

QUINE OR WITTGENSTEIN: THE END OF ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY?

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Abstract

This paper deals with the question whether science and philosophy are continuous, as Quine thought, or whether they are completely separated, as Wittgenstein held. Reconstructing the reasons why the latter kept a sharp distinction between science and philosophy, it examines the attempts of the former to resolve philosophical problems in scientific terms. It maintains that Quine's scientism is misconceived and presents further reasons for making a distinction (if not a separation) between science and philosophy.

Introduction

Despite the fact that W. V. Quine is, deservedly, the patron of this symposium, my homage goes to Wittgenstein: we should also be celebrating today the fiftieth anniversary of the *Philosophical Investigations* (not to speak of the centenary of Moore's *Principia Ethica*). Shortly, my complaint is this: we are in better company if our friends do not support scientism in philosophy. By 'scientism,' I mean a view which holds that philosophy must be scientific-laden, that is, philosophical problems must be solved by scientific means, for instance, epistemological questions must be answered through empirical enquires. Thus, I shall here use the term 'scientism' to refer to Quine's project of a scientific philosophy including his famous naturalized epistemology.

Let me start by settling the main question at stake. Recently, Hacker held the thesis that "if Quine is right, then analytic philosophy was fundamentally mistaken."¹ By this statement, he meant, on the one hand, that analytic philosophy, mainly under Wittgenstein's influence, held a sharp distinction between science and philosophy. On the other hand, Quine was a naturalizing epistemologist and a propounder

of ontology guided by physics, that is, a defender of scientific philosophy. Thus, if Quine is right, then Wittgenstein was wrong. In his outstanding book, Hacker presents the origins of analytic philosophy, the main achievements of the *Tractatus* and its impact upon the Vienna Circle, the main achievements of the *Investigations* and its relations with ordinary language philosophy. In chapters 6 and 7, he compares Quine and Wittgenstein, the similarities and differences between them and the main reasons of the decline of analytic philosophy, that is, of the abandonment of Wittgenstein's sharp distinction between science and philosophy. I agree with Hacker's main points in those chapters, but I would like to add further reasons for his defense of Wittgenstein and criticism of Quine's scientism in chapter 8 by helping to bring about the day when the great work that is now in the descendant to rise again. The main question is, then, who is right? or better: should we keep a distinction between science and philosophy?

My hypothesis is that if by 'analytic philosophy' we mean (as Hacker partially does) a view which holds a clear distinction between science and philosophy, then Wittgenstein is right in keeping it, from the *Tractatus* to the *Investigations*, and that Quine's scientism is misconceived: philosophy cannot be reduced to science.² To show this, I am going to focus on a particular point in Quine's work which is not well discussed (at least, not in Hacker's book), namely, his claiming that ethics can be causally explained in scientific terms. This particular point is my main interest in doing this present work. Thus, I shall divide this paper in three parts. In the first, I shall reconstruct Wittgenstein's sharp distinction between science and philosophy. In the second, I shall point out some problems in Quine's scientific philosophy. In the third, I shall put forward further reasons for keeping the distinction between science and philosophy.

1. Wittgenstein's Separation between Science and Philosophy

First of all, I would like to present a very short history of analytic philosophy. It may be reasonable to divide it in four main phases. The first one is composed of a twofold root in Cambridge at the turn of the last

century in the work of Moore and Russell and their rebellion against Hegel's Absolute Idealism. Analysis was taken by Moore to be the decomposition of a complex linguistic item into its constituent parts and as conceptual analysis. Russell's theory of descriptions, which shows that the logical form of a proposition is not necessarily identical with its grammatical form, is a development of this method. At this time, Russell already defended a scientific approach to philosophy. A second phase was 'the linguistic turn' of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* including a sharp distinction between science and philosophy. Sciences build pictures (*Bild*) of the world, which are genuine propositions, that is, can be true or false; philosophy tries to clarify our conceptual framework, but is composed of pseudo-propositions. The third phase emerged under the influence of the *Tractatus* originating with the thinkers who were part of the Vienna Circle. It was characterized by Logical Positivism, its insistence on the exclusive analysis of the logic of science, and the attempt to demolish metaphysics. Quine's scientism (or even his physicalism) was much influenced by logical positivists such as Carnap. I shall return to this point later. The last phase is that of the connective and therapeutic analysis carried on by the later Wittgenstein and Oxford linguistic philosophy (Austin, Strawson etc). Quine, then, represents a return to Russell's project and a pragmatist development of the main thesis of the Vienna Circle. Thus, philosophy has moved away from Wittgenstein's ideas in the past two decades, mainly under the influence of Quine's scientism, but it is doubtful whether it has moved in the right direction.

Let me, then, reconstruct Wittgenstein's sharp division between science and philosophy. Even before the *Tractatus*, he was criticizing Russell's attempt to build a scientific philosophy arguing that it was simply a retrogression from the method of physics. The task of physics, and science in general, is to *construct* theories about reality; philosophy is an activity of *elucidation* of our theoretical apparatus. Therefore, their utterances must be different in *kind*. To realize this point, it is necessary to remind a strong influence in Wittgenstein's thinking, namely Hertz's *Principles of Mechanics*, which is paramount to understand the sharp distinction between scientific problems and philosophical questions. When Hertz was addressing the problem of how to

understand the mysterious concept of *force* in Newtonian physics, he argued that instead of asking “What is force?” we should restate physics without using it as a basic concept. Then, he concludes: “When these painful contradictions are removed, the question as to the nature of force will not have been answered, but our minds, no longer vexed, will cease to ask illegitimate questions.”³ Wittgenstein took this as a prototype of the nature of philosophical problems and the correct way to solve them. That is why we find in his work, from the *Tractatus* up to the *Investigations*, a sharp distinction between science and philosophy and a permanent attempt to show that philosophical problems are illegitimate questions.

In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein held that all philosophy is “critique of language” (4.0031) and by this he meant that it must set the necessary and sufficient conditions of sense, that is, of the propositions that can be true or false. Science is composed of such propositions, which are pictures of reality.⁴ Thus, both have different tasks. That is why philosophy is not one of the natural sciences. It must mean something whose place is above or below the natural sciences, including psychology, not beside them. To be more precise, the task of philosophy is the clarification of thoughts; it is not a body of statements, but an activity. There are no philosophical propositions, but only elucidations.

The basic difference between philosophy and science is that the former sets limits to the sphere of natural sciences. It sets limits to what can be thought and, in doing so, to what cannot be thought. Science fulfills the domain of what can be said, but art, morality, religion etc. are part of what cannot be *said*, that is, what can only be *shown* by speaking without having the pretension of being true (or false). If I say “You ought to keep your promises,” I *show* you what you have to do. Contrary to the positivist interpretation, the *Tractatus* is not abolishing these domains of human life, but protecting them. The observations of the *Tractatus* itself (and philosophy in general), however, run against sense and that is why we must overcome the book recognizing that it is nonsensical. We must throw away the ladder after we have climbed up it.

In the *Investigations*, despite the fact that some of the mistakes of the *Tractatus* were corrected, the basic distinction between philosophy

and science still remains. Wittgenstein wrote in his late work: "Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language; it can in the end only describe it. For it cannot give it any foundation either. It leaves everything as it is." (PI § 124.) As for the *Tractatus*, philosophy neither explains nor deduces anything.

Science, art, morality etc. are composed of different language-games, that is, they are part of particular activities of our form of life. In the paragraph 23 of the *Investigations*, Wittgenstein illustrates this notion. We may say that the language-games of the science are: describing the appearance of an object or giving its measurements; constructing an object from a description; reporting an event; forming and testing a hypothesis; presenting the results of an experiment in tables and diagrams; solving a problem in practical arithmetic etc. The language-games of art are: making up a story and reading it; play-acting; singing catches etc. The language-games of morality are: giving orders and obeying them etc. The language-games of ordinary language are: guessing riddles; making a joke and telling it etc. The language-games of religion are: thanking; praying etc.

Philosophical problems arise when we *conflate* different language-games, for example, when we apply the rules of science to morality. As an illustration, we may mention the meta-ethical debate between cognitivists, who hold that moral language can be true or false, and non-cognitivists, who hold the opposite view, which may be based on a misleading parallel (for example, the assumption that a proposition is true if and only if it corresponds to a fact). The task of philosophy is to dissolve such misunderstandings. In Wittgenstein own words: "Our investigation is therefore a grammatical one. Such an investigation sheds light on our problem by clearing misunderstandings away. Misunderstandings concerning the use of words, caused, among other things, by certain analogies between the forms of expression in different regions of language." (PI § 90.) Thus, philosophy still has a "positive" part, that is, *analyzing* and criticizing language (cf. PI § 90), but ends up with nothing. The author of the *Investigations* wrote: "for the clarity that we are aiming at is indeed *complete* clarity. But this means that the philosophical problems should *completely* disappear." (§ 133.) As for the *Tractatus*, philosophy is composed of pseudo-problems,

which must be dissolved, that is, left aside as Hertz did in his work. To finish this section, we must bear in mind that, according to Wittgenstein, imitating the method of science gives rise to metaphysical troubles.

2. Some Problems in Quine's Scientism

In this section, I would like to point out three main problems in Quine's project of a scientific philosophy. The aim is not to discuss his work as a whole, but to underlie some points in order to answer the question whether or not we should keep a distinction between science and philosophy. As I said previously, my main interest is Quine's naturalist claim that moral values can be dealt in scientific terms. For this purpose, I am going to concentrate on his papers that are closely related to the main theme.

In his paper "Has Philosophy Lost Contact with People?" as in many others, Quine holds that philosophy is *continuous* with science and that a scientific philosophy has had two main tenets in the past two centuries: i) the use of formal logic and ii) an increasing concern with the nature of language.⁵ With logics, we have a deepening of insights and a sharpening of problems and solutions; with linguistic investigations, control is gained by focusing on words, on how they are learned and used, and how they are related to things. Not surprisingly, Quine mentions Wittgenstein as a philosopher who insisted upon the importance of both logic and linguistic investigations. Wittgenstein, however, would certainly reject Quine's *scientific* philosophy in the same way he had previously rejected Russell's project and the positivist interpretation of his work.

What are, however, the main tenets of Quine's thinking? In his paper "Five Milestones of Empiricism," he wrote: "In the past two centuries there have been five points where empiricism has taken a turn for the better. The first is the shift from ideas to words. The second is the shift of semantic focus from terms to sentences. The third is the shift of semantic focus from sentences to systems of sentences. The fourth is, in Morton White's phrase, methodological monism: aban-

donment of the analytic-synthetic dualism. The fifth is naturalism: abandonment of the goal of a first philosophy prior to natural science.”⁶ I shall take these points as representing Quine’s own philosophy. It is time, then, to assess them.

First of all, I would like to point out that Quine’s interpretation of Wittgenstein’s ideas was misleading. Quine wrote: “Wittgenstein has stressed that the meaning of a word is to be sought in its use. This is where the empirical semanticist looks: to verbal behavior. John Dewey was urging this point in 1925. ‘Meaning,’ he wrote (p. 179), ‘... is primarily a property of behavior’.”⁷ That is to say, Quine himself was, with some qualifications, a behaviorist. But, clearly, Wittgenstein would reject a behaviorist explanation of the meaning of a word in his *Investigations*. For example, he argued: “Let me ask this: what has the expression of a rule –say a sign-post– got to do with my actions? What sort of connection is there here? –Well, perhaps this one: I have been trained to react to this sign in a particular way, and now I do so react to it. But that is only to give a causal connection; to tell how it has come about that we now go by the sign-post; not what this going by-the-sign really consists in.” (PI § 198) If we look at this paragraph closely enough, we will realize that Wittgenstein thought that a behaviorist explanation of the connection between rules and actions is unsatisfactory. Let me try to say why. The behaviorist says that I was *trained* to react in a particular way; now, Wittgenstein’s refusal of that solution is based on the reason that it gives us only a *causal connection*. In other words, scientific *explanations* are not needed here, but descriptions of *normative* phenomena.

It was for this reason that Wittgenstein held a different view about the connection between rules and actions: “I have further indicated that a person goes by a sign-post only in so far as there exists a regular use of sign-posts, a custom.” (PI § 198.) Thus, Wittgenstein points to our *practice* of following, for example, traffic rules, which must be neither conceived as platonic rails nor as mere interpretations (as the skeptic does), but as a normative device: when we are driving, we *ought* to turn left, if that is what the sign-post asks us to do. That is why naturalists such as Quine neglect normativity. He did not only misunderstand the *Tractatus*, interpreting a proposition as a *copy* of a

fact, but also Wittgenstein's attempt to clarify the meaning of a word by pointing to its use: it is not just a matter of how we in fact use it, but how we ought to do it, that is, it has a normative element which cannot be captured by merely looking at real behavior. This is one of the main tenets of Wittgenstein's project of a philosophical grammar: it has to do with *rules*, which are normative devices to prescribe how we ought to use a word, how are *ought* to behave.

A second problem in Quine's work is related to his conception of philosophy. In some way, he oversimplified its scope holding that philosophy of science is philosophy enough.⁸ It is evident that we have here one of the main tenets of the positivistic thinking. Now, the influence of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* upon the Vienna Circle is well known as well as the misunderstandings of the positivistic reading of his book. While Wittgenstein wanted to establish limits to what can be said, that is, to science and to protect, for instance, morality (or art or religion etc), the positivists were trying to abolish everything that could not be translated into observational sentences (*Protokollsätze*) as meaningless, including moral judgments. It is also well known that the positivist influence of Carnap and many others members of the Vienna Circle on Quine was deep. Apart from the fact that both shared a radical form of empiricism, the idea was that scientific knowledge is the paradigm of what can be said.

Let me then ask: why did Quine never write substantial work on justice, on the justification (or the lack of it) of a State (either a minimum or a maximum one), on the morality or otherwise of invading countries, on what art is all about, on the nature of religious belief? Clearly, what Quine called "scientific philosophy" does not preclude ethical studies. He wrote on the meaning of "scientific philosophy:" "By this vague heading I do not exclude philosophical studies of moral and aesthetic values. Some such studies, of an analytical cast, can be *scientific* in spirit (*italics added*)."⁹ Scientism manifests itself in this passage. I could agree with the adjective 'analytic', but certainly not with 'scientific'. It is, however, in Quine's "unaccustomed venture into ethics" that we can find scientism in its strongest form.

Take Quine's application of the scientific minded philosophy to morality as an example of conflating language-games. In his paper "On

the Nature of Moral Values,” Quine held that morality is the result of social conditioning and heredity. The former is composed of the behavioral basis of moral experiences; the later, from the innate nervous system (the structure of our first experiences of good and bad) to chemistry and evolution. Following Schlick, another positivist, Quine places moral values in among the sensual and aesthetic ones. Moreover, moral sentiments such as sympathy are *gene-linked*: “hereditary altruism at its heroic extreme raises a genetic question, if the young martyr is not to live to transmit his altruistic genes; but biologists have proposed an answer. Altruism is mainly directed to close kin, and they transmit largely the same genes.”¹⁰ I certainly think that Quine is committing the naturalistic fallacy here, but in the present context, I would simply say, what turns out almost to be the same, that he is conflating different language-games.¹¹ Other scientific-minded moralists such as Dawkins have postulated the existence of the selfish gene (the hypothesis that we are survival machines, robot vehicles blindly programmed to preserve our selfish genes passing them to the next generation), but neither has convinced me that morality is a matter of nature, not nurture. Free choices, which are the source of moral values, are simply forgotten. One may ask then: where is the *scientific* character of Quine’s explanations of moral behavior? To believe that morality has to do with natural facts is the main the reason of Quine’s misapprehension of the specificity of values.

What is more reproachable in Quine’s naturalism is his attempt to reduce ethics to science. He wrote: “There is a legitimate mixture of ethics with science that somewhat mitigates the methodological predicament of ethics. Anyone who is involved in moral issues relies on causal connections. Ethical axioms can be minimized by reducing some values causally to others; that is, by showing that some of the valued acts would already count as valuable anyway as means to ulterior ends. Utilitarianism is a notable example of such systematization.”¹² Since there is no *science* of final ends (and not everyone would choose the utilitarian ones), Quine cannot reduce moral values to ultimate natural ends. We may agree with Quine that moral learning has to do with a transmutation of means into ends so that we prize things not only as a means but for itself. However, there is no science

for choosing one end instead of others. Therefore, ethics is based on human freedom and not on the “use of inductive science for realizing values.” We must conclude that ethics does not derive its principles from a non-ethical source, such as a divine command or the facts of nature, but is autonomous. Science and ethics are language-games of different *kind* (IF § 23).

A third problem in Quine’s work is that his naturalized epistemology seems to be doomed to failure. Along with his behaviorist approach to semantics, there is his thesis that the problems of epistemology can be (re)solved into semantics and explained in psychological or physical terms. Definitely, Quine’s attempt is to reduce philosophical problems to scientific ones. But again: to ask for the use is not to ask merely for behavior, but for *rule-governed* behavior. Moreover, rules, that is, statements about how an expression is used as well as how it *ought to be used* give us a standard of correctness and for this reason they are not just empirical propositions. That is why we should also keep a distinction between *necessary* (analytic) and *empirical* (synthetic) propositions, *pace* Quine.¹³ On this point, an important question is this: what is the status of non-empirical statements which are rules? For the late Wittgenstein, they were withdrawn from being checked by experience and now serve as a paradigm for judging it, though they are not eternal. In other words: rules of grammar are logically distinct from empirical propositions. They play a different function in our theoretical scheme. They are different in *kind*.¹⁴ So, why will Quine’s project not succeed? Because, the normative aspects of language were forgotten: the assertion of a such program cannot be verified by means of *causal* explanations alone (from physics, neurophysiology etc), but rests upon conceptual claims. That is why philosophical claims are *sui generis* and cannot be *reduced* to scientific ones.

A distinct matter is the nature of what was traditionally seen as the task of metaphysics, that is, to state non-trivial necessary truths about reality. In other words, to present the essence of the world. We have to do here with the Aristotelian claim of a first philosophy, “which investigates being as being and the attributes which belong to this in virtue of its own nature.”¹⁵ Quine may be right in rejecting such

enterprise, but not by simply saying that science does not need it. Using Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblances, we may refute any essentialist account of language and, consequently, of the world. But this is not yet to assume a naturalist standpoint. It is paramount to realize that Wittgenstein's arguments and concepts such as *form of life* are characteristically transcendental, not naturalistic. For example, a form of life is what two groups need to share if their languages can be mutually comprehensible. Such concept may be the basis of a socialized epistemology.

A naturalized epistemologist cannot properly answer to skeptical claims. When the very possibility of knowledge is in question, one cannot simply look at science and say that it is functioning. One cannot simply say that epistemological problems (whether knowledge is possible at all) would be solved by scientific means.¹⁶ Quine simply skips skeptical difficulties, as many pragmatists do. Such an appeal would be equivalent of assuming a "naïve" form of realism, which was correctly rejected by Wittgenstein in his criticisms of Moore's defense of common sense. What we need, perhaps, is a socialized epistemology. That is to say, one that overcomes the problems of the modern approach to knowledge, which was based on solipsistic assumptions, for example, the Cartesian one. As Wittgenstein has shown, there is no private language in a philosophical, not empirical, sense. To sum up: the main difference between Quine and Wittgenstein is that while the former was propounding a naturalized epistemology, the latter was defending a socialized approach to human knowledge. But the conclusion must be that an empirical account of knowledge is not enough to show that science is possible at all.

3. Keeping a Distinction (if not a Separation)

In this last section, I would like to advance two main reasons to keep a distinction between science and philosophy. They are somehow independent of Wittgenstein's *sharp* separation between the domains of human activity, but also of Quine's thesis that philosophy is *continuous* with science. Afterwards, I will return to the question formulated in

the title of this paper and try to give an answer to it.

In my opinion, science and philosophy differ both *methodologically* and *thematically*. While philosophy is speculative, science is experimental, that is, the method of the former is based upon critical interrogations; the method of the later is hypothetical-deductive and observational, testing propositions against reality. Philosophy must try to *understand* the world as a whole (in some sense, give us a *Weltanschauung*), perhaps through the elucidation of language; particular sciences investigate specific subjects in order to *explain* and control them: to transform nature through technology. Philosophy deals with “being”; sciences, with particular entities. In fact, philosophy has no specific subject; it is rather a *way of thinking* and *living*. Philosophy aims at wisdom, which is not only a form of knowledge, but also a way of acting well; science, by discovering the truth, may contribute to it.

Despite the fact that Quine is right by pointing out that in the tradition of western civilization many philosophers were scientists, from modernity onwards, division of labor is more fruitful even *within* a particular science. Indeed, Plato was among other things a cosmologist and a mathematician; Aristotle was a pioneer physicist and biologist; Descartes and Leibniz were physicists; Locke and Hume were psychologists. But, nowadays, science has progressed in such a way that its technical language strikes many philosophers as unintelligible. Few philosophers hope to make a substantial contribution to science with their philosophical investigations. In ancient Greece, that would be possible.

Another strong reason for keeping a distinction (if not a separation) between science and philosophy is that the latter is a reflection upon different human activities or experiences. We do not have only propositions on *how* the world is (science), but also aesthetical experiences, moral attitudes and, why not, spiritual feelings. Art and morality cannot be built on sense data or sensory stimulus. *Critical reflection* on art, costumes and so on is good philosophy as it is reflection upon science. In some way, philosophy makes the place for science, art, morality, religion etc. in our life. It is a permanent task of philosophy to discuss the place of new technologies in our lives, for instance, in our present-day age of information to help us to make a triage of what is

true and relevant from the lot of bullshit that mass media spread over the globalized world. To begin to be wise is to recognize the real function of each of these activities in human existence. That is why a scientific philosophy is just poor philosophy! That is to say, even if, for example, an aesthetical experience could be scientifically explained, that is not what makes its value for us. To conclude: philosophy must avoid mystifying science.

Let me, then, return to the question whether we should keep a distinction between science and philosophy. To do so is to locate the former *within* our human form-of-life and our language. That is to say: science plays one language-game, but we have many others. The *Investigations* as well as the *Tractatus* set limits to science in order to save specific language-games (daily knowledge, art, morality etc.). Metaphysical problems arise from conflating language-games such as *descriptive* and *normative* ones. These problems must disappear so that science can work more properly. Consequently, Hacker's question must be answered saying that it is not the end of analytic philosophy. Hopefully, Quine was not right in this respect. It may be correct to say (as Hacker does) that the *spirit* of the *Tractatus* has triumphed over that of the *Investigations*, but if my point is sound, then the *ethical* sense of both works of Wittgenstein must rise over its scientific interpretations and over Quine's scientism.

We may feel free, however, to speak of a *post-analytic* philosophy as long as we do not reduce it to science. Or we may just give up the label. Perhaps, we should be even more radical and speak of a *post-philosophical* thinking (as Wittgenstein would urge us in a paradoxical way), but we cannot still forget Kant's lesson: the critical task never ends. Kant wrote in his first *Critique*: "Transcendental illusion ... does not cease even after it has been detected and its invalidity clearly revealed by transcendental criticism (e.g. the illusion in the proposition: the world must have a beginning in time;" B 353). This was one of the main mistakes of the *Tractatus*: at that time, Wittgenstein did not realize that metaphysical illusions do not disappear after the critique; hence it is not enough to throw away the ladder. To generate such illusions seems to be an intrinsic property of language. It is a permanent job for the philosopher to clear them away.

Concluding Remark

Analytic philosophy is not dead yet; scientism should be.¹⁷

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Resumo

Este artigo trata da questão se a ciência e a filosofia são contíguas, como Quine pensava, ou se elas são completamente separadas, como sustentava Wittgenstein. Reconstituindo as razões pelas quais este último conserva uma nítida distinção entre ciência e filosofia, o texto examina as tentativas do primeiro desses autores de resolver os problemas filosóficos em termos científicos. Sustenta que o cientificismo de Quine é mal concebido e oferece outras razões pelas quais se pode fazer uma distinção (se não uma separação) entre ciência e filosofia.

Palavras-chave

Filosofia, ciência, naturalismo.

Notes

¹ Hacker 1996, p. 195. I will not here examine the differences between Quine I, II or even Quine III. For this purpose, see Gibson 1986.

² In fact, what we should mean by ‘analytic philosophy’ is a view that holds analysis to be central to philosophical investigations without relating it with

the distinction between science and philosophy. In this sense, both Quine and Wittgenstein are analytic philosophers despite the differences.

³ Hertz 1899, p. 9. Perhaps it is better to call such puzzles 'philosophical-metaphysical' or just 'metaphysical' in order to distinguish them from the genuine *philosophical* task of clearing them away from our language and life.

⁴ Quine misunderstood one of the main ideas of the *Tractatus*, namely Wittgenstein's comparison between a proposition and a picture (*Bild*). He wrote: 'When Dewey was writing in this naturalistic vein, Wittgenstein still held his copy theory of language,' (cf. Quine 1969, p. 27.) and 'Wittgenstein thought in his *Tractatus* days that true sentences mirrored nature...' (cf. Quine, W. V. 'Russell's Ontological Development' In: Quine 1981, p. 82). A proposition is not a *copy* of a fact, but a *model* of a state of affairs and that is why an empiricist interpretation of the *Tractatus* is mistaken. As we shall see, Quine made a similar mistake reading Wittgenstein's famous dictum 'the meaning of a word is its use in the language' in a behaviorist vein.

⁵ Quine 1981, p. 191.

⁶ Quine 1981, p. 67.

⁷ Cf. Quine "Use and its Place in Meaning". In: Quine 1981, p. 46. In *Word and Object* (p. 82), Quine explicitly says that his ideas follow Skinner in essential respects. For a more detailed discussion on this topic, see Dutra 2000. See also Gibson 1986.

⁸ See Hacker, 1996, p. 195.

⁹ Quine, "Has Philosophy Lost Contact with People?" In Quine, 1981, p. 193.

¹⁰ Quine, "On the Nature of Moral Values." In Quine, 1981, p. 59.

¹¹ I think that we can argue against reductionism in ethics, either naturalist or metaphysical, reconstructing Moore's argument in terms of a category mistake since his main idea was that moral values are *sui generis*. This is not far from Wittgenstein's idea that metaphysical troubles arise from conflating different language-games, for example descriptive and normative ones. If this is correct, not only the sense of the *Tractatus* is ethical in willing to keep a separation between ethics and science, but also that is the sense of his *Investigations*.

¹² Quine, "On the Nature of Moral Values." In Quine 1981, p. 64.

¹³ In his famous paper "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" (cf. Quine, 1980, p. 20–46). Quine denies the relevance of making the distinction between analytic and synthetic propositions since we do not have a reasonable criterion for synonymy on which the distinction depends. However, there are different ways of making such a distinction, for example, Kant used not only the logical

form of a proposition, but also *the way it can be proved*. In the *Tractatus*, the combination of the truth-functions gives us a genuine proposition or a *tautology*.

¹⁴ Wittgenstein 1999, § 23. See also: Wittgenstein 1969, § 96-99.

¹⁵ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1003^a23.

¹⁶ It is interesting to realize how many times Quine quotes Wittgenstein in conjunction with Dewey and pragmatism in general. However, Wittgenstein was not a full-blooded pragmatist.

¹⁷ A draft version of this paper was read at the *Third International Symposium Principia*, in September 2003, but it was revised at the beginning of 2004. I am indebted to CNPq for financial support.