., dropping out (*like Herman Melville I failed as a teacher. For him; the sea. For me; Ludwig, always Ludwig*). Intrigue and suspense as they almost meet in Manchester, in Vienna, on the ferry to Norway. Descriptions of the sea. Migratory birds, the waxwings seen eating insects in Scandinavia, seen later, eating berries in a Cambridge carpark (Lidl or Waitrose?). Eventual coming together on the west coast of Ireland. Fulmars.
- 14.1. A travel agent bankrupts his family by setting up a pan-European tour of the locations of Ludwig's life, the price including a series of lectures given on the coach. Include a food poisoning incident.

15. A rock-climber, idealistic and imprecise, elects to study philosophy at university, mostly due to the lack of timetabled hours. Spends most of her time on the crags. Soloing (ropeless climbing), the thrill and danger of it when approaching one's limits. Addictive quality to it, the peculiarity of the mental states thus attained. How in such moments of madness of inspiration the crag but not the crag even not even the climb embarked upon equates to the entirety of the world, the world reduced, completely belonging within the insecurity of a foothold, the marriage of boot rubber and foothold, the manifold ways in which a quartz pebble might be gripped. Solutions revealed in the vanishing of the problem. Mind and brain seeming detached, lagging a step or more behind bodily movement. Follies of youth, rock-climbers as a tribe. How to come to terms with the normal the everyday the daily commute having had such experiences?
16. A novel composed (almost) entirely of silence, that which we cannot speak about.
BLANK PAGES!
17. A mutually beneficial/sustaining academic squabblefest in the form of letters/email correspondence. So i.e. moving from differing interpretations of the word *bedeutung* into *Zettel* into the *Remarks on Colour*, with ever increasing hints of more going on. The time that emails might be sent could be quite telling, i.e. some minor quibble about a specific differentiation between meaning/reference being sent at five in the morning, etc. They could fall in love or kill one another or both.
18. A book called *The World as I Found It*.

19. The suicides. If such a thing could be anything other than an intrusion onto grief – even now, these generations later. Hans the musician of remarkable gifts, running away to the States and jumping overboard. Rudolf in Berlin, grappling with his sexuality. Issues of identity, doubt, belonging. Family pressure, parental guilt. Notion of character traits, if one suicide perhaps opens a door for another?
20. A horror story, stemming from the remark that *the rose has teeth in the mouth of a beast*.
21. The secret/private life of a book (*Tractatus* probably, *Zettel*? for obscurity) as it is read on a wire, in a mountain hut, aboard the Andaman Islands ferry, the physical object as it moves through time and the world, across the Sahara and down the Zambezi. The unacknowledged fellowship of those who read it, those who pick it up with the intention of reading it but instead leave it neglected on a shelf, in the pocket of a rucksack. How it might be said to shape them, affect them in various ways.
22. In the form of a job application. A lapsed philosophy graduate/autodidact of some (self)regard with an erratic/sporadic work history. The usual sort of thing; while not necessarily having been a corpse for pay has worked on the phones, in catering, as a labourer and newt-fencer, nothing for very long and never having risen (had any desire to rise) beyond the base level of each given profession. Going in for something approximating to a PROPER JOB, that which might require *the ability to analyse and solve problems with an appreciation of longer-term implications, effective communication skills, both written and verbal, report writing skills, ability to communicate effectively with people with varying levels of seniority* etc., the sort of

thing that of course he could do, he could do it without using his thumbs, but how to go about conveying that in a personal statement, the stilted language of a job application? After necessary waffle talks about labouring, work done on building sites, the primitive language games found in such situations. Gobo gobo gobo. Would naturally refer to the *Investigations*, digressing over other theories of language and communication, misreadings of Freud and how overdone the concept of an unreliable narrator could be said to have become. Descriptions of what such work might involve, shovel and manhandle, four tons of sand (sand which weighed four tons when dry but has been left in the rain for those weeks of rain and working on a building site) shifted within a morning (a morning's protein? the protein of a morning and its hangover sweated dry), the thoughts which might go through the head during times of barrowing, filling up skips. When mixing cement (gobo gobo gobo), those thoughts which might occur when the machine is on and swirling, two buckets of sand, one bucket cement and water - not too much because the sand is damp – churning together, those which might happen when the next three buckets are thrown into the equation. The trancelike state achieved when watching the squall of sand and water, gobo gobo gobo. The labourer/job applicant being reminded of certain passages from *Moby-Dick*, the masthead chapter, Ishmael's description of those *many romantic, melancholy, and absent-minded young men* who lose themselves in reverie of ocean/cement mixer, *the blending cadence of waves with thoughts*, losing identity within the swirl such that *every strange, half-seen, gliding, beautiful thing that eludes him; every dimly-discovered uprising fin of some undiscernible form, seems to him the embodiment of those elusive thoughts that only people the soul by continually flitting through it*. Reminded of this each time he mixes cement, wonders if he is the only person currently labouring with such thoughts going through his head. At first, the first few days of mixing cement, barrowing it to the brickies, finding comfort in the diversion, the diversion which does not progress, remaining always thoughts of Ishmael, his kinship with Ishmael, remaining this and never moving on or advancing, until becoming or seeming to become a symptom, a direct corollary to something

beyond a general malaise, that *damp, drizzly November in the soul* from which *Moby-Dick* pans out/sets sail. A retelling of *Moby-Dick* from within a mixer? The truth is always/rarely profound. Solipsism.

23. *If truth is universal, then how, ever, to go about saying something new?*
24. From *The Blue and Brown Books* to an exposition on the generality of notebooks, Bruce Chatwin and the cult/mythology of the notebook, could itself be something approaching a notebook's form. So i.e. the difference between a poet/novelist's notebooks – the same person, and the differences which might occur within their notebook when writing poetry as opposed to prose as opposed to working on i.e. a job application. What it might mean to move from a draft (from sub/protodraft beginnings) to something approaching a finished piece. Ludwig's never ending drafts. Classic birdwatcher's notebooks, the sketches of Hudsonian whimbrels blown onto the Scilly Isles, snow buntings at South Gare. Duck during the eclipse phase. How this skill has been said to have been lost in the age of digiscope technology, the ease of photography and the internet depleting standards of birdwatching somewhat (or so they say). *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* and what the fuck might Walter Benjamin make of this digital soup, the myriad images in which we nowadays drown. Pen vs. pencil vs. i.e. pictures cut out and stuck in, newspaper clippings and the like (does there need to be a competition?). How to include photographs (reproductions of images) without consigning the work to being yet another Sebaldian footnote? Oh, look, J.G. Ballard! Beckett's doodlings of Joyce and Chaplin.
25. Magic-realist highjinks. Ludwig swallows a parrot or a parrot possesses his voicebox – is it Ludwig or the parrot that speaks? Time an elastic dynasty. Frost

reputed to have come from Atlantis. The family working as circus performers, talking to the lions. Paul's phantom limb plays a piano of its own, the compositions for this (left/right?) hand being written by i.e. Beethoven's ghost. Avoid the word *labyrinth*.

26. Something about translation?
27. The problems occurring when language goes on holiday/takes a break. Two Wittgenstein scholars on a carshare back from a conference get lost/waylaid in the desert (a sandy one, prominent cacti, big-eared foxes). Eventually found withered, leather-tanned and hirsute, stinking of that urine that has sustained them and on the verge of submitting to the vultures, somehow with only two words remaining between them; *larn* and *streng*; a verb and a noun with context-specific meanings, confused linguistic heritage (seeming to derive from i.e. Basque, Sanskrit and the specific Staithes dialect that was last spoken in the 1990s). Notions of a private language, etc. – if no-one can be said to know quite what (if anything) a word means, but everyone carries on, can't help from using it, can it be said to refer to anything, have meaning at all? The terms *larn* and *streng* seeping thereafter into the lingua of all who come across them, insidious disease, police forces/hospital staff/small towns/academic departments succumbing within the gravity of *larn* and *streng*, communicating solely in guttural, monosyllabic grunts/confusion. Societal breakdown/moral relativism. Larn it streng.
28. Frank Ramsey. Maths, philosophy, unrequited love, psychoanalysis, Vienna. His role in translating the *TLP* and persuading Ludwig to return to his duty. Twenty-six years old. The narrator perhaps reflecting on him/herself at twenty-six, how age,

maturity, responsibility have changed in the past eightysome years. What can be hoped for. Mathematics too hard a blag? Fibonacci sequence.

29. Something dystopian. Story of two people in the Bradford area (Baildon), the same person in two separate Baildons. A could be said to be precocious, talented, possessing of *something*, in the possession of that which should be encouraged. As could B, with them being essentially the same person at the beginning (although chronology would no doubt not be straightforward). A, growing up in the metropolitan borough of Bradford, spends much time in the library, withdraws six books each Saturday and reads them, sometimes returns them on a Thursday even. For B there is no library. So A might come across Ludwig, perhaps in the form of a biog. or the *Tractatus* read on a teenage wire. And this might shape him/her, be said to have shaped him/her. Or it could be B, maybe s/he did not need libraries, maybe we who withdrew six books each Saturday and read them through the week, straining eyesight after lights-out on nights of equitable moon, the crack between the curtains, maybe it is us that are deluded and maybe B will read the *Tractatus*, maybe s/he will be moulded within its space. Baildon's Ramanujan. *I have always imagined Heaven as some kind of library.* From third person into 1st person, with the 1st persons not always readily distinguishable, both i.e. getting into a golden chaos at Baildon Bank, throwing empty bottles at the quarry walls. Are we happier, more content for having had books in our lives? Shouldn't require twenty-foot squid/talking rats.

30. ~~Someone/a parrot/lion who believes themselves to be the resurrection of Ludwig, the simultaneous resurrections of Ludwig and V.V.G., secular saints in one bodymind.~~ The possibility of Ludwig meeting James Joyce. Notions of (self-imposed) exile and such. An unlikely friendship. Ludwig's consternation over JJ's drinking, JJ's consternation over Ludwig's sobriety. The monetary difficulties of two

such men. What conversations they could have had. A theme/riff/motif being regular games of *Scrabble* – L. infuriated by JJ's renegade approach to language, i.e. when he gets *pszozlers* on a triple word score, attempts to play *soomerfugl* or *impalpabunt*. Arguments as to what use the dictionary, whether it holds things back or allows them to roll on. Not too great a stretch to bend truth and have them meeting somewhere – Paris or Zurich?

31. A first person, Proust/Musilian sequence as if written by one of the family, i.e. Hans or Rudolph.
32. Diary format, as if written by Bertrand Russell, utilising the proto-textspeak he himself employed. *I met the Austrian again yesterday. Interesting fellow, strange eyes.* Also, i.e. his thoughts on T.S. Eliot. *He was talking about the Grail myth again, clairvoyants and Chaucer. Hindoo mythology and men with wrinkled breasts. I felt a little out of my depth.*
33. A birdwatcher (i.e. classically trained, good at sketching, keeps detailed notebooks, has spent enough time studying house sparrows to know a Spanish or Italian sparrow when he sees one) who spends time/goes on a prolonged visit to the west coast of Ireland, i.e. very close to (perhaps stays in same house as) where Ludwig wrote *On Certainty*. So i.e. difference between second/third winter Iceland gulls, own personal doubts about whether it's possible to distinguish between i.e. Iceland and Thayer's. Phalaropes. Strong westerlies/remnants of a tropical storm bringing all sorts of stuff to land (red-eyed vireo, Madeiran firecrest, northern parula, Baltimore oriole etc.) and amongst this already ludicrous, once-in-a-lifetime selection of rarities something truly at the limits of belief, at the very limits of his own belief i.e. some Caribbean endemic such as La Selle thrush or Cuban trogon/

Antillean piculet, the sort of thing which he cannot help but doubt *even when observing the fucker*.¹ What to do? The celebratory whiskey and waking up in a proper fug. What to do? How to go about reporting it when even having seen the thing, even having kept impeccable notes and sketches, sketches of the very highest standard, he cannot help but harbour doubts? To learn or not to learn, that is the question. His deliberations before he goes about the deed *for the sake of truth itself*. Inevitable doubts w/in the community i.e. why in this age of digiscope technology did he not produce a photographic record? Other/previous sightings combed over/discredited. The doubt and scorn ruining him, as birdwatcher and man, such that that, that Hispaniolan woodpecker somehow drifted onto the west coast of Ireland is at once zenith and nadir, apogee and ?

- 33.1. Something similar but w/a rock-climber/soloist (15). In no way goes out to report things but somehow word gets out, i.e. a guidebook w/notes as to what has been done is found in the Burbage quarries. Name raked through the internet and its squalor.
34. A solipsistic novel. Does not consider itself to be an object within the world. Are all novels in a sense solipsistic? *Only because it is a world can a book be entered*, etc.
35. The learning through life of someone for whom the *problems of philosophy* represent genuine, everyday problems. Doubts each evening that the sun will rise again etc. Difficulty of someone who can genuinely doubt another person's capacity to feel pain (would this make them a psychopath?) when attempting to form/conduct

¹ Could open with/have hints at previous mental unrest, how birdwatching, the quiet and the focus, stills the mind, probably has qualities congruent with the practice of mindfulness. So this, his previous issues present within the reader, the reader doubting alongside the birdwatcher, or hoping alongside the birdwatcher that i.e. a Hispaniolan woodpecker is really BEING SEEN. Can we expect the common reader to know that woodpeckers don't seem to like large passages of water?

relationships. And they're supposed to call it the love of wisdom! Can never be sure if a duck is in fact a rabbit or a rabbit is in fact a duck.

36. A desperate (at least considers himself to be desperate) (aspirational) novelist/ otherwise writer of fiction. Mid-twenties, still clings to i.e. Sisyphus as a fitting analogy for the human condition. Struggling for ideas or has so many ideas he doesn't know how to think. Cannot live on thought alone. No, actually has no money. Barely eating. Coughing in the night and wakes up spitting blood. How to fund the next page? Sells his library/what books he owns, including i.e. *TLP* and *Zettel*. Buys enough tobacco to get through the next page.

37. *When Ludwig met Karl; a love story.*