Wittgenstein: Playing on the Edges of Language

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> In certain cases, as the saying suggests, one
> *remains* a philosopher only by – being silent.
> Nietzsche, *Human all too Human*, Preface

If it is true that the *Critique of Judgment* represents an internal threat to the foundations of Pure Reason (Cacciari [1982]: 87) something very similar can be claimed about the relationship between *Philosophical Investigations* and *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*.

Some light can be cast on Wittgenstein's work by considering this ambivalence: on one hand the Notebooks 1914 – 1916 show us the background from which the *Tractatus* emerges, on the other hand a great amount of Wittgenstein's later considerations go back to weigh up and process its assumptions and its structures[1].

The *Notebooks* are a sort of magmatic mass from which the pure distillate of 1921 is extracted, almost as if every proposition was a result of a crystallization of originally extremely fluid and heterogeneous elements. Conversely the *Philosophical Investigations* and the *Philosophical Remarks* – but also the *Philosophical Grammar*, the *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology* and *On Certainty* – go back to the same ruptures, tracing the inevitable imperfections, implicit in every crystallization, and mainly due to the mere need of finding peace in a determined linguistic formulation.

Von Wright inquired from an historical, documental and conceptual point of view the complicated stratigraphy of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, besides having found its early draft: the so-called *Prototractatus*. Although the remaining notebooks force us to a sketchy reconstruction (von Wright [1982]: 99-103) – as at least four of them from the

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[1] One of the most clear examples – a real withdrawal – concerns the moving on from the logical atomism of the *Tractatus* to a principle of context. On this topic: Berto (2003): 44-46 and Lamb (1979). The most significant point is the fact that every issue used by Wittgenstein in order to deconstruct his first theoretical plan can be found, at least *in nuce* in the *Tractatus* itself. For instance the principle of context, whose role will be crucial in the so called second Wittgenstein in a dialectical – olistic conception, can be found in proposition 3.3: «Only the proposition has sense; only in the context of a proposition has a name meaning» (Wittgenstein [1971]).

time of the war are missing – Italo Valent's thesis seems to be likely: «the process of composing the work […] was not following a pre-ordered scheme, it was rather formed gradually, through later interventions and redistribution of the propositions – after a first selection, in an open order of remarks or blocks of remarks, taken from the preparatory notebooks» (Valent [1989]: 34).

Whatever the relationship between the preparatory material and the ultimate formulation of 1921, the author surely went back to incessantly question the whole consistency of that system.

Even if we leave aside Wittgenstein's well known withdrawals from the theories exposed in the *Tractatus* – suffice to mention the Preface of the *Philosophical Investigations* and more generally «the sack the Investigations gave to the *Tractatus*» (Valent [1989]: 166) and other passages of *The Big Typescript*[2] – we can find in Wittgenstein's work considered as a whole a constant spur on rethinking and rewriting its main topics: we will take into consideration some of them.

Besides the conflict between semantic molecularism and principle of context, some other issues are to be mentioned: the explicit contrast between simple objects and general form of the proposition (particularly the lack in the account of grammar rules, as far as the formulation of 1921 is concerned)[3]; the necessity of finding a rigorous definition of language, a necessity that leads to ungovernable consequences; the idea of world – dominating the first part of the *Tractatus* – compared with the mystic dimension brought about in the final pages.

Behind these contrasting poles we can see «the gap of arbitrary Wittgenstein had already seen in the *Tractatus* threatening from behind and from the inside the logical approach to signs» (Valent [1989]: 122). If we dare to express in an extremely brief way what occurs to Wittgenstein's conception of language through the years, we can speak of *a progressive movement from the pictorial request to a model next to the musical dimension*.

The act of painting in fact bears the theme of the re-presentation, thus matching a certain realism, mostly observed as the main theme in the formulation of *Tractatus*. However, we cannot reduce this work to a mere realistic point of view without making a

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[2] Wittgenstein (2005): 101: «My view in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* was wrong: 1.12. because I didn't clearly understand the sense of the words "a logical product is hidden in a proposition"».

[3] Wittgenstein (1975): 109: «What I said in the *Tractatus* doesn't exhaust the grammatical rules for 'and', 'not', 'or' etc.; there are rules for the truth functions which also deal with the elementary part of the proposition».

trivialization. Wittgenstein is too Viennese for it: he does not see in language the pure and simple representation of reality, as if expression itself could be a mere mold of the world, he rather sees it as something that forces us to think about the enigma of what is projected.

In this way, language seems to suggest at least the possibility of a reality, by raising the question of its congruence with it. This account of Wittgenstein's realism is explicit in the *Notebooks*: «The form of a picture might be called that in which the picture MUST agree with the reality (in order to be capable of portraying it at all)» (Wittgenstein [1961]: 15). A theme that will be exposed in an even more iconic manner through the idea according to which «the proposition is a measure of the world» (Wittgenstein [1961]: 41) – repeated, with evident variations in the countless reflections on the connection between yardstick and world.

The hypothesis of a simple realism is to be rejected. Wittgenstein lived in the same cultural atmosphere of Max Planck, who in one of his most famous writings came to such conclusions:

Suppose we have found a physical account of the world that satisfies every need, so that it can represent in a perfectly exact way every law of nature empirically found. We could never, in no way, give evidence that that account is similar, even approximately to real nature [...]. To do so we should know something certain about real nature and that is obviously impossible. In front of us there is an enormous gap, that no science can ever penetrate. To fill this gap is not a duty for pure reason, but for practical reason. (Planck [1933]: 45)

This kind of position is very close to the link between ethics and world expressed in the *Tractatus*: at the bottom and beyond every inquiry about the world there is the logical indemonstrability of the fact that there is a world.

In spite all the subsequent clarifications, Wittgenstein's conception of language remains strongly defined within "pictorial" terms.

The fateful expression is the proposition 2.1: «We make to ourselves pictures of facts». The thesis manifests itself – in Hegelian words (Hegel [1807]: 12) – as «familiarly known», and thus not «properly known»: just for the reason that it is "familiar", this assumption remains not inquired. On this point, the lack of foundations of the proposition 2.1, many critics (Sini [1994]; De Carolis [1999]) agree.

The pictorial connotation of language as representation of reality will keep on emerging in Wittgenstein's work, not only in the form of the yardstick drawn up to reality – where the measure is already a linguistic translation of the world into something else (Wittgenstein [2005]: 97) – but also in another idea, that constantly appears in Wittgen-

stein's writings: «Because language doesn't have any way of signifying something until it gets it from what it signifies, from the world, no language, no language is conceivable that doesn't represent this world» (Wittgenstein [2005]: 363).

In the end, Wittgenstein remains irresistibly attracted by the idea according to which «The possibility of the proposition is, of course, founded on the principle of signs as GO-ING PROXY for objects» (Wittgenstein [1961]: 37).

1. *Language as Picture*

The metaphor of language as a tool-box belongs to the most important part of Wittgen-stein's work: it is present in *Philosophical Investigations* (Wittgenstein [1953]: 7), in the *Philosophical Grammar* (Wittgenstein [1974]: 33) and also in *The Big Typescript* (Witt-genstein [2005]: 26). Implicit in this analogy is the idea of a reality on which we can op-erate with tools, whose usefulness goes together with their effectiveness.

Again, a realistic conception, at first sight. But as soon as we try to come to some conclusions, the analogy is not solid anymore: the so called second phase in Wittgen-stein's work deals with this constitutive fuzziness.

In the *Philosophical Investigations* in fact it is clear how the manipulation of reality performed by the tool-box results in an end only measurable on the basis of those same instruments: we made a piece of wood shorter and we measure the effect with a ruler. In the *Philosophical Grammar* we read instead about the impossibility to perfectly dis-tinguish the tools: they are often so related to each other with "kinds of relationships" that a unique set of rules seems to be impossible.

Lastly, in *The Big Typescript* the description of the toolkit comes after the statement that we never think about 3 o' clock by figuring the position of the hands of the clock: the figure itself is just a tool.

If we evaluate these different discussions about the analogy between language and toolkit, we come to two fundamental principles, very closely related: a) Every time we try to continue with the analogy we lose that stable correspondence, very much desired, between tool and reality, as if the tool showed us its tendency to withdraw into the equipment itself; b) on the other hand reality remains untouched, just because the tool can measure its effectiveness only within the equipment itself.

This alternating current movement is reminiscent of a famous Nietzsche fragment:

Has a force been demonstrated? No, only effects translated into a completely foreign lan-guage. We are so used, however, to regularity in succession that its oddity no longer seems

odd to us. (Nietzsche, *Will to power*, § 620)

Although a background realism is still present, a consequent account of language puts in doubt that one could ever approach reality but through further linguistic translations. Language seems to withdraw, describing a detached, independent world, beyond any desire of evidence of the correctness of its representations. This question would be developed in the second phase of Wittgenstein's work, but it was fully present in 1921: the analogy between language and picture shows from the beginning its weakness.

Beside the proposition 2.1: «We make to ourselves pictures of facts», there is 3.13: «To the proposition belongs everything which belongs to the projection; but not what is projected». Furthermore, the conclusion of proposition 5.552: «logic is before the How, not before the What»[4].

In the later considerations these suggestions that demand, *iuxta propria principia*, the internal consistency and coherence of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* are taken into consideration. *Philosophical Investigations* show us this inquiry about language as a "picture of reality":

What this language primarily describes is a picture. What is to be done with the picture, how it is to be used, is still obscure. Quite clearly, however, it must be explored if we want to understand the sense of what we are saying. But the picture seems to spare us this work; it already points to a particular use. This is how it takes us in. (Wittgenstein [1953]: 184)

This clarification of the picture has serious consequences: it shows us that the picture does not demand a sense – it has it already; it reveals itself in a certain sense. So, what does it mean to get the quid of a picture? What makes anything in the picture understandable? This core of sense is not anything pictorial either.

Wittgenstein compares it to the possibility of perceiving a facial expression «the reinterpretation of a facial expression can be compared to the reinterpretation of a chord in music, when we hear it as a modulation first into this, then into that key» (Wittgenstein [1953]: 144). The possibility of understanding a facial expression does not have a "pictorial connotation", it rather resembles the interpretation of music.

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[4] On this topic the well renowned 6.44: «It is not how things are in the world that is mystical, but that it exists». (L. Wittgenstein [1971]).

2. *Brief Remarks on Hegel's* Aesthetics

It would be right to try to legitimate or at least to support the movement of Wittgenstein's thoughts on the relationship between painting and music within a wider historical and philosophical context, with particular regard to Hegel's *Aesthetics*.

In Wittgenstein's theory, as far as the comprehension of a sentence is concerned, we are taken on an inescapable transition from the pictorial model of the picture theory to a sort of "musical" perspective: from a strongly representative model to a looser system.

By reading Kojève's comments on Kandinsky's concrete art, or Foucault's comments on perspective in Velasquez' *Las Meninas*, one can easily understand that painting is never mere reproduction, but also, at the same time, creation. This aspect of creation can be detected even more easily in music, because, as Hegel taught in his lessons on Aesthetics, the one-dimensionality of sound shows us a superior abstraction, compared to the bi-dimensionality to which a painting is constrained (even if for this bi-dimensionality an abstraction from the third dimension is still, according to Hegel, an example of the Spirit's creative power).

In the conceptual system of the arts, as it is conceived by Hegel, Flemish art is the point in which we see the passage from colour to sound. In the famous Telburg silk[5]. Colors combine, just as the sounds in an orchestra heard from a certain distance, and sound together as a harmony. If painting produces this effort, longing to achieve the unitary harmony of music, sound itself is free: absolute possibility of themes and variations.

Between painting and music subsists the same relationship that we can analogically draw between physics[6] and mathematics: the first has to take into some consideration the reality it measures and represents, the latter is pure, non representative production.

Critics (Janik [1966]: 76-95 and also Engel [1969]]: 285-302) have underlined Wittgenstein's continuity with Schopenhauer, with regard to this non-representative quality of music: «music will have to be regarded as the copy of an original which can never itself be directly presented as idea» (Schopenhauer [1886]: I, 332).

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[5] According to Hegel: «*Nehmen wir, z. B., Terborchs Atlas, so ist jeder Fleck der Farbe für sich ein mattes Grau, mehr oder weniger weißlich, bläulich, gelblich, aber in einiger Entfernung durch die Stellung zum anderen kommt der schöne, milde Glanz hervor, der dem wirklichen Atlas eigen ist*». (Hegel [1838]: 14, 228).

[6] As a matter of fact even physics in its contemporary age departs from the pure and simple description of reality. Overcoming a mere representative conception of language in poetry, music, science, constitutes one of the main themes for Wittgenstein's age.

The non-pictorial feature of music makes this art completely abstract and detached: a position that music shares, in fact, with mathematics and of which Wittgenstein, in the *Philosophical Investigations*, is perfectly aware: «"But mathematical truth is independent of whether human beings know it or not!" […]. Of course, in one sense mathematics is a branch of knowledge, – but still it is also an *activity*» (Wittgenstein [1953]: 226-227).

The same independence is conceived by Wittgenstein as a property peculiar to music: «A tune is a kind of tautology; it is complete in itself, it satisfies itself» (Wittgenstein [1953]: 40). Tautology cannot be verified and doesn't need to find empirical proof. We need to understand in which extent this autonomy, typical for music and mathematics, can be valid in the case of language.

3. *Musical Nuances and Pictorial Technique*

Let us go back to the question of understanding a proposition. In addition to the musical tone of a face, Wittgenstein suggests several times the example of aroma: «The eye – we read in the *Observations on Philosophy of Psychology* – doesn't distinguish the figure as a wire frame from the figure as a box, etc. This is so to speak the aroma, which the brain supplies to what it has seen» (Wittgenstein [1980]: 7). And more specifically in the following passage:

It s as if the word that I understand had a definite slight aroma that corresponds to my understanding of it. As if two familiar words were distinguished not merely by their sound or their appearance, but by an atmosphere as well, even when I do not *imagine* anything in connection with them. But remember how the names of famous poets and composers seem to have taken up a peculiar meaning into themselves. So that one can say the names "Beethoven" and "Mozart" and they do not merely sound different; no, they are also accompanied by a different *character*. But if you had to describe these characters more closely, would you point to their portraits or to their music? (Wittgenstein [1980]: 49-50)

We should be clear from the entire context how the aroma constitutes an attempt – as the musical atmosphere does – to take away the proposition from the idea of a complete representation and perfect detectability of its functions of truth. Beyond the proposition as a technique that pictures reality, beyond the metaphor of the toolkit, something irreducible to the mere representation remains: «the "aspect-blind" will have an altogether different relationship to pictures from ours» (Wittgenstein [1953]: 214).

The faculty of understanding the sense is analogous to a good ear for music, not just in the sense that every proposition assumes its meaning from its internal rhythm and in-

ternal structures, but also because in every proposition the echo of language as a whole is to be recognized.

Every proposition can be compared to a picture: but the picture is not mere representation, but also, a point of view; understanding an image is not just perceiving single elements, but also getting its perspective vision, its own "musical tone". The comprehension of language is expressly compared to the comprehension of a musical piece (Wittgenstein [1980]: 188), because it is not cognition of a single frame, but the faculty of understanding at a glance[7] the entire sonority of that language (Wittgenstein [1953]: 77).

Music is the flavour of the world: in this sense there is an aroma in the propositions that cannot be translated through a propositional system and that can only *appear* in translation.

The act of understanding breaks the conception of language as a pure mirror of reality. The question of the comprehension coincides with the rupture of the paragon between language and picture, proposition and image. That picture demands to be treated as a musical piece.

What does "getting the sense of a proposition" mean, according to Wittgenstein? It means "to be translated into something else": «Why am I whistling this just this way? Why do I want to make my change in volume and tempo fit this very specific ideal? I'm inclined to say: "Because I know what it all means" – but what does it mean? – I couldn't say other than by translating it into a sequence that had the same rhythm» (Wittgenstein [2005]: 114).

But this "something else" is another rhythm, that is an enclosed pattern, that can be taken as a sort of independent melody. «When I'm understanding one thing do I as it were think of another thing? Does understanding, that is, consist of thinking of something else? And if that isn't what I mean, then what's understood is as it were autonomous, and the understanding of it is comparable to the understanding of a melody» (Wittgenstein [1974]: 79).

That is why understanding a sentence in a foreign language can often be hard, even if we have the translation of every single word of it: what is missing is the comprehensive sense that cannot be reduced to a scheme or correspondence of unambiguous terms.

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[7] Desideri (2008): 141: «"Getting a sense" means to "comprehend" and reminds us that this action can be summarised in the unity of a rapid gesture, as the hand that grasps something in order to use it». These passages manifest their analogy to Kant's unity of quality (cf. Kant [1787]: §12, B 114).

«But I can say that I understand a sentence in a foreign language – say a Latin one that I can only decipher by a painful effort to construe – even if I have only turned into English bit by bit and have never succeeded in grasping the overall phrasing of the sentence» (Wittgenstein [1974]: 72).

This musical feature is insuppressible for any kind of linguistic dimension[8] that tries to limit it or to specify its truth value. In this contest translation, as comprehension of the sense, the falling back of language to itself and its independence from the pictured reality is manifest.

As we know that understanding a proposition means to get its internal melody, we must now underline that, according to Wittgenstein «a tune is a kind of tautology; it is complete in itself, it satisfies itself» (Wittgenstein [1953]: 40).

The musical dimension of language proves the complete autonomy of language in it-self and saves Wittgenstein's position from Kripke's critique in *Naming and Necessity* (on this issue, Tripodi (2009): 173-177). Kripke refuses to acknowledge the emancipation from a mere pictorial scheme towards a musical account of language: this misinterpreta-tion does not recognize the point that makes Wittgenstein's position an *unicum* in ana-lytic philosophy[9].

This proceeding from painting to music must not drive us to think that the *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* strictly belongs to the picture theory and that the later writings be-long to the musical one. The pictorial account of language has a strong influence in all of Wittgenstein's work, in spite all the contradictions it raises; conversely, in the *Tractatus* music already plays an important role. Valent supports the theory according to which «it is possible that the formal structure in the *Tractatus* closely follows the repartition of the tonic scale» (Valent [1989]: 36).

Heller compares the *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* to Schönberg's musical theory: «there is a familiarity of logical structures, motives and intentions […] even Schönberg is guided by the firm belief that the "language" he uses – music – has to be elevated to that extent of logical necessity that eliminates every subjective accident» (Heller [1967]: 94-95).

The problem of this comparison lies in the fact that language is always an *understood* music – this understanding is clearly always a subjective accident, as it is performed only by someone who has an ear for it. Wittgenstein is actually going towards Schönberg

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[8] On this relationship between music and understanding a language cf. Lewis (1977): 115-120.

[9] Tripodi ([2009]:147) defined Wittgenstein's awareness of what is beyond representation "Witt-genstein's Aventino".

when he says that «signs have their meanings neither by virtues of what accompanies them, nor because of what evokes them – but by virtue of a system to which they belong» (Wittgenstein [2005]: 155), making explicit that language is not an independent creation of a hypothetical subject, but rather a complex of signs in which we all are immersed. On the other hand the accompaniment that gets the meaning – that internal rhythm that a single proposition shares with all the propositions of the same language – proves the faculty of «taking in a symbolism as a whole» (Wittgenstein [1974]: 5), not assimilable to a theory of harmony.

It is clear that the *Tractatus* had very strong connections with the musical dimension, although it is hard to bring them back to a real *Harmonielehre*. At the same time it is always possible to trace in the reflections of the second Wittgenstein a pictorial account of language: the two analogies end up completing each other.

On one side the musical metaphor helps us understand the fact that «For knowledge is not *translated* into words when it is expressed. The words are not a translation of something else that was there before» (Wittgenstein [1980]: 133); on the other Wittgenstein claims that «I said that a proposition is laid alongside reality like a yardstick: [...] And like yardstick, neither does it determine anything, so long as one doesn't measure with it. But measuring is comparing (and needs to be called translating)» (Bouveresse (1973): 182-183; Wittgenstein [2005]: 70), where the translation always is translation of something.

Language never chooses a model refusing the other one: it remains indecisive between pictorial technique and musical nuance. «The maximal realism of the "name of the objects discovers its own objective desperation: it cannot hope to possess them» (Cacciari, [1977[2]]: 163). In the extreme proximity the aroma of the experienced thing is sensed in musical tones, the representative nature of language shows its aura through a figurative technique. Musicality is the echo of a thing (*die Sache selbst*), lost in the very moment of its perception. «The experienced thing disappears in its being-formulated. Naming is the act of that renunciation and of this disappearance» (Cacciari [1977[2]]: 162).

If we want to place this perspective about language within its cultural context, we are able to draw several similarities with the Viennese atmosphere of the first decades of the 20th century.

Starting from Loos' essay, *Ornament and Crime* (Loos [1908]: 19-24), where the ornament, symbol of an entire age, is «wasted labour power and hence wasted health» (Loos [1908]: 22). «Freedom from ornament is a sign of *spiritual* strength» (Loos [1908]: 24). Here we find exactly Wittgenstein's point: «Loos insists on the impossibility to find a

schematic solution of Langue and linguistic technique. The meaning of propositions cannot be found in the absolute unit of an eternal and ideal syntax» (Cacciari [1975]: 17).

The main question of the contemporary *Zivilisation* is the fact that «there is no synthesis: not "industrial crafts", nor "industrial art" – but art and industry, art and crafts, music and drama, painting and music» (Cacciari [1975]: 17) and this "and" is to be read as a "non compatibility": art does not sublimate technique, nor is industrial technique able to reach the quality of art. In the same way language, according to Wittgenstein, cannot be reduced to mere representational technique, nor to a simple melody to be heard by the perfect ear for music. Language is always one thing "and" the other, painting "and" music.

These questions necessitate a metaphor able to sum up these opposites, by keeping their tragical conflict: language as a linguistic game, in particular as chess[10].

4. *The "Language" of Chess*

Thinking of language as a game is not a solution, rather the statement of a conflict: the game demands to be a world – is actually a world in itself – thus not coincident with the world. Eugen Fink claims that in the game: «the whole reflects in itself and appears "in a picture". The "TOTUM" returns in a part of itself and elevates this piece of the world, by reflecting itself in it» (Fink [1960]: 126).

In its conventionality, when the rules are set, the game is part of the world; but within those rules the convention disappears: once the determined, the game is the world.

Huinziga is closed to Fink's analysis when he said: «No skepticism is possible where the rules of a game are concerned, for the principle underlying them is an unshakable truth. Indeed, as soon as the rules are transgressed the whole play-world collapses. The game is over»[11] (Huizinga [1939]: 11).

The image becomes music, because it only manifests itself; music remains panting, because it continues to hint at something else: the metaphor of chess is suitable to Wittgenstein's thought. In the language, as in the game «*Das TOTUM ist "in parte"*» (Fink [1960]: 169).

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[10] Max Black ([1988]: 241) counted 98 occurences of the expression "lingustic game" and 59 of "chess" or "chess piece" (cf. also Kaal, McKinnon [1975]).

[11] Huizinga refers to Valéry (1945): 81: «Pas de scepticisme possible à l'égard des règles d'un jeu».

The formula of chess as a model for a linguistic game is used and detailed on several occasions. Similarities refer to rules of the game: «Just as in a chess game we learn to use the king in connection with the pawns and the word "king" together with the word "checkmate"» (Wittgenstein [1980]: II, 25), but also to the peculiar connection of the pieces within the game. «As if there could be a debate about whether the king or the chessboard is more essential to chess» (Wittgenstein [2005]: 92). Language and its rules are very much alike to chess: «A rule – as I understand it – is like a path in a garden. Or like the pre-established squares on a chessboard or the lines in a table» (Wittgenstein [2005]: 191).

The nexus between a single proposition and the entire amount of propositions that constitutes a language is analogous to the link between a single square and the entire chessboard: «Is one square of a chessboard simpler than the whole chessboard?» (Wittgenstein [2005]: 329).

The old illusion of getting to the simple object, is finally crushed by the consideration of the rule as a «concept with blurred edges» (Wittgenstein [2005]: 193). This fuzziness belongs to every name, to every grammar rule.

Chess rules can be summarized in a couple of pages: a paragraph can explain the structure of the chessboard and the positions of the pieces; another can explain the moves allowed to the single figures; a third one can give an account of castling, passed pawn, king in check, checkmate, stalemate, tie. In these terms chess seems to avoid the multiplicity of nuances and variations of the linguistic game, but those rules generate an extraordinary amount of strategies.

The language of chess grows depending on who is speaking – as any other language does. By practicing this linguistic game one can learn the importance of conquering the centre and will therefore begin to use the "gambit". Like in any other language terms will fall into disuse, such as the Scandinavian defense or the Ponziani opening, nowadays very rarely used.

In analogy with language, a piece is never "just a piece": a pawn can be isolated, passed, doubled, wrong rook; the knight is a queen-knight or a king-knight; the bishop can be a dark-squared bishop or a light-square bishop, the king himself can be in check, a king side castling and so on.

Every linguistic strategy has its variations and the complexity of the language increases even because of an historical perspective: some strategies remained emblematic for their mistakes, some others for the variations produced. Therefore we have Steinitz defense, Rubinstein variation, Alechin attack. Some games remained in the annals, like

Nimzowitsch-Capablanca in 1927; Tal-Pachman in 1961; Kovalek-Pomar in 1972; or Kasparov's game against the computer program Deep Junior (Schenk [2006]: 226-227). Those games are remembered in virtue of the new possibilities they opened up, because of the new linguistic potential discovered.

The chess language can be enriched very quickly in a semantic of the pieces and each piece, and when connected to the others and to the possible moves there is a real syntax. What is hence a single piece alone, or a single strategy alone? A very fuzzy concept. At a certain degree of complexity, chess is not a simple representation of a world: it shows the features of an internal musicality. «Someone who doesn't know anything about chess and sees someone making a move won't understand it, i. e. won't understand it as a move of a game» (Wittgenstein [2005]: 113).

In addition to this, we can see that the amateur playing chess is far from attaining that musicality for which the expert has developed a perfect ear, ready to listen to any nuances, because even a tiny variation can change the end of the game.

If we listen to the melody of a linguistic game with a very good ear, we must recognise that the name does not have the object as it were on a lead (Wittgenstein [1980]: 110). If comprehending a game coincides with the ability to use a language (Wittgenstein [2005]: 74), this use is a practice that aims to capture a world. A world that fades into translations.

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