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Neither Theory nor Science Metaphilosophical Remarks on Philosophical Elucidations

Ni teoría ni ciencia. Observaciones metafilosóficas sobre las elucidaciones filosóficas

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Abstract: This article examines Wittgenstein's philosophical reflection on philosophy: its method, its scope, and its relationship with other knowledge as central elements of the philosophical proposal the author developed in Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus. Therefore, my proposal is to rehearse a metaphilosophical reading of Wittgenstein's remarks about philosophy in TLP focusing, on the one hand, on his reflections on philosophy as an activity and not as a theory; on the other hand, on his categorical differentiation established between philosophical elucidations and scientific explanations. This proposal differs from the readings that interpret it is through the construction of a theory of meaning –or logical doctrine– that one can distinguish philosophical nonsense and see the world correctly. It also differs from Tractatus's non-theoretical or quietist readings which understand philosophical elucidations as exclusively negative or critical nonsense. My aim is to highlight a positive aspect of philosophical elucidations that I will call performative. From my metaphilosophical reading, not only does the activity of clarification work as a critical sieve that separates what makes sense from what does not –with no theory; but it also makes a modification –a transformation– in the one who establishes it. These performative aspects imply emphasizing that there is a change in the way we see the world but also in the way we 'see' language, meaning, logic, science, philosophy, life, etc. Thus, the refusal to elaborate a theory or to offer scientific explanations does not turn the philosophical elucidations in TLP into a mode of self-destructive attack on all kinds of philosophy. On the contrary, these elucidations are part of the defense of a particular way of practicing it.

Keywords: *Tractatus* , Metaphilosophy, Performative Aspects, Elucidations, Scientific Explanations.

Resumen: *Este artículo examina la reflexión filosófica de Wittgenstein sobre la filosofía: su método, su alcance y su relación con otros saberes como elementos centrales de la propuesta filosófica que desarrolla en el Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus. De este modo, mi propuesta es ensayar una lectura metafilosófica de las observaciones de Wittgenstein sobre la filosofía en TLP centrándome, por un lado, en sus reflexiones sobre la filosofía como una actividad y no como una teoría; por el otro, en la diferenciación categórica que establece entre las elucidaciones filosóficas y las explicaciones científicas. Esta propuesta difiere de las lecturas que interpretan que es a través de la construcción de una teoría del significado -o doctrina lógica- que uno puede distinguir el sinsentido filosófico y ver el mundo correctamente. También se diferencia de las lecturas no teóricas o quietistas del Tractatus, que entienden a las elucidaciones filosóficas como sinsentidos exclusivamente negativos o críticos. Mi objetivo es destacar un aspecto positivo de las elucidaciones filosóficas que llamaré performativo. Desde mi lectura metafilosófica, la actividad de esclarecimiento no sólo funciona como un tamiz crítico que separa -sin teoría- lo que tiene sentido de lo que no lo tiene; sino que también realiza una modificación -una transformación- en quien la establece. Estos aspectos performativos implican enfatizar que hay un cambio en la forma de ver el mundo pero*

también en la forma de "ver" el lenguaje, el significado, la lógica, la ciencia, la filosofía, la vida, etc. Así, la negación a elaborar una teoría o a ofrecer explicaciones científicas no convierte a las elucidaciones filosóficas del TLP en un modo de ataque autodestructivo de toda clase de filosofía. Por el contrario, estas elucidaciones forman parte de la defensa de una forma particular de practicarla.

Palabras clave: Tractatus , Metafilosofía , Aspectos performativos , Elucidaciones , Explicaciones científicas .

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Introduction

In a brief text, at the end of the 1970s, Gottfried Gabriel (2007 [1978]) grouped the great variety of interpretations that already existed of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* [TLP] into two large groups: the *logical-epistemological* ones, centered around the aspects that brought Wittgenstein closer to Carnap and the Vienna Circle; and the *existential* ones, which brought him closer to Heidegger. The first ones focused on the initial part of TLP, on the notions of world, thought, knowledge, language, meaning, logical structure, logic as doctrine, philosophy of science. The second ones focused on the final part of TLP, on the ethical aspects, on the *saying-showing* distinction and its relation to mysticism, on the meaning of life, on how to interpret silence (Cf. GABRIEL, 2007 [1978], p. 127-132). Beyond Carnap and Heidegger, to whom it could be appropriate to add Frege, Russell, Schopenhauer, Tolstoy, among other relevant thinkers, the division remains current. It is also important to note that this division, between logical-epistemological and ethical-existential readings, does not always imply excluding terms. Over 100 years after the first edition of TLP, a third reading comes to stage: the exegetical-historiographical one. It takes TLP as a whole and as a textual source; and it seeks to highlight the opaque aspects contained therein and its relation with the historical context of production [2] .

My proposal for this text focuses on another aspect: Wittgenstein's philosophical reflection on philosophy, its method, its scope and its relationship with other knowledge as central elements of his philosophical proposal contained in TLP. My aim, based on these topics, is to offer a *metaphilosophical* reading of Wittgenstein's remarks on philosophy in TLP, focusing on two considerations: his way of understanding philosophy as an activity and not as a theory (§4.112); and his categorical differentiation established between philosophical *elucidations .Erläuterungen*) and scientific explanations (*Erklärungen*) (§4.111; 4.112; 4.113). This metaphilosophical reading differs from the readings that interpret it is through the construction of a theory of meaning –or logical doctrine (§6.13) – that one can differentiate philosophical nonsense and *see* the world correctly. Against this doctrinal

reading, the Wittgenstein's ladder (§6.54) is not built by theoretical rungs (cf. CONANT & DIAMOND, 2004, p. 49; FANN 1992, p.26). On the other hand, and unlike *quietist* readings (CONANT 2000; CONANT & DIAMOND 2004; DIAMOND 1988, 2000; MCDOWELL, 2009; VIRVIDAKIS, 2008; WRIGHT, 1989, 1992, 2001) which understand philosophical elucidations are exclusively negative or critical nonsense (§4.003), I seek to highlight a positive aspect of philosophical elucidations that I will call *performative*.

Therefore, from this metaphilosophical reading, not only does the activity of elucidation function as a critical sieve that elucidates and shows (§4.022, 41212) the conditions of possibility of sense (§4.115, 4.116), but also a modification, a transformation, is produced in the one who makes them. This means emphasizing that the exercise of philosophical elucidation produces a change in the way we see the world but also in the way we "see" language, meaning, logic, science, philosophy, life, etc. Thus, neither does philosophy elaborate a theory nor offers scientific explanations; it does not make the philosophical elucidations of TLP a mode of self-destructive attack on all kinds of philosophy either. Rather, philosophical elucidations are presented as a defense of a particular way of practicing philosophy.

For this aim, this itinerary is followed: the first section is a critical analysis of *quietist* readings of TLP; the second, a development of elements that support an alternative metaphilosophical reading of TLP; the third, the distinction between science and scientism in order to clarify Wittgenstein's approach to scientific explanations; and the last one, an exposition of the *performative* aspects of philosophical elucidations that I consider vital for a non-quietist understanding of Wittgenstein's philosophical proposal.

I. *Tractatus's* Readings: Quietism

In philosophy, quietism can be assumed as the view that involves avoiding substantive philosophical theorizing. In particular, it seeks to avoid postulating positive theses or dogmas and to develop constructive arguments. In the context of contemporary philosophy, quietism is directly related to a certain interpretation of Wittgenstein's work that emphasizes the negative purpose of his therapeutic-proposal. In this interpretation, philosophy conceived of as an activity without substantive theses (CRARY, 2000; MCDOWELL, 2009; WRIGHT, 1989, 1992, 2001). Thus, in Wittgenstein, philosophy seems to assume a role centered on the exercise of clarifying philosophical nonsense -§4.0031- (CRARY, 2000; CONANT & DIAMOND, 2004; DIAMOND, 1988; MCDOWELL, 2009; WRIGHT, 1989, 1992, 2001). Wright explains it succinctly: quietism involves the claim that "meaningful metaphysical debate is impossible" (Cf. WRIGHT, 1989, 1992, 2001). In J. McDowell's analogous expression, it implies "avoidance of any substantive philosophy" (MCDOWELL, 2009). Nonetheless, McDowell warns that quietism has sometimes been understood only as

a critical moment in Wittgenstein's philosophy. In this way, there would be another moment in which he elaborates substantial views against the theory of meaning, against certain theses in philosophy of mind, and so on. He settles:

> It has acquired currency in readings in which Wittgenstein is complimented (a bit backhandedly) for uncovering a requirement, in connection with such topics as acting on an understanding, for substantive philosophy, which, however, in deference to a supposed antecedent commitment to quietism, he does not himself give. In a variant version of this tendency, Crispin Wright credits Wittgenstein with an 'official' quietism—leaving room for the suggestion that, inconsistently with his 'official' stance, Wittgenstein actually at least adumbrates the supposedly needed substantive philosophy, (MCDOWELL, 2009, p. 370) [3] .

Beyond this caveat, quietism seems to be literally committed to the idea that philosophy does not provoke any progress or modifications, as Wittgenstein states in his second period: "[Philosophy] leaves everything as it is", (PI §124). Interpreted in an extreme way, Wittgenstein offers neither theory nor therapy and, thus, philosophy gets to its end (cf. HUTTO, 2003, 2009) [4] .

The resolute readings of TLP (CONANT & DIAMOND, 2004; DIAMOND, 1988) can be placed within the framework of philosophical quietism. In their critical response to M. Williams and P. Sullivan, Conant and Diamond (2004) focus on paragraph §4.112, where Wittgenstein points out that philosophy is not about constructing a doctrine or a theory, but about practicing an activity. He seeks to emphasize that this particular activity does not result in *philosophische Sätze* –in propositions of philosophy– but in *das Klarwerden von Sätzen* –in achieving clarity in our relation to the sentences of our language (Cf. CONANT & DIAMOND, 2004, p. 46). In this sense, philosophy is an activity characterized as a work of elucidation or clarification, an activity of "making clear". Thus, they propose that TLP should be read in an ironic key; in other words, philosophical elucidations do not have a special status. A correct reading of its statements should lead to acknowledging that these elucidations do not say anything, they are simply nonsense (§4.0031). What is more, they are not a special type of nonsense, they are simply absurd propositions. For Conant, in order to understand §6.54, we must consider elucidations exclusively as *Unsinn* –nonsense. However, according to him, this approach cannot be made without appreciating the structure of the book and the philosophical method (§6.53) as a whole, "through which alone we can come to some understanding of what Wittgenstein meant by 'elucidation' and of how he was deploying the term 'nonsense' in the book" (Cf. CONANT & DIAMOND, 2004,p. 68). In these resolute readings, the ladder metaphor –"throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it" (§6.54) – is interpreted as the end of philosophy. This way of reading seems to focus exclusively on the ladder metaphor rather than on the structure of the book and the philosophical method as a whole.

Although I think that the "resolute readings" clarify a significant aspect of TLP, that is, the relation between the notion of nonsense and the

methodological reflections on the philosophical activity of elucidating, I consider that this can result into an anti-philosophical interpretation. According to Hutto (2009), for resolute readers, Wittgenstein's philosophy is understood extremely as a negative therapy that implies the end of clarification. The emphasis on the non-theoretical approach defended and exercised by Wittgenstein may lead us to think that his purpose was only destructive. From my metaphilosophical reading, Wittgenstein raises *important*, not only ironic or absurd, philosophical elucidations that produce modifications on the way of practicing philosophy, its limits and its scope. In the next section, I will present a metaphilosophical approach as an alternative reading to the resolute ones.

II. Metaphilosophy

In contrast to this quietist reading and from my metaphilosophical reading, I consider that, although Wittgenstein assumes a critical attitude towards certain dogmatic ways of doing philosophy, he should not be read as an anti-philosopher. In this sense, I am detaching myself from *quietist* readings and I am advocating aspects that I call *performative*. By performative, I understand those elements that are promoted for the exercise of philosophical activity which have both a critical-destructive objective and a creative and transformative one. These positive aspects can be highlighted by understanding their relationship with the concept of philosophical elucidations in the framework of philosophical reflection on philosophy. These metaphilosophical remarks allow for rescuing the positive aspects of the defense that Wittgenstein suggests in favor of philosophy understood as an activity that should not follow the scientific model.

In 1940, inspired by his reading of the second Wittgenstein's work, Lazerowitz coined the term "metaphilosophy". The term refers to "the investigation of the nature of philosophy, with the central aim of arriving at a satisfactory explanation of the absence of uncontested philosophical claims and arguments" (LAZEROWITZ, 1970, p. 1). The method of investigation consisted in "translating philosophical statements back into the verbal idiom", (REESE, 1990, p. 28). In Reese's reconstruction of Lazerowitz's position, the prefix "meta" means "beyond": "metaphilosopher goes beyond philosophy, dissolving philosophical statements back into those of ordinary language" (*Ibid*). His proposal is "in" philosophy in the sense that it operates on material which he calls philosophical; it is "beyond" philosophy in the sense that it dissolves that material from the outside; and it is "about" philosophy because it makes a judgment about the entire philosophical enterprise, (Cf. *Ibid*. p. 29). Lazerowitz based his position on Wittgenstein's remark of Philosophical Investigations, §116: "what we do is to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use". From my point of view, a literal interpretation of this remark, such as the one Lazerowitz seems to try, can wrongly reduce philosophy to ordinary language or even consider that common sense offers answers to philosophical questions.

In his *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein explicitly stated that: "if philosophy speaks of the use of the word 'philosophy" there must be a second-order philosophy. But it is not so: it is, rather, like the case of orthography, which deals with the word 'orthography' among others without then being second-order" (PI §121). In this way, I understand that metaphilosophy is not a second-order reflection or language, but a way of offering philosophical elucidations (*Erläuterungen*), philosophical remarks (*Bemerkungen*), which take philosophy itself as part of its reflection. This seems to be in tune with the way he describes philosophy as an activity and not as a theory or doctrine (TLP §4.112). Hence, this proposal focuses on the philosophical reflection on philosophy, not committed to a meta-level, meta-language, or external standpoint.

In a more systematic and subsequent exposition of the term metaphilosophy and of the particular methodology proposed from it, Lazerowitz (1977 [1971]) emphasizes that the research focuses on philosophical utterances. The aim is to grab a satisfactory understanding of what, in their nature, allows for the "intractable disagreements" that invariably accompany them. It seems to be suggested that, when understood, philosophical problems or philosophical disagreements can be solved.

> Understanding a philosophical problem rightly = solving the problem. No one is cured, but our understanding is enlarged. The important thing to be grasped about the nature of a philosophical problem, which makes it utterly unlike a mathematical or a scientific problem, is not that understanding it is a prerequisite for its solution but that it is its solution, (LAZEROWITZ, 1977, p. 30).

From Lazerowitz's perspective, it is essential to understand the nature of philosophical problems in order to understand the permanence of disagreements in philosophy. Precisely, this understanding makes it possible to solve these problems – because it is revealed that they are formulated in a confused way; consequently, the disagreements are *resolved*. From my point of view, the main goal of philosophical reflection on philosophy is not to solve all kinds of problems, but to understand, within the framework of TLP, its logical structure in order to determine whether its formulations make sense. An important remark must be made before proceeding: with my suggestion I am not assuming that Wittgenstein proposes a metaphilosophy in TLP. Instead, I am proposing a metaphilosophical reading -or metaphilosophical remarks- in order to highlight his philosophical reflections on philosophy in a positive sense. This positive aspect arises when his strategy, which differentiates philosophy from other disciplines, is understood as a defense of a way of doing philosophy.

Taking *performative* aspects into account, and from my suggestion, metaphilosophy cannot be only reduced to an initial propaedeutic instance. Rather, it should be seen as a philosophical orientation that regards the examination of philosophy itself as cardinal. Therefore, this examination of philosophy is also philosophical. This allows us to understand that the philosophical reflection proposed by Wittgenstein is not reduced to setting the limits of sense, in a purely destructive way for

philosophy. As we shall see in the next section, this in turn relates to the categorical contrast between the method of philosophical investigation and that of natural science. For Wittgenstein, philosophy as an activity of clarifying the limits of sense, and his proposal of philosophical elucidations as nonsense, does not imply accepting the method of natural science as a model for all kinds of investigation. Therefore, neither does Wittgenstein abolish philosophy in favor of science nor he subordinates the philosophical method to the scientific one. In order to show how Wittgenstein, from his non-theoretical perspective, does not attack every way of doing philosophy but defends a particular one, these reflections should be connected to his views on the status of scientific explanations.

III. Scientific Explanations: Science and Scientism

Regarding the anti-theoretical approach of Wittgenstein's philosophy, and from the reading I propose, the distinction between philosophical clarifications or elucidations and scientific explanations is crucial. This distinction is directly related to both his philosophical reflection on philosophy and the protection he seeks for philosophy against scientism. In TLP, he made a distinction between the explanations that the natural sciences can offer and the elucidations (*Erläuterungen*) that philosophy offers (§4.111; 4.112). At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, a great dispute arose over the distinction between what W. Dilthey (1833-1911) called the sciences of nature (*Naturwissenschaften*) and the sciences of spirit (*Geisteswissenschaften*). Many authors of the time sought to establish the specific methods each of them uses based on the distinction between explanation (*Erklären*) and understanding (*Verstehen*). The sciences of nature were dedicated to explaining the world; those of spirit, to understanding it. The categorical distinction between explanation and understanding, between causes (the general) and reasons (the particular), outlined the debate on the methods that characterized both the natural and the social and human sciences of that time.

Beyond the specific debate that is established by Dilthey and the further development of hermeneutics, I am interested in highlighting that Wittgenstein presented *family resemblance* with these irreducible differences between philosophy and science. However, not necessarily do these differences have to be understood in terms of confrontation. From my reading, Wittgenstein's proposal is to make a difference that he considers essential to avoid any kind of reductionism and any kind of foundationalism for philosophy. The tendency that he, and many authors of that time, find suspicious – not to say dangerous – is to subsume all "scientific" disciplines to a unique model: the empiricist scientific method of the natural sciences. As K. Kraus considered, the error of his time was to conceive progress based only on the model of scientific and technical progress, (Cf. BOUVERESSE, 2006, p. 192).

The distinctions between reasons and causes, descriptions and explanations, might imply that Wittgenstein was interested in

reestablishing the opposition between the sciences of nature and those of spirit – like Dilthey or Spengler. However, this apparent reestablishment is not given in the terms in which these authors understood the opposition. Wittgenstein's aim is rather to reject the classical model of "science" –even for social science, whose clear example is Frazer's anthropological work– as the only model to be followed (Cf. *Ibid*. p. 210). Philosophy is a fundamentally elucidatory activity that operates on language. Hence, neither does it produce "novelties" –"discoveries"–, such as those implied by science, nor it elaborates "theories" since these imply a kind of explanations that Wittgenstein considers to be beyond the scope of philosophy.

On the other hand, and in a brief digression, Wittgenstein's TLP should also be placed in what is known as the "language crisis" of the Vienna of the 900s. This book seems to be a response to the crisis captured in *The Lord Chandos Letter* (1902) by Hugo von Hofmannsthal (1874-1929), whom Fritz Mauthner (1849-1923) [5] considered one of his owns best interpreters. The author of the letter completely abandons writing not only books but also letters because he can no longer formulate concepts given the variety of experience subject to constant change. In fact, it falls into a "deep state of speechlessness", of *silence*, as words lose their references; it represents "an escape from language". Mauthner (2001 [1903]) was convinced that language deceives us. This idea explains his epistemological radical skepticism about the reliability of language as part of the cultural pessimism of the early twentieth century in the Austro-German tradition. This delusion or superstition supposes the idea that, although there are words that claim to represent objects in the world, they have lost their anchorage in it; then, they distort it. With this digression, I only want to emphasize that the philosophical elucidations separated from the model of science that Wittgenstein defends do not commit him either to an abandonment of language or to a commitment to literature. From my reading, Wittgenstein is interested in a defense of a way of practicing philosophy, not in its cancellation or its definitive dissolution.

Finally, the reading I propose does not pretend to deny that TLP provides elements for developing a philosophy of science. His critical vision of the modern world, of progress and scientism, did not prevent Wittgenstein from expressing a deep admiration for the more theoretical or abstract reflections on science or the philosophy of science outlined by, for example, Hertz and Boltzmann (Cf. MONK, 1997, p. 40-1). Tomasini Bassols (2020) details the different ways in which a philosophy of science can be done in terms of external or internal to the scientific endeavor, and points out the important contributions that Wittgenstein made to both variants. However, the fact that the book allows for this possibility should not imply that this is the aim of TLP. Wittgenstein did not seek to develop a philosophy of science; he did not understand that philosophy is reduced to such a task as positivist readings tended to misunderstand, either nor it implies that TLP was intended as a critique of scientific knowledge. The point I tried to clarify in this section is that Wittgenstein's proposal is negative because he does not offer a philosophy

in the traditional sense -he does not offer any kind of theory. At the same time, his proposal is positive because Wittgenstein does not abolish philosophy in favor of science; he offers a defense of philosophy as an activity against the scientist model of explanations.

IV. Philosophical Elucidations: Performative Aspects

As we have seen in the previous sections, for Wittgenstein, philosophical activity consists fundamentally in presenting elucidations (*Erläuterungen*). As such, philosophy does not aim to offer "philosophical propositions" – *philosophische Sätze*– but to make the propositions clear – *das Klarwerden von Sätzen* (§4.112). The term elucidations appear few times in TLP: §3.263, 4.112, and 6.54. It is linked to the activity of making clear (§3.251, 4.112, 4.115, and 4.116) and the way of presenting philosophy (§3.324, 4.003, 4.0031, 4.111-4.115, 4.122, 6.211, 6.53). From the reading that I propose, the notion of elucidations is also linked to the difference established with scientific explanations (§4.111; 4.112). Given this constellation of links, I do not interpret that philosophical elucidations should be assumed in their negative aspects, as absurd nonsense products of a destructive clarification – or therapeutic – activity, but in their performative aspects.

The term "performative" has enormous importance in the philosophy of language since J. L. Austin (1911-1960) it presented. Austin proposed the concept of performativity to establish an inseparable connection between language and action. For Austin, performativity occurs when an act of speech or communication not only uses "words", but it necessarily involves an action at the same time. Accordingly, the performative stresses that some expressions serve to effect a transaction or constitute the performance of the act specified by virtue of their utterance –for instance, to make a promise. Austin intended to highlight the pragmatic dimension of natural language and the elements that come into play in a linguistic transaction or *speech* act. It is worth clarifying that, when I mention of performative aspects, I am not indicating that the analysis of this pragmatic dimension of natural language appears in the context of TLP. What I am trying to emphasize is that philosophical elucidations have the effect of performing an action, the action of seeing differently.

I think a correct way of describing the positive aspects of philosophical elucidations is to assume that performative expressions are not primarily about exchanging information but about producing an effect. On the other hand, this way seems to be in tune with understanding that the sharp distinction with scientific explanations that Wittgenstein proposes is not a destructive attack on philosophy but a particular defense of it. For all these reasons, I choose the performative term as a way of understanding philosophical elucidations because it is a term linked to language and action, though not in the Austin's sense. As regards language, it is through an activity of language clarification that we can discover and set the limits of sense and understand philosophical elucidations as nonsense. As regards action, two levels are distinguished: the first one, that clarification

is a practice, not a theory; the second, that it produces an effect; defining elucidations as nonsense is not to indicate that they are something empty or passive. Elucidations are not simply a theoretical distinction that we contemplate; instead, they have an active effect by producing a change or transformation in the way we see or understand certain phenomena such as language, meaning, logic, ethics, etc. According to my reading, Wittgenstein makes a distinction between philosophical elucidations -nonsense- and scientific explanations -propositions with sense-, without seeking to favor science over philosophy. Rather, he seems to defend both that can only occur if they are properly differentiated.

Therefore, it is the metaphilosophical reading that allows for highlighting the performative aspects of philosophical elucidations the one which explores the connection between the status of philosophy as an activity of elucidation and the defense of philosophy against scientism. In TLP's preface Wittgenstein already indicated that his book deals with philosophical problems and shows that:

> the reason why these problems are posed is that the logic of our language is misunderstood (...) Thus the aim of the book is to draw a limit to the expression of thoughts (...) only be in language that the limit can be drawn, and what lies on the other side of the limit will simply be nonsense (WITTGENSTEIN, 2001, p. 4).

This is why, in a metaphilosophical remark, it can be pointed out that the book also offers valuable elucidations, not simply ironies – as the resolute readings proposed. In this way, these elucidations can produce changes in how we understand, how we see, concepts that are part of the philosophical discussions of the early twentieth century around language, meaning, logic, logical constants, and the problem of analysis, among others. At the end of §6.211, between brackets, Wittgenstein states that: "(In philosophy the question, 'What do we actually use this word or this proposition for?' repeatedly leads to valuable insights [*wertvollen Einsichten*])". These insights [*Einsichten*], the elucidations (*Erläuterungen*) that are reached, do not claim to be recognized as true, since they are not part of a correct theory of language but intended to clarify problems concerning the symbolism of TLP which must speak for itself (Cf. ENGELMANN, 2013).

Final Considerations

Therefore, from this metaphilosophical reading, not only does the activity of elucidation function as a critical sieve that separates what makes sense from what does not, but also a modification, a transformation, is produced in the one who makes them. This means emphasizing the performative aspects of philosophical elucidations because they produce a change in the way we see the world but also in the way we "see" language, meaning, logic, science, philosophy, life, and so on. Thereby, philosophical elucidations are presented as a defense of a particular way of doing philosophy.

Finally, and beyond TLP and the specificity in its philosophical proposal, I consider that the philosophical question of philosophy and its relationship with science and scientism are still valid. Given the place that science and technology have in our lives, both at a theoretical and practical level, it is still essential and urgent not only to rethink about the status, the scope, the limits, the divulgation of quality, of science, but also of philosophy. I consider that these metaphilosophical remarks are inviting us to take the ways in which Wittgenstein thought of tractarian philosophical elucidations –their purposes and effects– in relation to science as tools that we can use, not to replicate the ladder he built but to reflect philosophically on the place that philosophy has – or should have – in our own contexts and in the face of our own historical challenges.

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Notes

[2] There are also the readings that deal with the different periods of Wittgenstein's thought, and evaluate their continuities and discontinuities: the t*herapeutic, doctrinal or theoretical*, elucidatory readings, among others. This paper only deals with some of those addressed in TLP.

[3] The proposal of this paper, against any variant of quietism, especially in TLP, seeks to highlight the *performative* aspects presented in Wittgenstein's philosophy. These non-quietist aspects do not imply a commitment to substantive thesis.

[4] Nevertheless, Hutto's own position is to offer a third possibility, which he calls a "live" one, the elucidatory readings. This reading is presented as different from both readings that propose a theory and those that propose a therapy. He understands therapeutic readings as those that understand philosophy as "purely therapeutic, designed only to help rid us of such ambitions and attendant confusions" (HUTTO, 2003, p. 1). These readings cover what I call quietism in this paper —including the resolute readings that are inspired by TLP. While my own position has affinities with Hutto's, it has some discrepancies with it, too: my suggestion is a metaphilosophical reading – which will be developed in the next section of this paper– that allows for a re-evaluation of the notion of elucidation. My reading addresses Wittgenstein's concerns about his philosophical proposal as an activity different from

scientism. Besides, my approach does not deny the importance of the notion of therapy but understands it in relation to what I have called *performative* aspects.

[5] Wittgenstein explicitly mentions Mauthner in TLP, exploring the idea of philosophy as a critique of language. In entry §4.0031, he indicates that "All philosophy is a 'critique of language' (though not in Mauthner's sense)". Despite this denial, the relationship between the two thoughts is complex, and a matter of debate. See SLUGA 2004, SANFELIX 2005.

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