"THE MYSTICAL" IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF WITTGENSTEIN

In the preface of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* that represents his early philosophy, Wittgenstein writes:

"This book deals with the problems of philosophy, and shows I believe, that the reason why these problems are posed is that the logic of our language is misunderstood. The whole sense of the book might be summed up in the following words: what can be said at all can be said clearly, and what we cannot talk about we must pass over in silence."

The earlier part of the TIP is devoted in expounding the logical nature of such language and its relation to the world. Summarily then, in the words of Fann:

- "... (1) Language consists of propositions.
 - (2) All propositions can be analysed into elementary propositions and are truth-functions of elementary propositions.
 - (3) The elementary propositions are immediate combinations of names, which directly refer to objects; and
 - (4) elementary propositions are logical pictures of atomic facts,
 - (5) which are immediate combinations of objects. Atomic facts combine to form facts of whatever complexity which constitute the world. Thus language is truthfunctionally structured and its essential function is to describe the world.
 - (6) Here we have the limit of language and what amounts to the same, the limit of the world."2

He acknowledges his indebtness to Frege's works and to Russell's writings for stimulating his thoughts.

The later-part of the TIP that is also known as his account of 'the Mystical' throws light on what he means by the 'limits of the world' and by the 'limits of the language' through his attempts to

express the inexpressible i. e. the propositions of logic, metaphysics, ethics and aesthetics. However, in his later work *The Philosophical Investigations*,³ he realizes that 'meaning' is not the same as 'naming', the meaning of a word is its use: and that there is nothing sublime about the 'forms of logic' (P 189) and the 'forms of fact'. There corresponds a form of language to every form of life (activity) (P 123). Thus we can meaningfully talk about any activity of life. But his philosophy seems to be fading into mysticism again. The forms of language are so deep—may be they are 'mystical' (P. 111).

This paper is an attempt to discuss Wittgenstein's concept of 'the mystical' as given in the TLP Via⁴ understanding the connection between the logically perfect language and 'the mystical' to which the logical framework of that language is not supposed to apply and to review *it* in the light of doctrines of his later view developed in the P. I.

The main thrust of the system is in the direction of providing us with an account of logically perfect language—a language in which sentences mean something quite definite, and also that it provides logical presuppositions of empirical knowledge (asserting or denying facts). Thus the rules of syntax should provide two types of conditions: (a) the conditions for sense rather than nonsense in the combination of symbol, (b) the conditions for uniqueness of meaning or reference in symbols or combination of symbols.⁵

The proposition specifies the syntactical features of the system and provides 'epistemological formalism' of stating only—(not for any metaphysical assertions). This category of logical propositions excludes the other two categories of logical expressions: the Tautologies—the expressions which have the value (true) for any value of their variables; and the contradictions—the expressions which have the value (false) for any value of their variables. For a proposition 'to have a meaning is (a) to show its form' (TLP 313), (b) to represent a situation. 'Expressing a formal structure' is accidental one (because a situation can be represented by one of the various possible aspects of a given fact). This distinction made between 'essential' and 'accidental' features of a proposition seems to be parallel to the distinction made by Aristotle between two kinds of predication, one of which may be called 'synonymous'

and the other 'homonymous'. The first is that predication in which both name and the definition of the predicate are predicable of the subject, for example 'man' is predicable of individual man in this sense. This type of predication makes known those attributes of the subject which are proper to it. For Wittgenstein 'form' is predicable to a logical proposition in this sense. The formal structure of the proposition makes 'shown' the essential attributes of a proposition. The second is that in which only the name, but not also the definition, of the predicate is predicable of the subject, for example 'white' is predicable of a body in this way, 'the situation' is represented by a proposition in this sense.

The terms used in 'elementary propositons' and 'logical propositions' are 'observational terms' and 'symbolic terms' respectively. In both cases terms function as a name and fulfils the condition of uniqueness-two different elements do not receive the same name. For example, if a universe 'U' contains two elements □ and □, these elements will be represented by marks □ and □ respectively, and designated by the words 'black' and 'white'. Thus it includes the possibility of 'theoretical terms' and 'metaphysical terms' to be the constituent parts of a propositon, because the entities such terms denote are not the possible constituents of 'state affairs'. Perhaps Wittgenstein, implicitely assumed the possibility that theoretical terms like 'atoms', 'objects' etc., can derive their empirical and logical (may be partially) meaning by means of certain rules of correspondence, that could relate certain sentences containing the 'theoretical terms' with the sentences containing the 'logical or observation terms' because the sentences using such terms are no where referred as 'the mystical', since the sentences; using the 'metaphysical terms' as 'God', 'will', 'I', 'my world', and the 'ethical terms' like 'ought', 'good', 'bad' etc., don't designate any observable objects or properties, and Wittgenstein's system does not provide with any logical postulates these can connect such sentences with logical propositons, hence, all such sentences and terms are excluded from the system of talking sense and referred as 'the mystical.'

The propositions do not stand in any 'external relations'. Thus he excludes the possibility of their being an 'objective constituent' in any sentence containing 'propositional verbs' with a subordinate noun 'that' clause in which truth-value is not a function of or

dependent on the truth-value of subordinate clause. Thus all metaphysical, ethical and aesthetical propositions are excluded from this group of propositions because 'truth-values' are not predicable to the former in the sense they are predicable to the latter. Thus it is legitimate to say that 'A knows that P is the case' because here the truth-value of the whole sentence is determined by the truth value of the objective constituent. Also, because to say that 'I know it, but I may be wrong' is a logically contradictory statement. But it is illegitimate to say that 'A believes that P is the case' because the use of 'believe' presupposes the possibility of the objective constituent 'as possibly not be the case.' But it cannot be possible in the case of a proposition because the truth-value of a proposition is independent of the propositional verb.

The propositions supply the epistemological framework for any system that is to make truth claims about the facts. 'We picture facts to ourselves' (TLP 21). 'A proposition is a model of reality as we imagin it' (TLP 4.01). 'It represents the facts that objects stand in a determinate relation to one another' (TLP 2031-2032) "Propositions can represent only 'how things stand" (TLP 3.211). All these quotes show that a proposition is a form of representation. In other words, it provide us with a formal structure of interpreting the experience in such a way that knwoledge statements becomes possible. 'The simultaneous presence of two colours at two different places in a visual field of a person' is an epistemological assertain because it expresses logical possibility, in other words, it could be represented by the logical form of consistency. On the other hand 'the simultaneous presence of two colours of a person' at the same place in a visual-field' is not an epistemological assertion because it expresses logical impossibility. 'Contradictions' lack sense because they don't refer to any fact.

The possibility of making truth claims about the facts, presupposes the possibility of relating propositions with the observation language. How can propositions tell us *this* is not the same colour as *that* or that 'this' and 'that' refer to different points in the given space? Wittgenstein has given an answer to this question. In order to be able to say 'This point' or 'that point' I must first know when a point is referred to as 'this' or 'that' (TLP 4063).

One could object: if propositions specify 'what it is to be an object of experience,' how can the account of the applicability of

the propositions be other than circular? The objection seems acceptable. If there is a system by means of which we understand facts we cannot be said to know via that system anything at all about the facts to which it applies. Wittgenstein himself insists that we can have no independent knowledge of facts—about their existence and structure (TLP 6·124). That is 'the mystical'.

Thus we can say: 'The Mystical' is the same as 'that which cannot be subsumed under the concept of a proposition'. From it follows that it include the whole of logic and philosophy. The validity of Wittgenstein's arguments in favour of this thesis has to be judged. It seems appropriate here, first to quote his direct statements about 'The Mystical':

M1. "There are, indeed, things that cannot be put into words, they make themselves manifest. They are what is mystical" (TLP 65223).

M2. "It is not how things are in the world that is mystical, but that it.. exists" (TLP 644).

M3. "To view the world sub-specie acterni is to view it as a whole-a limited whole. Feeling the world as a limited whole-it is that is mystical" (TLP 645).

There are many more statements, referring to religion, ethics art, the realm of personal, concerning with 'what cannot be said, to which I shall be referring to in the following parts of the paper

'The logical form' as 'The Mystical' is not represented in a proposition but can only be shown or mirrored in the expressions of that proposition. (TLP 4121) Wittgenstein here is arguing that 'The language of logic' is the same as 'the language of forms' (TLP 6·1224), whatever can be said about 'the language of forms' cannot be said in terms of the language of forms. It can merely be shown in the structure of that language. 'Shown' used in this sense needs to be distinguished from 'shown' used for mirroring 'what cannot be spoken of'— that is assumed to be given, e.g. by Fann,' in the world beyond the world of facts. If we say 'God shows itself; values shows themselves; self shows itself' we could mean that God, values and self show themselves through certain 'feeling expressions'. Thus 'feelings' would not 'show' themselves through 'feeling expressions' the same way as the 'forms would express themselves through 'formal expressions'.

Retreat to the point: 'The logical forms' merely 'show' themselves through the formal structure. Let us see what arguments Wittgenstein puts forward to prove that they are 'mystical' in this sense. Referring to the attempts made to explain the 'concept proper', with the help of the higher level 'concept—formal concepts', Wittgenstein argues that "when something falls under a formal concept as one of its objects, this cannot be expressed by means of a proposition. Instead it is shown in the very sign for the object" (TLP 4126). Most probably he is attacking Frege's idea, let us see what Frege has to say about the "expressing of the relation—falling under".

"-1 is a number less by 1 than a number whose square is equal to its double. This expresses the fact that -1 falls under a concept."

The careful analysis can show that what Frege is saying, does not contradict with what Wittgenstein has said about the inexpressibility of a formal concept by means of a proposition because:
(a) the formal concept here is expressed in a language, other than the language of forms. In other words, formal concept is not represented by a proposition. (b) Admitting that Frege makes such a distinction between properties as:

"Some are properties of the expressions for concepts and the expressions for obejcts, and some are properties of concepts and objects themselves."

Then what Frege is trying to express by that formal concept is not the properties of the expression of the object (-1) but the properties of the object (-1). The problem for Wittgenstein is that he does not make such a distinction, the distinction that seems to be a valid one. For example, let us table the following two expressions:

(i)
$$(3-2)=1$$

(ii) $(4-3)=1$

now in one sense (in the sense of the properties of the object 1) both express the same thing. But in another sense (in the sense of the properties and of the expression of object 1) both express different expressions. Wittgenstein and Frege won't contradict on this point.

Wittgenstein has one more point to prove his thesis that 'the

logical form' is 'the mystical'. Formal concepts cannot be represented by means of a function, as concepts proper can:

"For let us suppose that the function F (fx) could be its own argument: in that case there would be a proposition 'F [f(fx)]', in which the outer function F and the inner function F must have different meaning, since the inner one has the form (fx) and the outer one has the form $[\phi(fx)]$. Only the letter 'F' is common to the two functions, letter by itself signifies nothing" (TPL 3.333).

Wittgenstein is trying to show that 'F' is not representing ' ϕ ', and both 'F' and ' ϕ ' are equal level concepts with distinct meanings. Frege would say that the equal levelled functions can again be divided into first-level and second level ones. ¹⁰ We can say that this relation of 'higher' to 'lower' is merely the relation of 'outer to inner'. Hence it proves Wittgenstein's point i. e. each concept represents itself through its own form.

In M2, Wittgenstein argues that to say 'The world exists' is mystical. (1) 'world' is not a name of a simple element, therefore, cannot refer to or signify any fact (state of affairs). 'World' taken as a complex term in order to be meaningful, must signify via other (simple) signs—the signs those serve to define it (the TLP 3261). 'World' in this sense is not definable, because it has no parts. So we fail to give meaning to 'world' in the statement 'The world exists' since 'world' does not signify anything, 'exists' is not predicable to it because 'existence' is predicable only to those signs which express the possibility of becoming the constituents of a proposition (TLP 2012). Secondly, it is logically impossible to move from 'how' statements i. e. to the statements about 'observable properties' and 'relations', to 'that statements' i.e. to the concluding statements expressing the existence of objects which are supposedly in the capacity of producing 'the state of affairs'. For example: from a conditional like "for any X, if X is copper and is heated, then X would expand" we can never deduce any existential statement like 'there is' X and 'X' is copper, etc. actually, Wittgenstein is questioning the move here, because it seems mystical to him. This form of phenomenalism has its historical roots in the writings of Berkeley, Hume and J. S. Mill. Earnst Mach, Kare Pearson, Bertrand Russell (in one phase of his development), P. W. Bridg-

man, and Herbert Dingle also belong to this group. Let us see what Pearson says speaking on sense impressions:

"Of what is beyond them, of things—in themselves—we can know but one characteristic—(the) capacity of producing sense—impressions. There is no necessity, now there is want of logic in the statement that behind sense-impressions there are "things-in-themselves" producing sense impression. "11

A. J. Ayer in his Language, Logic and Truth defends the same thesis. In M3, Wittgenstein argues that in the language of logic we cannot say "the world is a limited whole" or "the world has this in it, and this, but not that" (TLP 561) because this statement is an answer to an external question—the type of question with which logic can't deal, how can it test the validity of answer to such questions logic can answer only internal questions¹² which fall within its own framework. Hence such statements are mystical. I can say 'I feel that the world is a limited whole.' This again is mystical because this statement expresses a dyadic relation—the relation between the 'subjective constituent' and an 'objective constituent' consisting of an entity named by noun 'that' clause. This relation is not explainable in terms of propositions.

'My World' is mystical (the TLP 562). Interpreting 'my'¹³ as a tie-world in the sense of belonging, and 'belonging' as a case of imagining: I can say 'my world is the world as I imagine it', contrary to the world that is the objective reality and represents itself in propositions. Then further question could be asked: 'what sense of 'imagining' this relation of imagining' could precisely have? can it have one of the three senses Annis Flew distingushes:

"—One, in which (the context makes clear that) the word used to report the occurance of mental imagery; second in which 'imagined' is used as substantially equivalent to 'thought'; and a third in which imagine 'is used as substantially equivalent to suppose'".14

Wittgenstein cannot use 'imagining' in the sense of 'thought', because 'what we can think, falls in the given universe of discourse, (the TLP 561). Neither can he use it in the sense of 'suppose', because 'suppose P taken in the sense of 'propositional entertainment' can be trnasformed into 'logical possibility that P'. The

'logical possibility that P' also falls within the linguistic frame work. 'Imagining' seems to be used in the sense of 'reporting of the occurances of mental imagery'. Hence 'my world' cannot be represented in the language of logic.

In another statement 'I am my world' he seems to identify 'I' with 'my world' so his argument could be put as following: "'I' = 'My world", "My world = 'mental-occurances'". Thus 'I' is reducible to mere, 'mental-occurances' so there is no such thing as thinking 'I' (the TLP 5631). He is attacking Descarates, in the manner of Hume, Kant and Ryle. He seems to be still wondering about 'I' as a metaphysical subject. 'I' does not signify in the sense, a simple sign does because it "shrinks to a point without extension" but "there remains a reality co-ordinated with it". (TLP 564) Like Ryle¹⁵, Wittgenstein rejects the belief 'I' or 'mind' denote an entity but there is a difference in their approach. Ryle asserts dogmatically that the 'mind' does not denote a separate entity; whereas Wittgenstein's claim is that if 'mind' or 'I' denote a non—physical entity, we don't know it. It is the mystical.

"Values" can't be spoken of because they do not belong to the doman of what can be spoken of, and 'value-judgments' can't be formed because no logical framework is provided for such propositions. But in ethical arguments, such moves are made, for example, a move from ethical law of the form "Thou shalt—" to the factual statements like "——is doing" or to the act of doing. (TLP 6422) Wittgenstein seems to be attacking the deductive approach to ethics. Assuming that Wittgenstein implicitely used the intermediate of a particular fact stating premise, we can say that this attack is directed towards the type of logical argument (practical inference) given by Aristotle:

"When the two premises are combined, just as in theoretical reasoning the mind is compelled to affirm the resulting conclusion, so in the case of practical premise you are forced at once to do it."

He has given a full example of a practical syllogism in the third chapter of the seventh book of *Ethica Nicomachea*. The two premises are "All sweet things ought to be tasted" and "that thing is sweet" then, instead of stating the conclusion in words—"that thing ought to be tasted". Aristotle goes on to say that I.P.Q..2

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you are bound, if able and not prevented, to taste the things immedaitely. So, for Aristotle, the conclusion of practical syllogism is an action, by questioning the move from 'action' or 'fact statement' to 'value statement'. Thus seems to be attacking the inductive approach to ethics. It is the same problem that Hume recognised:

".. of the last consequence. For this ought or ought not, expresses some new relations or affirmation, 'tis necessary that it should be observed and explained; and at the same time that a reason should be given, for what seems altogether inconcervable, how this new relation can be a deduction from others, which are entirely different from it." 17

This is what Kant has to say about this:

"Where as, so far as nature is concerned, exprience supplies the rules and is the source of truth, in respect of the moral laws it is, also the mother of illusion. Nothing is more reprehensible than to derive the laws prescribing what ought to be from what is done, ..." What Wittgenstein, with Hume, Kant and many others, seems to be suggesting is to restrain from forcing value arguments into the inadequate moulds of logical propositions.

'Value terms' like 'good', 'bad', 'happiness,' 'unhappiness' signify properties of different kind i. e. non-descriptive, therefore cannot be related or identified with the terms signifying descriptive properties. By doing so, we shall be committing in the terms of G. E. Moore, a naturalistic fallacy. Wittgenstein would not assert or deny such position but would simply say that the relation seems mystical. Wittgenstein takes three statements about God and tries to prove, by applying his criterion, that they are all mystical.

- 1. God reveals himself in the world. 'God' is not 'factuality' or 'the formal structure of the facts or propositions'. If it were, it could have 'shown' itself the same way as 'forms' can show themselves. Therefore, God does not reveal himself in the world (TLP 6432). It refutes Zemach's argument that God is 'factuality'.¹⁹
- 2. God as the cause of the logical world. (TLP 3031)

Wittgenstein argues that the relation between the logical and 'some-thing that can be spoken of' and the relation between the 'illogical' and 'something that cannot be spoken of' is apprehensible and expressible but the relation of God being the cause of the logical properties of the world is not expressible hence, 'mystical' (TLP 3032).

3. Laws of God are inviolable (TLP 6.372). If we say that by 'acknowledged terminus' he means 'the limits of our language' then surely he is taking the terminus. We cannot say anything about such a statement.

He seems to be puzzled. "The facts all contribute only to settling the problem not to its solution" (TLP 6.4321). At this point if an atheist, like Marcel²⁰ argues "if the fact God is transcendent means that the usual standards of correctness and rigourderived from science and mathematics—does not apply to it." But to what? Reply me Mr? Wittgenstein would reply, "that is what, I don't know that is what, about which I can say nothingthat is "the mystical." Wittgenstein speaks more like an agnostic.

He deals with the other metaphysical problems about 'meaning of life', 'death', 'will' etc., by applying the same criterion.

It has been argued that has not Wittgenstein himself said far too much when he used words like 'God', 'will', 'the meaning of life', 'the Mystical' etc. Is it not inconsistent with the aim of the TLP'what we cannot speak about we must pass over in slience'? (TLP 7). But he has also said, one understands this (whatever he has said about God, will etc.) properly only if one perceives that it was not really possible to express all this in the given language. The real understanding of his approach has resulted in stimulating the quest (even in him as expressed in the PI) for new way of conceiving language and its relation with the world and men. The later Wittgenstein realizes that the sentences do not get their meaning essentially in one way, namely through "pecturing", but there are countless kinds of uses of "symbols", "words" and "sentences" (PI 23). Any language does not essentially have the clear and firm structure of the formulae in a logical calculus. There are various forms of language. The language is used not just for one purpose, the stating of facts—on the contrary forms and uses of language are inexhaustibly flexible and various; a language is not a game, but

like a whole family of games. "To imagine a language means to imagine a form of life" (PI 19).

The comparing of the last lines of the preceding paragraph with the lines: "It is obvious that an imagined world, however different it may be from the real one, must have something—a formin common with it" from the TLP (2022), shows that his basic thesis about, there being something common between 'the forms of life' and 'the forms of language' remains unchanged in his later work. In both works—The TLP (4022, 313) and the PI (512), the 'imagining of form' is determined by the forms of logic and the forms of facts. These "forms" are given apriori. The truth value of propositions is determined a posteriori. On the contrary in the PI, Wittgenstein seems to have discovered, through analytical approach to the language of philosophy, that the forms of language are arrived at through agreement (PI 246)—on agreement that has to be consistent with the given form of life (PI P. 226). This given could be conventional or natural or both.

How could this later discovery be relevent to his concept of 'the Mystical'? There is no direct statement in the PI, about 'the Mystical'. But we may say that the 'discovered parts of the universe of 'the mystical' of the TLP', are 'no more parts of 'the mystical' of the PI. Hence 'the mystical' in the PI is that, that cannot be subsumed under any form of language (with a corresponding form of life).

In conclusion of this paper, I may say that in the TLP, there is one universe (U), consisting of two universes i. e. the 'Ui', (the logical) and the 'Uii' (the mystical). The 'Ui' consists of totality of facts ('propositions' and 'state of affairs'), and the 'Uii' consists of 'the inexpressible'. Hence 'the logical' and 'the mystical' stand in relation of exclusion, that is a symmetrical relation. This relation can be symbolically expressed as: if we let 'E' stand for 'excludes', 'L' for the 'logical' and 'M' for 'the mystical': then we can say E (ML) or E (LM). In the PI, there are a number of universes i. e. 'U'...Un.: each consists of a certain form of language with a corresponding forms of life. Thus we may infer that 'the mystical' stand as a dyadic relative term-E.g. If 'Ui' is mystical to 'Uii', then 'Uii' is mystical to 'Uii' and so on. Apart from this discovered universe (Ui...Un), there is an undiscovered universe (XI...Xn). This undis-

covered universe may be called 'The mystical', outstanding relation of exlusion to the discovered universe. This undiscovered universe is still a mystry. It is not describable because its form of life and the corresponding form of language is not yet discovered. But it is a possibility, that can be actualized with further discoveries.

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NOTES

- Ludwig Wittgenstein, Tractatus Logico Philosophicus London Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963 p. 3.
- 2. K. T. Fann, Wittgenstein's Conception of Philosophy Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1969. P. 2.
- Ludwig Wittgenstein. Philosophical Investigations. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1968. Herein after cited as PI.
- 4. Hacker attacking Zemach argues "... to think that the so-called 'mystical' parts of the book are a culmination of the work reflecting back on everything that went before", is very strong claim about the relationship between the 'earlier' and 'mystical' parts of the *TLP*. The relation is neither 'terminus'. as claimed by Hacker, because there exists a very important relation between the two parts. It is from the earlier parts of the book that Wittgenstein derives his criterion of, 'what can be called mystical' and it is to the later parts of the book he applies this criterion. P. 78.
- 5. L. Wittgenstein, TLP. P. X.
- 6. Aristotle categoriae. 5, 2a 19-24.
- 7. K. T. Fann, Op. Cit. P. 24.
- G. Frege, Philosophical Writings. Trans. P. Geach and M. Black, Oxford: Basil Blackwell. P. 30.
- 9. J. D. B. Walker, A Study of Frege. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, P. 20
- 10. G. Frege, op. cit P. 40
- 11. K. Pearson, Grammer and Science. London: Everyman, 1937. PP 60-62.
- R. Carnap, Meaning and Necessity. Chicago University of Chicago, 1956 PP. 206-207.
- J. King-Farlaw, "Mine and the family of Human Imaginings" Inquiry Vol. 12 P. 226.

- 14. Ibid., P. 229.
- 15. G. Ryle, The Concept of mind. London: Hutchinson's 1955, P. 51.
- 16. Quoted from the Leob classical Library translation by H. Rackham
- David Hume, A Treatise on Human Nature. Selby-V gge edition., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958. III —I —I.
- 18. I. Kant, Critique of Pure Reason. Norman Kemp Smith, Trans. B 375.
- E. Zemach, "Wittgenstein's Philosophy of the Mystical" Review of Metaphysics, Vol. 18, 1964 — P. Ai.
- 20. G. Marcel, "Philosophical Atheism,' International Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. (Dec. 62) PP. 501-514.