Schlick and Wittgenstein on Ethics and Acts of Will

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ABSTRACT

In Paolo Parrini's masterly reconstruction of the Logical-Empiricist movement and its critical history carried out in a variety of writings (1987, 2002, 2003), particular attention is paid to Moritz Schlick's thought from his 1918 volume *Allgemeine Erkenntnislehre*[1] to the fundamental essays of the years 1930-1936, produced in the decade of the so-called Viennese phase of his activity, which preceded the tragic and premature end of his life. It was a decade that saw him found the Vienna Circle, the "Wiener Kreis", and follower of the movement's programmatic manifesto: the *Wissenschaftliche Weltauffassung* (Carnap, Hahn, Neurath, 1929). The theme of Schlick's relationship with Ludwig Wittgenstein can be considered a separate chapter in the broader history of the Logical-Empiricist movement and remains, unlike this latter which has been subject of a number of studies in recent and less recent critical literature, a subject rarely developed in a systematic manner..

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* Abbreviazioni: LE = Wittgenstein 1929; MV = Schlick 1936; PE = Schlick 1939; PG = Wittgenstein 1933; PO = Wittgenstein 1993; PP II = Schlick 1979; PU = Wittgenstein 1953; TLP = Wittgenstein 1921[1], 1922.

[1] Cf. the English translation *General Theory of* Knowledge (Schlick, 1974).

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In general, it can be said that the Schlick-Wittgenstein relationship and the existence of their reciprocal influence can be studied from at least three sources:

1) from the *Tractatus*, which since its publication (1921 and 1922) became the pole of attraction of the discussions developed within the "Wiener Kreis", and a topic variously debated among its members;

2) from the conversations Wittgenstein subsequently held in Vienna between 1929 and 1932 with Schlick himself and with Friedrich Waismann[2];

3) from Schlick's aforementioned essays of 1930-1936, including his interpretative contribution to the theory of knowledge and also to the problems of ethics.

The first personal contact between the two philosophers dates back, however, to a few years before the aforementioned conversations and precisely to December 1924 when Schlick wrote to Wittgenstein – at that time an elementary school teacher in a village in Lower Austria – declaring his admiration for the *Tractatus*, as well as that of his colleagues in the Circle, and their desire to visit him in that remote residence. In reality, the meeting took place later in Vienna in 1927 through the intermediary of Ludwig's sister Margaret (a *grande dame* of the Viennese cultural elite of the time), when Wittgenstein had already left his teaching in Lower Austria and came back to Vienna. In fact, the meeting was the beginning of a deep friendship that continued even after Wittgenstein moved to Cambridge in 1929.

It should be noted that at the beginning of the 1930s radical transformations had already taken place in both Wittgenstein's and Schlick's thought: the former had amended and largely repudiated the central theses of the *Tractatus*, the latter, following his call in 1922 from Rostock to Vienna to the chair of the philosophy of inductive sciences, had begun a new course of research that would move him away from the realist perspective of the *Allge-*

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[2] The conversations were collected and annotated by F. Waismann and published in 1967 with the title *Wittgenstein und der Wiener Kreis*, ed. by B. McGuinness. See Waismann (1979).

meine Erkenntnislehre towards a more decisive empiricist position. These transformations would not fail to leave their mark on the whole of Schlick's writings in the 1930s, in the 1929-1932 conversations and, as we shall see, to mark the traits of the relationship between the two new friends.

Schlick's sharing of some of the central theses of the *Tractatus* (the picture theory, the tautological nature of mathematical propositions, the logical character of probability, the say-show distinction), although very profound, is only indirectly documented through references to them not only in the Viennese essays, such as *The Turning Point in Philosophy* (1930), *Form and Content* (1932), *On the Foundation of Knowledge* (1934), *Meaning and Verification* (1936), but also in the aforementioned 1929-1932 essays where Paolo Parrini has emphasised Schlick's relationship with Wittgenstein and particularly in his extensive epistemological study on *Form and Content* (1987).

It is in *Form and Content* that Schlick announces the philosophical debt that bound him to Wittgenstein, with regard to the verificationist theory of the meaning of propositions, and the principle underlying it, shared by Wittgenstein at the time, according to which the meaning of a proposition is the method of its verification. In *Meaning and Verification* (MV), Schlick states that his conversations with Wittgenstein had profoundly influenced his views and that his debt to him cannot be expressed enough. He summarises his thesis by pointing out that

> the meaning of a word or a combination of words is, in this way, determined by a set of rules which regulate their use and which, following Wittgenstein, we may call the rules of their *grammar*, taking this word in its widest sense"(PP II, pp. 457-458).

In a sentence added in brackets Schlick concludes by stating:

> (If the preceding remarks about meaning are as correct as I am convinced they are, this will, to a large measure, be due to conversations with Wittgenstein which have greatly influenced my own views about these matters. I can hardly exaggerate my indebtedness to this philosopher (*ibid.,* p. 458).

The exact extent of this debt and the identification of its qualifying elements would deserve careful examination because, as I will try to show, Wittgenstein's influence on Schlick turns out to be, at least in some respects, more problematic than Schlick himself believed.

I do not propose here to analyse the founding theses of the theory of knowledge developed in the Viennese essays, which have been widely investi-

gated from Carnap and Neurath to more recent interpreters such as W. Stegmüller (1978, Bd. I), F. Stadler (1997), P. Parrini (2002, 2003) and B. McGuinness (2010). I will, instead, present another aspect of the Schlick-Wittgenstein relationship concerning the problems of ethics, investigated in the 1930 book *Fragen der Ethik*, later translated in English as *Problems of Ethics* (PE), which with the coeval essay *The Turning Point of Philosophy* (1930) opens the series of Schlick's Viennese essays. It is a text that is somewhat neglected in the critical literature, and yet crucial for the identification of Schlick's distinctive position on ethics and acts of will (*Willensakte*) or, according Wittgenstein's lexicon, voluntary actions (*willkürliche Handlungen*).

I will now attempt to identify affinities and differences between the theses of *Problems of Ethics* and Wittgenstein's assumptions on this subject set forth in the *Tractatus* (TLP) and the 1929-1932 conversations with Schlick and Waismann (Waismann, 1979).[3]

In one of the earliest essays devoted to Wittgensteinian conception of ethics Rush Rhees (1965) sketched an exemplary commentary on sections 6.4-6.43 of the *Tractatus* (TLP) concerning the status assigned to ethical propositions, value judgements, voluntary actions, defined as *Träger des Ethischen* ("subjects of ethical attributes") and the good or bad will (TLP, 6.43). In opposition to what was stated in sections 1-5 above about factual propositions liable to truth/falsity – and thus formulated as "what can be said" according to true-functional logic – Wittgenstein states in the famous sentence of the *Tractatus* that "it is impossible for there to be propositions of ethics" (6.42). Ethics is therefore the domain of sentences that cannot be meaningfully said but only "shown". In ethics, as in logic, there are no propositions that deal with the world, and in this sense they cannot be said in terms of factual propositions that are true or false, but only express "conditions of the possibility of speaking about the world", and thus they can be qualified, in an exquisitely Kantian sense, as "transcendental" (6.421)[4].

The ineffability of ethics – and with it of aesthetics and religious belief – is thus the core of the conception set forth in the *Tractatus*, and if we recall what Wittgenstein had communicated in a letter to Ludwig von Ficker, proba-

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[3] Cf. Wittgenstein's conversations held with Schlick on 30.12. 1929, 5.1.1930, and 17.12,1930. See Waismann, 1979.
[4] On Wittgenstein's ethics as domain of sentences which cannot be sensibly said cf. some more recent essays McGuinness (2006), Christensen (2011) and Cahill (2018).

bly written in the autumn of 1919), that the sense of the *Tractatus* is "an ethical sense"[5], we can infer that the treatment of ethics contains the real message of the book, its "not said" part, which is actually, as Wittgenstein maintains, the most important. Thus, we can argue that at the base of the ineffability of ethics there is an underlying absolutely positive idea.

However, most members of the Vienna Circle did not accept or misunderstood Wittgenstein's message and excluded from the scope of their research the class of propositions that cannot be formulated in terms of scientific rationality. Nevertheless, the theme of ethics remained a field of interest and research, albeit not exclusive, for both Wittgenstein and Schlick, a field that constitutes a common and distinctive trait with respect to the positions of the members of the Vienna Circle, a field aimed at restoring to ethics a place and a role in human conduct. We will see, however, that while the goal is common, Wittgenstein's and Schlick's argumentative strategy for achieving it is profoundly different.

An important document of this difference is given in one of the conversations annotated by Waismann (1979), held on 17 December 1930, in which Wittgenstein sets out to refute Schlick's interpretation of the task of ethics to define the nature of the good, as set out in *Problems of Ethics*, and to reiterate the idea that the status of the ethical is not factual, and therefore, unlike the states of affairs, is not only inexpressible but also "inexplicable". According to Schlick, there are two versions of the nature of the good: the first, which he calls "the flatter" (*die flächere*), states that the good is good because God wills it to be so, which is why it is God's command that expresses the essence of the good. The second, deeper version (*die tiefere*), in Schlick's opinion, states that God wills the good because it is good, where it is assumed that one can motivate, say why what is good is good, i.e. explain what is good. Wittgenstein challenges Schlick's reasoning by reversing the qualification of the two versions. It is not the second but the first version that is the "most profound", since it cuts off, he says, any attempt to explain the good as an ethical goal, and thus to homologate ethics to a fact[6].

Waismann does not record any of Schlick's reactions to Wittgensteinian criticism, but the distance of his viewpoint from the ineffabilist and anti-

[5] "In Wirklichkeit ist er Ihnen – Wittgenstein writes – nicht fremd , denn der Sinn des Buches ist ein Ethisches" (Wittgenstein, 1969, p. 35).
[6] Cf. Waismann (1979, p. 11).

factualist approach to ethics indicated by Wittgenstein is already clear. This can also be deduced from an earlier annotation of 5 January 1930 in which Waismann (1979) punctually refers to Wittgenstein's thesis he put forward in *A Lecture on Ethics* (LE), delivered in Cambridge in November 1929. As we shall see, the letter presents a conception openly at odds with that expressed by Schlick in his book *Fragen der Ethik* (Schlick, 1939), published a year later, in 1930, but conceived before the decisive meeting with Wittgenstein.

        In the *Lecture* Wittgenstein insists on the non-psychological, in the sense of non-scientific or non-factual status of ethics. Ethics is therefore un-sayable, it "cannot be said". The attempts to express it leads to non-sense, it is as to run against the boundaries of language. As Wittgenstein says in a para-digmatic conclusion of his *Lecture*:

> The tendency of all men who ever tried to write or talk Ethics or Religion was to run against the walls of our cage is perfectly, absolutely hopeless. Ethics so far as it springs from the desire to say something about the ultimate meaning of life, the absolute good, the absolute valuable, can be no science. What it says does not add to our knowledge in any sense. But it is a document of a tendency in the human mind which I personally cannot help respecting deeply and I would not for my life ridicule it (LE, p. 44).

Schlick's autonomous position in relation to Wittgenstein's conception of eth-ics as "no science" and the dominant negationist ideas of the members of the Vienna Circle, who exclude ethics from the domain of scientific rationality, as well as his attempt to reaffirm the role of the ethical in voluntary action are de-veloped particularly in the first four chapters of *Fragen der Ethik* (PE) (Schlick, 1939). Composed in 1930, the work constitutes a characteristic document of the transition between the two phases of Schlick's thought, one characterised by the interest in ethical-social phenomena documented in some works of the pre-Viennese period; the other phase marked by the preponderant interest in the problems of knowledge, already at the centre of the *Allgemeine Erkennt-nislehre* and culminating in 1930-1936 Viennese essays.

        In *Problems of Ethics* Schlick makes explicit the attempt to reconcile this twofold interest, to which not only the assimilation of the theses of the *Tractatus* and its developments serves as a background, but also the primary role it played, from 1922 onwards, within the Vienna Circle. The application of the neo-empiricist form of analysis that Schlick carries out in the essays of the last six years of his life, with a predominantly epistemological content, had

already been adopted in the eight chapters of *Problems of Ethics*, which con-
figure what can be designated Schlick's practical philosophy.

The subject matter of the work can be said and substantially articulat-
ed in three intertwined nodal theses: the empiricist thesis of ethics, developed
in Chapters I-IV[7]; the relativist thesis of values, argued in Chapters V-VII, and
the eudemonist thesis of human moral conduct, contained in Chapter VIII. In
the treatment of the more important empiricist thesis the scientific status of
ethics, the naturalistic conception of the acts of will, empirically founded on
"natural" feelings such as pleasure and displeasure (*Lust and Unlust*), as well
as the utilitarian principle of moral law are, in the first four chapters, systemati-
cally developed. Naturalism and Utilitarianism, in Schlick's peculiar version,
can be considered the key-qualifications of his conception of ethics.

As an alternative to the traditional conception of ethics and at the basis
of the empiricist thesis there is the so to speak heterodox idea, expounded in
Chapter I, that ethics is not part of philosophy but, since it pertains to modes of
human behavior, is part of a science such as psychology (*ein Teildisziplin der
Psychologie*), with which it shares the status of an empirical science and the use
of the scientific method. In this way Schlick attempts to place the ethical prob-
lem in a scientific perspective and thus to extend to ethical sentences the em-
pirical criterion of meaning that applies to factual propositions, thus attrib-
uting to statements concerning human conduct the explanatory power of the
empirical sciences. It is an attempt that is radically challenged by Wittgenstein
for whom, as we have seen, there are no propositions of ethics and "ethics can-
not be put into words" (TLP, 6.42-6-43).

Consistent with his factualist conception of ethics, Schlick argues that
ethics is not a normative science (*Normwissenschaft*), understood as a reper-
toire of norms and laws pertaining to human agency and in this sense akin to
jurisprudential disciplines. As a science not of norms but of facts (*Tatsa-
chenwissenschaft*), ethics, like any empirical science, is concerning with the
meaning of moral actions and with the goal of giving causal explanations. Only
by adopting scientific methods and in particular the explanatory model offered
by psychology is it possible to provide an answer to "why we act morally". Con-
sequently Schlick can argue that

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[7] On Schlick's "Option 'empirische Ethik'" as an alternative to the versions of "Intuitionismus"
cf. Hegselmann (1984, pp. 18-36).

the problem which we must put at the center of ethics is a purely psychological one. For, without doubt, the discovery of the motives or laws of any kind of behavior, and therefore of moral behavior, is a purely psychological affair. Only the empirical science of the laws which describe the life of the soul can solve this problem (PE, pp. 28-29).

To the objection that by making ethics nothing but a part of psychology, in some way a sort of "ancilla" of psychology, the autonomy of ethics is destroyed, Schlick responds by claiming the ideal of unity and not separation of the sciences in opposition to the traditional trend "to draw strict lines of division between the sciences, to separate ever new disciplines, and to prove their autonomy" (*ibid.*, p. 29).

The true philosopher goes – Schlick highlights – in the opposite direction; he does not wish to make the single sciences self-sufficient and independent, but, on the contrary, to unify and bring them together; he wishes to show that what is common to them is what is most essential, and that what is different is accidental and to be viewed as belonging to practical methology.

[...] Therefore, if you decide that the fundamental question of ethics, "Why does man act morally"? can be answered only by psychology, we see in this no degradation, nor injury to, science, but a happy simplification 0f the world-picture. In ethics we do not seek independence, but only truth (*ibid.*, pp. 29-30).

The following Chapters II-IV are aimed at illustrating the motives of human conduct and of the so-called acts of will (*Willensakte*), as well as the meaning of what we call "moral". As expressions of individual and collective voluntary actions, Schlickian ethics can be defined as a social-ethical doctrine. Werner Leinfellner (1985), in his extensive and illuminant essay, has particularly emphasised Schlick's sozialethik and reconstruct it in the context of his view on ethics as a cognitive, empirical science, closely related to theory of science and particularly to social sciences. According to Leinfellner, in Schlick's *Problems of Ethics* five theses emerge with particular relevance: (i) ethics does not belong to philosophy; (ii) it is an empirical cognitive science of the individual and collective actions; (iii) it belongs to psychology and sociology; (iv) it is a *Sozialethik*; (v) it is controlled by feelings of pleasure and displeasure.

As an expression of society's desires, directed towards the attainment of the good not only for individuals but for the community, "the moral demands – Schlick says – are established by society *only because* the fulfilling of these

demands appears to be useful to it" (PE, p. 96). Consequently, we can argue that his peculiar form of utilitarianism which is affirmed in ethics constitutes the final formulation of the empiricist thesis.

The moral laws that define the good as what is useful to human society by implying the moral condemnation of egoism is called by Schlick the "law of motivation" (*Motivationsgesetz*), a principle of clearly psychological intonation, which allows him to state that

> moral judgements about the behavioral modalities and characters of individuals are nothing more than the emotional reactions (*Gefühlsreaktionen*) with which human societies react to the consequences of pleasure (*Lust*) or displeasure *(Unlust),* that accompany those behaviors and characters" (*ibid.*, p. 51).[8]

It is therefore clear that if moral judgements about human behavioral modes and character dispositions, and possibly about human communities, are emotionally motivated, i.e. they are "emotional reactions", can only be investigated with the tools and methods of empirical sciences such as psychology and sociology.

In the following Chapters V-VII, as already mentioned, Schlick's two concluding theses emerge: the thesis of the relativity of values and the thesis of hedonism. The critique of the existence of absolute values is a corollary of the empiricist thesis and is closely connected to the law of motivation of moral judgements. According to Schlick, it is not based on the search for an absolute that justifies them a priori but, as we know, on contingent principles based on the "natural" feelings of pleasure-displeasure, and therefore to be investigated with the methods of empirical sciences such as psychology and sociology. It is therefore a dispositional property that exists only in relation to our feelings and in this sense it has a relativistic nature. As Schlick points out:

> The sense of every proposition concerning the value of an object consists in the fact that this object, or the idea (*Vorstellung*) of it, produces a feeling of pleasure or pain in some feeling subject. A value exists only with respect to a subject, it is relative. If there were no pleasure and pain in the world there

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[8] Cf. also: "We can state that the decision of the will proceeds in the direction of the most pleasant end-in-view, in the following manner: of the ideas (*Vorstellungen*) which function as motives (*Motive*), that one gains the upper hand which finally possesses the highest degree of pleasant emotional tone, or the least unpleasant tone, and thus the act in question is unambiguously determined" (PE, pp. 38-39).

would be no values. Everything would be indifferent (PE, p. 120).

However, the relativity of value to the subject does not mean caprice or arbitrariness: "it does not mean that the subject can at will declare the object to be valuable or valueless" (*ibid.*). When a subject has a relation with an object, the latter constitutes a definite value or disvalue. This is an "objective" fact, not explicable by the subject or any observer, like the existence – Schlick adds – of an absolute value[9].

The naturalistic, utilitarian and relativistic tendencies already present in the empiricist thesis of ethics are condensed in the final Chapter VIII of the *Problems of Ethics*, which contains an interesting conclusion on the subject of values, referred to as the "foundation of hedonism". Consistent with the status assigned to ethics as a tendency to the good (welfare) not only of the individual but of the community, happiness is viewed as intrinsic to the social impulses of the human beings. The "foundation of hedonism" is therefore, according to Schlick, the task of a social-ethical doctrine, as he states: "I have no doubt that experience indicates very clearly that the social impulses are those which best assure their bearers of a joyful life" (PE, p. 186).

Schlick understood more specifically the concept of "happiness of a society" as *capacity* for happiness, which exists when each individual has attained his greatest capacity for it. He can thus conclude the *summa* of his thought on ethics developed in *Problems of Ethics* with the indication of the task the philosopher has to perform in order to define man's conduct as moral. With the caveat, however, that to such a definition we cannot assign the role of a dogma or more precisely of a "postulate". It must obey a practical purpose, which is to accept such a definition "because the end it establishes is that which *de facto* is most highly valued by mankind" (PE, p. 197).

> The philosopher could, for his purposes, *define* as moral that behavior by means of which an individual furthered his capacity for happiness, and could designate the precepts of society as "truly" moral if this criterion fitted them [...] The formulation of a "moral principle", too, would be possible on this basis; and it would run, "At all times be fit for happiness," or "Be ready for happiness" (*ibid.*).

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[9] On a scientifically based theory of values, in turn linked to the option for an empirical ethics cf. the work of another member of the "Wiener Kreis": Viktor Kraft (1951). See in this regard the analysis of Hegselmann (1984, pp. 38-41).

From this brief overview of the central theses of *Problems of Ethics* and from the comparison with the themes that, as we have seen, Wittgenstein had dealt with in the *Tractatus* and in *A Lecture on Ethics* it can clearly be inferred that nothing compatible with the existence of a Wittgensteinian influence seems to emerge. If we keep in mind the empiricistic thesis, its definition of ethics as "Teildisziplin der Psychologie", as well as its corollaries such the critique of absolute values and the eudemonistic thesis, one cannot but agree with Anthony Quinton's assertion that *Problems of Ethics* is, on the subject of ethics, as far from Wittgenstein's way of thinking as one can imagine (1985, p. 116).

Of course, we cannot know whether Schlick, had he lived, would then have shared the anti-empiricist or, as Wittgenstein says, "grammatical" conception of propositions about personal experience, characteristic of the second Wittgensteinian way of philosophizing and whether he would have assigned acts of will or voluntary actions, as Wittgenstein called them, to the domain of the *philosophy of psychology* rather than, as he claims, of *psychology as a science*, thus correcting his law of motivation that, instead, assigned such acts to the naturalistic and utilitarian basis of pleasure-displeasure.

Although Wittgenstein did not deal specifically with ethics in the writings of his maturity, he nevertheless extended his anti-empiricist conception of will and voluntary actions during the 1940s mainly in the *Lectures on Volition*, the *Lectures on Freedom of the Will* and finally in the *Philosophical Investigations*. Taken together, these writings can be said to shape Wittgenstein's practical philosophy[10].

The intention behind the eight *Lectures on Volition*, delivered in the 1940s, is to refute the thesis that will is connected to certain physical sensations and the thesis that it provides the causes of our acting, i.e. the "physical" or "physiological", as well as the "causalistic" conception of will. The first refutation is particularly directed against the kinaesthetic conception held by William James, according to which kinaesthetic sensations (feelings, sensations and bodily movements, i. e. physical states) inform us about our mental states (thoughts, representations, images, beliefs, desires, volitions) and explain our actions. The second refutation develops the anti-causalist arguments advanced in the *Lectures on Freedom of the Will*, in which a first critique of the role of

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[10] For a more detailed analysis of Wittgenstein's practical philosophy cf. Chapter III.2 of my book (Egidi, 2023, pp. 345-95).

natural laws in determining human action was forwarded. According to Wittgenstein, the question of free will is not a question of opting for an indeterministic or a deterministic view of human action, as opposed to the deterministic and causalist one, defended by the empiricism and also by Russell. The distinction dictated by free choice and action determined by natural laws has a "conceptual" nature, in the sense that both obey different grammars, not necessarily incompatible with each other but depending on different uses and on planned tasks.·

Underlying the aforementioned fundamental intent of *On Volition* are two ideas: the first is to unmask the misleading analogies and false parallelism that invalidate the traditional conception according to which statements concerning the psychic sphere, i.e. the objects of investigation proper to psychology, are treatable in the same way as statements concerning the physical sphere, i. e. the objects of physics; the other idea is to avoid the temptation to resort to sensations (*Gefühle/feelings*) and to hypostatize them in order to explain facts and events of the mental world (intentions, thoughts, volitions, beliefs, wishes etc.). As Wittgenstein highlights:

> Misleading parallels: psychology treats of processes in the psychic sphere, as does physics in the physical. Seeing, hearing, thinking, feeling, willing are not the subjects of psychology in the same sense as that in which the movements of bodies, the phenomena of electricity etc., are the subjects of physics (PU, § 571).

Only the habit of the "one-sided diet" established in philosophy, leads us to support these misleading parallelisms. As Wittgenstein will later say: "A main cause of philosophical disease – a one-sided diet: one nourishes one's thinking with only one kind of example" (PU, § 593).

Finally, in §§ 611-628 of the *Philosophical Investigations* three qualifications of will are taken up and systematically developed:

(i) Willing does not imply the use of kinesthetic sensations, such as joy or sadness. When James says that "a man is sad because he cries", he means explaining a mental state (*sadness*) as the sum of physical sensations that can be expressed in this case by crying. But explaining a mental state, for example sadness, as the sum of physical sensations that can be expressed in this case with a cry is, according to Wittgenstein, not correct if it is asserted as an explanation of our mental states. In fact one can cry even without being

sad and feeling sad without these bodily sensations and having these bodily sensations without feeling sad.

(ii) The qualification that willing is not cause of voluntary action descends from James's idea-of the motor theory of the will. Instead, Wittgenstein's aim is to show that the willing is not a motor-idea of voluntary movements which cause an action, i.e. it is not something that accompanies action and brings about, determines, causes action, but it is identified with action, not as that which moves, but that which is moved (PU, § 618).

(iii) The third and perhaps most important qualification of the anti-empiricist perspective of volition is indicated in the statement that will is not an experience. "Whereas experiences are passive, they come as they go and we cannot provoke them, volitions are active. In the *Grammatik* Wittgenstein had argued that "the will isn't something I see happening, it's more like my being involved in my actions" (PG, § 97c). Whereas in experience observation (*Beobachtung*) plays an essential role, it is the element of doing (*das Element des Tuns*) that plays a role in voluntary acting. This confirms that the element of doing, intrinsic to voluntary action, "seems not to have any experiential volume" (PU, § 620).

These three qualifications sum up the properties that Wittgenstein, as opposed to Schlick's theses, attaches to his concept of voluntary action of being non-physiological, non-causal, non-experiential but essentially pragmatic.

As I said at the outset, Wittgenstein and Schlick use different argumentative strategies to pursue the same goals. In fact, their common interest in the problems of ethics, at odds with the conception of the Vienna Circle, remains unequivocal, and the need to assign ethics a place in the domain of research on the human conduct inspires the Wittgensteinian philosophy of psychology. It is a need that, if we shift our gaze further, beyond the boundary of the 1930s, we cannot fail to see developed by those who picked it up, after Schlick and the "Wiener Kreis", to constitute, almost a century later, one of the important strands of today's analytical philosophy of ethics, centred on the theme of the congruence between neuroscience and ethics.

Concluding my analysis of the Schlick-Wittgenstein relation on ethics and related concepts and reflecting on the Schlickian conception of ethics as so to speak an "ancilla" of psychology, forerunner in some way of contemporary analytical philosophies of the mind and in particular of current cognitivist and neuroscientific doctrines, I dare to formulate a sort of auspice that I convey as a

hypothesis, but of which of course I have no evidence to back it up, namely the idea that, perhaps in a next decade, a new philosopher *à la* Wittgenstein can stubbornly fight, once again, like the old Wittgenstein, to re-establish the boundaries between science and philosophy.

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