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Bouwsma, O.K. "On Difference In The Criterion of F.H. Bradley." Doctoral Dissertation. University of Michigan: 1928.

Bouwsma wrestles with a seeming contradiction in Bradley's idealism, attempting and finally failing to resolve it. If consciousness is fundamental reality, and not objects, then a consistent metaphysical theory of idealism must have a simple and immediate starting point in consciousness. But consciousness is given in thought and thought's essence is difference, i.e. making linguistic distinctions. Bradley sees this problem and attempts to resolve it through the idea of feeling – in feeling, diversity is folded into a unity of consciousness. The differences of thought are covered over in feeling. But Bouwsma cannot accept it – he cannot see his way through Bradley's solution. The last sentence of the dissertation, ambiguously praises Hegel as one who provided a "monument and inspiration of this kind of monism." Bouwsma's insistence, however, that he find his way through the idealist's problem of a starting point, meant that it was unlikely that he would be able to find rest in Hegel's system either. The undoing of idealism in Bouwsma's mind was already well underway in his dissertation. In fact, some elements of Bouwsma's journey to Wittgenstein are already in place in the dissertation. Bradley wants consciousness to come before objects, yet thoughts, in which objects are already distinguished, is necessary to think consciousness. Bouwsma's interest in examining the criteria for examining consciousness and finding it irresolvable that thought would be the criterion for judging itself, mirrors Wittgenstein' quandary in the *Tractatus*: How can language be used as the criterion for establishing meaningful language? Meaning, Wittgenstein says, is shown, not said. The "shown/said" distinction finally falls apart leading to his later philosophy. Bouwsma, in his own way, follows this same path from the problem in Bradley to his later confidence in developing ordinary language responses to philosophical problems. The issue, Bouwsma comes to see, is not how to understand consciousness as a foundation, but how to understand language as a foundation. His task becomes that of

examining language itself, in order to think through the issue of meaning. And for that he had Wittgenstein's help, but was by no means simply explicating Wittgenstein. The language of the dissertation was unique to the idealist project of the time. The dissertation is very difficult to follow without the adaptation and assumption of the terms of that school. Bouwsma would later come to drop all semblances of this language. He hid the dissertation and referred to it, if asked, as a part of a past that he had surpassed. Yet the traces of his journey lead back to it. The beginnings of what bothered him in philosophy were there. His insistence on getting it right was there. His antipathy for realism is there. The very same issue of using thought as a criterion for itself later re-emerges in his remarks about the oddness of logic used as the criterion for establishing a logical system.

The conclusion of the dissertation, again, is that Bradley failed to adequately resolve the issue of whether consciousness can be a starting point for an idealist metaphysical system.

Bouwsma, O.K. "On 'This Is White'." *Philosophical Review* January,1939: 48,71-73.

Ayer's theory of meaning describes the truth conditions for two kinds of meaningful sentences: tautologies and empirical propositions. "There are sense contents" is not a tautology. But Ayer treats it as if it were an indubitable sentence – a tautology. Bouwsma claims that Ayer does not recognize that he has given special privilege to this sentence, treating it as if it were an indubitable sentence when it is not.

The particular sentence, "This is white," is a sentence of sense-content. According to Ayer's claim, it should be, by analysis, an indubitable sentence. But "This is white" allows of the contradictory sentence: "This is not white." And so we have "p and – p." Therefore, "This is white" cannot be a tautology and is not indubitable. The positivist then is caught in a contradiction. "There are sense contents" is said to be indubitable but it implies "This is white," which is clearly not a tautology.

In this short article, Bouwsma gives a straightforward philosophical argument – a refutation. After 1949-50, he no longer will write such papers with refutations. The argument foreshadows Bouwsma's later interest in sense and nonsense.

Bouwsma, O.K. "Stace's 'The Primacy of Sympathy'." *Journal of Philosophy* November,1942: 39,631-635.

This short paper is a critical comment on Stace's then new book: *The Destiny of Western Man*. Bouwsma takes up Stace's proof of the proposition that one ought to be sympathetic. This, presumably, is a moral recommendation. It is offered in conjunction with the proposition that one ought to use one's reason. "Be sympathetic" and Be reasonable." Bouwsma proposes to take up Stace's moral recommendation to be sympathetic.

Sympathy, according to Stace, is primary to the moral life, because it is only by means of sympathy that we can be normal and happy. A similar claim is made for being reasonable. Stace's argument runs that only a reasonable man will recognize his own infinite value and see that all others have that infinite value as well. His reason therefore will lead him to recognize the primacy of sympathy, i.e. recognition of the infinite value of another.

But, outside a theological context, what does infinite value mean? Where does it come from? Bouwsma wonders how reason is to determine the value of ends that another has. It is possible that reason can determine another's ends and the means he may choose to get those ends, but how is reason to see the infinite value of the person himself? Bouwsma asks how Stace could come to beg this question without realizing that he was doing so. He proposes that Stace, who wanted to draw this conclusion of the primacy of sympathy without God, has really attached theological significance to the idea of ends without knowing it. He, Stace, has arbitrarily attached "infinite value" to the ends that men pursue and hence to the person himself.

The critical reflection on Stace's thesis reflects two features of Bouwsma's thought as it becomes fully developed

in his later work. One is that of presenting the claims of another philosopher and then asking how he could have come to such confusion. What analogies misled him? In this case, he sees the analogy of a theological idea – that the concept of "God" can provide "infinite value" – as the driving force in Stace's argument. But Stace, of course, wants to provide that infinite value by means of reason and without God. The second feature is seen in the idea of God as the only source of infinite value. Bouwsma's attitude toward metaphysics was that it comes to nothing. Philosophy may expose that. But philosophy can never pull the rabbit of infinite value out of an empty metaphysical hat. Bouwsma's faith eviscerated his need for metaphysics and metaphysical ethics. This is the man who was immediately drawn to Dostoievski's Ivan Karamazov: "If there is no God, then all things are permissible."

Bouwsma,O.K. "Moore's theory of Sense Data." *The Philosophy of G.E. Moore. Vol.iv The Library of Living Philosophers, 201-221.* Ed. Paul Arthur Schilpp. Lasalle, Illinois: Open Court, 1952. [written c.1942]

Also in:
----- *Philosophical Essays*. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1965.

    "Moore's Theory of Sense-Data," begins with Bouwsma presenting a quotation from Moore's "A Defence of Common Sense," for discussion. The quotation is Moore's response to his observation that some philosopher's have doubted that there are such things as sense-data.

> And in order to point out to the reader what sorts of things I mean by sense-data, I need only ask him to look at his own right hand. If he does this he will be able to pick out something (and unless he is seeing double, only one thing) with regard to which he will see that it is, at first sight, a natural view to take, that that thing is identical, not indeed, with his whole right hand, but with that part of its surface which he is actually seeing, but will also (on a little reflection) be able to see that it is doubtful whether it can be identical with a part of the surface of his hand in question.

Part 1 of Bouwsma's paper discusses the difficulties presented in Moore's directions for how to "pick out" sense-data. Bouwsma proceeds by means of a series of invented analogies to show the difficulties involved in picking out sense-data. Is it, for example, like looking at your hand and picking out your knuckles? That would give us a clear set of instructions, as we would know the difference between the knuckles and the rest of the hand. If finding the sense-data when looking at one's hand were like this, then one could follow the directions. The directions would be clear, i.e. would make sense. But Moore's directions could not be understood according to this analogy, for in Moore's directions we must pick out something about which it is doubtful whether it is identical with the very thing from which we are to pick it out (namely, part of the surface of the hand). Here the analogy is used to show that something – the directions – has not yet made sense.

A second analogy functions in a way similar to the first. Bouwsma compares Moore's directions to picking a red marble out of a basket which also contains a red pepper and a red rubber ball. Perhaps there would be no problem in this. But one might imagine that the marble and the ball could be confused for each other, and then, attempting to pick out the marble, one picked out the rubber ball. Here Bouwsma is trying to capture the part of the directions that spell out how one is to feel doubtful over something that is identical, or nearly identical, with something else. But this analogy fails also because there are criteria for distinguishing red marbles from red rubber balls but none for distinguishing part of the surface of a hand from the sense-datum of a hand.

Moore has set the criteria for identifying sense-data as that part of the surface of a hand which is distinguishable yet indistinguishable from part of the surface of a hand. Once one picks out the sense-data of X, a doubt arises about whether it is indistinguishable from the surface of X, but that doubt is never resolvable. Bouwsma wants to focus on this. He produces another analogy that brings one along in picking out sense-data to the point where it is clear that they cannot be picked out. The analogy is that of rubber gloves on a cook's hands. Visitors to the kitchen at first take the cook to have on rubber gloves that are not a part of the surface of his hands and yet on closer inspection a doubt arises as to whether this is so. The visitors fall to arguing about whether he has gloves on or not. Bouwsma constructs the language of this story to

parallel that of Moore's. The analogy shows what it would be like for there to be a dispute over whether something meeting Moore's description of sense-data exists or not. But in the process it also shows that there is something flawed in the conception of sense-data that is not flawed in that of rubber gloves. With gloves, one may take them off or pull them away from the skin or hold the hands in a different light. But with sense-data there is no such thing as getting a better look and no such thing as settling the dispute. Moore, in fact, defines them by the criterion that there is no way of settling the doubt over whether they are part of surfaces of objects. They are distinguishable yet indistinguishable from surfaces of objects. Now Bouwsma's analogy aims at showing the difficulty in understanding the directions to pick out sense-data, but that difficulty is an apparent contradiction or inconceivability. And this latter fact seems to make Bouwsma's work look like an argument against the existence of sense-data. That in any case is how Moore understood him ("A Reply To My Critics." *The Philosophy of G.E. Moore,* 647).

   Another analogy: Sense-data and surfaces are like twins being one person. This must be understood facetiously or as a joke. Each identical body is regarded as fitting perfectly inside the other so that they appear as one person. "He is Hans and Fritz." And which one am I seeing now? If one answers, a doubt arises about that answer, and, of course, there would be no way of settling the doubt. Bouwsma allows the reader to draw the conclusion from this analogy. Sense-data and surfaces are twins. A difference that makes no difference is no difference. Sense-data are completely indistinguishable from surfaces. The concept of sense-data makes no sense. Or is it that sense-data do not exist? Is the latter conclusion also to be drawn? Bouwsma never draws it explicitly. Again, Moore takes him to be drawing that conclusion. In some ways Bouwsma's discussion of sense-data reminds one of Berkeley's discussion of material objects. Sometimes one takes Berkeley's arguments as showing that material objects make no sense, and at other times one takes them to be showing that there are no such things as material objects. The latter makes Berkeley an idealist. But Bouwsma is learning how to resist making metaphysical claims. He does not want to make claims that deny the existence of sense-data nor affirm realism.

   Using Moore's language for picking out sense-data again, Bouwsma now substitutes "mirror-images" where he had

previously substituted rubber gloves for sense-data. This analogy seems to get us closer to the stuff of which sense-data are made. The mirror-image of one's hand is at first taken to be identical with part of the surface of one's hand, but then a doubt arises, etc. Little children and puppies might be taken in, but grown-ups, knowing how to recognize hand mirror-images, are not. This analogy plays out differently than that of the twins, for here there is a difference and at least grown-ups know it. As in the case of the rubber gloves, one knows how to separate what looks identical. But Bouwsma is concerned in this analogy to raise a question about the doubt that is supposed to arise. With seeing a hand, one is to see it and then have doubts about whether it is the sense-data of a hand that one is seeing. But how could that doubt come to be unless one was already familiar with the theory of sense-data? What is there about seeing a hand that would give one the doubts about whether it was really a hand that one was seeing or the sense-data of the hand? How does sense-data come into this? The analogy to mirror-images raises this puzzle for Bouwsma. If one sees a mirror-image of a hand and observes (ala Moore) that it is identical with part of the surface of his hand and then doubts whether it is a part of the surface of his hand, then he has already understood that there are mirror-images in order for the doubt to arise. No concept of mirror-image, no doubt possible – for one needs something to mistake the surface for. So too then, Bouwsma notices: No concept of sense-data, no doubt possible – for one needs something to mistake the surface for. The point, I take it, is that according to Moore's instructions for picking out sense-data, the doubt about the surface is essential for identifying the sense-data, but that doubt can not arise until after one is already able to identify sense-data. The explanation of the concept begs itself. This concept, like some of the others, while a difficulty in understanding what Moore meant, has some features of a straight-forward philosophical argument. Such features are not typical of Bouwsma's later work.

The next analogy is to the language of mistaking one thing for another. The case provided is that of Jacob's tricking Isaac into giving him the blessing rather than his brother Esau. Jacob had attached wool to his hand to match Esau's hairy features, and Isaac was blind or nearly so. Isaac, noticing a difference in the voice of Esau, might have asked: "Is this the hand of Esau or Jacob?" Now Bouwsma develops some of the language of this situation –

it is the language of doubt in making a mistake of one thing for another. And what is present to the language of doubt in making a mistake is that there are respects in which two things are similar and respects in which they are dissimilar. Isaac notices that while Esau's arm is similar to the arm he is feeling, Esau's voice is different from the voice he is hearing. There may be other similarities and differences as well. If there were no similarities, there would be no mistake, but if there were no dissimilarities, there would be no doubt. Yet the case of sense-data and surfaces has all similarities and no dissimilarities. The sense-data of the hand and the part of the surface of the hand are completely similar. So the two can apparently be mistaken, but no doubt would arise as to when one was taking (mistaking) one for the other. And, of course, once the situation is described in this way, it becomes conceptually impossible for there to be a mistake. The grammar of "mistake" involves that of discovering the mistake and of there being respects in which two things differ.

Bouwsma brings Part I to a close by making some observations about the odd sort of way Moore is using the expression "the surface of my hand." Presumably one knows some things about the surface of one's hand. One can pick out his knuckles, identify blotches, notice a scratch, etc. But suppose, as Moore supposes, that one is possessed by a doubt about whether this surface which one is familiar with, really is the surface of his hand. Now the surface of one's hand is something one can see, smell, touch, kiss, etc. – it is something physical. But the thing which might be taken for the surface of one's hand is not something which one can smell, touch, kiss, (or see in a different way) etc. – it is not something physical. So how can "the surface of one's hand" be used to refer to something with physical properties that can then be taken for something else which is identical with the surface of one's hand which has non-physical properties? Again, Bouwsma is working with the difficulties in understanding the meaning of an expression – with what makes or does not make sense. Here, however, he does it not so much by showing the use of the expression in various ordinary contexts, but by describing Moore's usages of the expression as having contradictory properties.

In Part 2 of his paper, Bouwsma discusses three sets of facts, reflection about which, would lead him to the sorts of doubt that Moore regards as arising from a little reflection about sense-data. In other words, Bouwsma

attempts to imagine for himself what would lead a
philosopher to the theory of sense-data. Again, the role
of analogy is predominant in these reflections. The first
set of facts and reflection is concerned with sounds,
odors, and tastes. Bouwsma notices first that it is odd
that Moore's discussion of sense-data is restricted to
visual sense-data. The surfaces of objects which can be
mistaken for sense-data only exist with respect to vision.
There is no surface of an object in connection with hearing
sounds, smelling odors, or tasting tastes. But there is
something interesting and similar in the cases of sounds,
odors, and tastes. In connection with each, when one
hears, smells, or tastes, there is a description of the
sound, odor, or taste which may be described independently
of the object heard, smelled, or tasted. Bouwsma gives
three pairs of sentences to help illustrate this point: i)
I hear a gnawing sound. I hear a rat. ii) I smell an odor.
I smell a rat. iii) I taste a sour taste. I taste a
lemon. The first sentence in each pair can be described
independently of the second, but the second cannot be
described independently of the first. So that if I say, "I
hear a rat," then one may ask, "What did it sound like?"
And I then will say "It was a gnawing sound." And so on
with the other pairs. The first sentence in each pair
might be thought of as the sense-datum which exists
independently of the object. Bouwsma is not recommending
that one talk in this way, he is only showing how
reflection on certain facts may lead one to Moore's view of
sense-data. The first sentence in the pair, then,
represents the sense-datum connected to the sensing of the
object, and the second sentence is of the object itself.
These pairs could constitute a misleading analogy to the
sense of sight for Moore. If one were to construct the
corresponding pair of sentences for sight, what would one
put as the first sentence? "I see a rat," would clearly be
the second sentence. So must there not be a corresponding
first sentence which describes the sense-datum connected to
the seeing of the rat? "I see a sense-datum of a rat."
And of course what it is that you find when you look around
for the sense-datum is the surface or part of the surface
of a rat. You do not see anything else and so you say that
what you see (the surface of a rat) is the sense-datum. So
by analogy to the other senses, one is led to equating
visual sense-data with surfaces. Bouwsma provides this
interesting origin to visual sense-data as arising out of
the comparison to sounds, odors, and tastes. It is
difficult to assess what roll it actually played in Moore's

reflections. While it is unlikely that Moore was conscious of any such analogy motivating his thinking, Bouwsma's claim was not that Moore was conscious of such an analogy, but only that such an analogy could unconsciously drive one to Moore's conclusions.

A second set of facts and reflections about them concerns mirror reflections and the like, and is closely related to the first set. If one is already taken by the analogy of sounds, odors, and tastes to sights, then one may be further motivated by another aspect of this analogy as it relates to mirror reflections and other images. A mirror reflection may be described independently of the surface of an object in some way that can be said to be similar to a gnawing sound being described independently of a rat. It is true that the independent visual description of a mirror image is the same or nearly the same as the description of the surface of the object, and this is unlike the relationship between the gnawing sound and the rat. But this fact does not dissuade Moore from accepting the analogy, and it explains how Moore comes to say that the sense-data is identical or nearly identical with the surface of the object. If both the sense-data and the surface are independently describable and happen to have the same descriptions, then it would be understandable why one would say that they were identical or nearly so and why they could be mistaken for one another.

The third set of facts and reflection involves a misleading grammatical analogy again related to the first that, significantly, can also be seen as a grammatical analogy. The misleading grammatical analogy is captured by reflecting on the differences involved in the following look-alike sentences: i) This sounds like a horse. ii) This smells like an onion. iii) This tastes like a peppermint. iv) This looks like a million dollars. v) This feels like a sponge.

Bouwsma notices the difference between the first three and the last two. In order to grasp the point, focus on i and iv as representative of the different sets. In i, the description is the description of a sound. The sound is a sound like the sound of a horse. In iv, the description is not that of a look, but that of an object. This object looks like a million dollars. The object is a million dollars or perhaps a person. The sentences have different uses and are used to describe different kinds of things. But the sentences have apparently similar grammatical patterns. (A lesson Wittgenstein would later teach by the introduction of the distinction between "surface and depth

grammars.") And if one follows the analogy of their apparent similarity, one is misled to looking at iv as being about a "look." "This 'look' has the look of a million dollars" as "This sound has the sound of a horse." And, of course, the "look" turns into the sense-data. "This sense-datum has the look of a million dollars." And: "This sense-datum is identical or nearly identical with the surface of a million dollars." And thus the analogy takes one to where one does not belong – to see objects that no one else sees.

In the brief Part 3 of his essay, Bouwsma generalizes about what he has done or tried to do in the first two parts. He states that he has not refuted Moore's view. Moore has claimed that there are sense-data and has given directions for how to pick them out. Bouwsma has explored the difficulties in following these directions for the discovery of sense-data. He has done this by assembling numerous analogies for following those directions. He has also provided analogies for how Moore may have come to suppose that there are sense-data. In this too Bouwsma has shown that there are difficulties in understanding how sense-data are distinguishable from the surfaces of objects. The failure to understand this distinction is a failure to understand what Moore means by "sense-data." Bouwsma comes very close to saying that there are no sense-data, but only objects. "... I discover nothing but my hand" (18). But he does not say directly that there are no sense-data. He restricts himself to what he regards as Moore's confusions in claiming to have discovered them.

Bouwsma,O.K. "Russell's Argument On Universals." *The Philosophical Review* March, 1943: 52,193-199.

Russell claims that there are universals. Bouwsma proposes to examine Russell's argument for the existence of such things. He focuses on Russell's attention to resemblances. Triangle A resembles triangle B with respect to triangleness. And B resembles C with respect to whiteness. Thus we have the universals: triangle and white. Bouwsma points out an ambiguity in the expressions "the same shape" and "the same color," that transfers to the expressions of resemblance. Pink and maroon are both reds, and so "the same color" may be applied to pink and maroon. Yet in another sense of "the same color," they are not the same

color. So also with triangles – equilateral and isosceles
are both triangles, resembling and not resembling each
other at the same time. This presents a problem for the
idea of universals resting on the argument that they are
required by the resemblance shared between different
objects. Bouwsma argues that this ignored ambiguity leads
Russell to draw conclusions about the existence of
universals. This conclusion that there are "universals" –
contains a word "universals" that must be philosophically
"expurgated." I take it that Bouwsma means by this that
the word "universals" harbors an ambiguity about sameness
and must be cleaned up or purged before we can understand
what is being claimed.

Again, while Bouwsma would not have written in this
argumentative style later, one can see here his early and
persistent focus on language and meaning and the seeds of
his later awareness of the "failure to make sense."

Bouwsma, O.K. "Jack and Jill On A Log." *The Prairie
Schooner* Summer,1944. (*The Prairie Schooner* is the
literary magazine of the University of Nebraska.)

Also in:
-----. *O.K.Bouwsma's Commonplace Book: Remarks On
Philosophy and Education.* Ed. Ronald E. Hustwit and J.L.
Craft. Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2001.

       The parenthetical subtitle – "With Apologies to Mark
Hopkins" – is a reference to a remark of President James
Garfield at the inauguration of his former teacher Mark
Hopkins to the presidency of William's College. The remark
was: "Give me a simple bench, Mark Hopkins on the one end
and I on the other, and you may have all the buildings,
apparatus and libraries without him."

                              I

       In thinking about education, to put our ideas in
order, we should first think about the uses of knowledge.
Knowledge may sharpen our wits. It may provide little
curious facts which can be entertaining or like collecting
treasures. Knowledge may be used to build machines to help

in human work. It may open our eyes to the grandeur of nature, and more. Before we set out to teach Jack and Jill, we should be clear that knowledge has various uses and understand something of what those uses are.

<center>II</center>

In further clearing the concepts involved in education, we should also take notice of the fact that any given branch of knowledge has more than one use. Mathematics, for example, does not merely produce discipline of mind – clear analytic thinking. It has other uses as well – counting money and building steam boilers. The same is true for other branches of knowledge. As each branch is complex in its uses, the cataloging of the branches of knowledge for the education of Jack and Jill must reflect that complexity. Nevertheless, the general branches of knowledge may be catalogued in the following ways.

Mathematics, the physical sciences, biology, logic, and metaphysics may be grouped together as branches of knowledge that aim at exhibiting the order of the world. The social sciences and much of psychology may be thought of as describing "the rags and tatters and slums" of our the world. Geography and geology, like the social sciences, are descriptive of something less than a royal realm, but rather are providing all sorts of "curious information about bananas and bears on ice" and useful information for military strategists. Bouwsma adds: "My only point is that they are not calculated to develop minds that cut clean and link with strength. Nor do they draw back those folds, the superficies of our world. They are sunk in them and in their manifold 'here' and 'there' and 'next'." He also adds to the list of such courses all the survey courses in English, physical sciences, and social sciences. Bouwsma continues his cataloging.

Professional education belongs in professional schools. Here the education of Jack and Jill is simpler. A given professional study is clearest on its aims, understands the uses of its knowledge, and works best to achieve its aims in the education of those who are passed on to it.

Literary studies, including ancient and modern languages, even philology and language studies, while obviously having certain other useful benefits are "best understood as preliminaries to the enjoyment of the individual wonders of human life. Literature is to be

enjoyed. And the enjoyment is tied to the contemplation of the "wonders of man." Yet, Bouwsma hedges the claim with the word "preliminary." They wipe Jack and Jill's eyes, "remove film," but "sight is not for them to give." So while literary studies may bring enjoyment in the contemplation of the wonders of man, they are not productive of truth in this arena. "And yet it may be for the sake of what they cannot give that they are so busy."

In light of this cataloging of the branches of knowledge and their uses, it is no wonder then that in the liberal arts colleges there is nothing but confusion. Not only have we failed to distinguish the uses of knowledge, but each branch of knowledge has multiple uses. One branch has no exclusive claim to one kind of use. The result is: "Teach anything." The art's curriculum is a kaleidoscope. Most see this but are unable to clear the fog nor lead thru the political decision-making process to make any changes of significance.

<div align="center">III</div>

The first two questions in sorting and ordering thought about college education then are: 1) What are the functions of knowledge? and 2) What function or functions does each branch of knowledge have? A third and greater question is: "What were Jack and Jill made for? This question is of central importance to orienting ourselves on the education map. The latter question requires a choice between competing pictures of who Jack and Jill are and what their function is. It may be that one may, in planning for Jack and Jill's education, hold more than one of the competing pictures. But one will have to be chosen as primary and the other as secondary in order to give a coherent account of education.

Bouwsma presents four pictures of who Jack and Jill are and what they were made for. 1) Man is a rational animal. He was made as a thinker. An education accordingly should aim at the perfections of his rational faculties. 2) Man is a creature made by God. His function then is to glorify God and to enjoy the wonders of creation. An education under this picture would serve to develop his powers of enjoyment of these created wonders. 3) Man is made as part of nature and must function in the natural order of things. An education accordingly should teach him how to function best in the natural and human world. This will involve getting control of nature – of one's environs. 4) Man is to be a good citizen in a good

community.   An education aims at producing good citizens and good states, presumably democracies, in which to live.

Bouwsma does not present these four pictures in an entirely unbiased manner. For example, in 4, he describes the good citizen as one made to be governed and he worries that attention to the development of the individual citizen may well produce another Socrates.   Socrates, remember, presented difficulties to Athenian democracy. And, there is in picture 3, that man, as one part of nature, attempting to control other parts of nature, the possibility of the concentration and abuse of that power. Further, it is difficult to see how general studies (literary, philosophical, and general science) would figure into the picture.

Bouwsma's bias becomes more evident in his noticing how "nicely an educational scheme unfolds," if we adopt the picture that Jack and Jill were made to glorify God and enjoy his wonders. The sciences and arts come together in this project. The subtle and richness of language enable one to enjoy the glories of God in poetry, song, and novels. In them we may observe and contemplate the wonders of creation – both man and nature.

<center>IV</center>

There is reason to apologize, Bouwsma writes, for disputable and even false statements that he has made in describing the uses of knowledge and presenting the slanted view of some pictures of what man is made for. Nevertheless, it will be necessary to make such claims and choices if one is to proceed to an account of an education schema.

Further, the confusions and disagreements that educators may have about these issues do not mean that nothing good arises from a college education. One teacher may have a cherished scheme and pursue it with a measure of success. And any given student may pursue one or another of these schemes, picturing himself in one of several of these ways, again with a certain measure of success. As there will be failures in this democracy of educational aims, there will, likewise, be successes. Perhaps these last apologies and allowances for success under the kaleidoscope of contemporary college education programs are Bouwsma's concessions to his circumstances in teaching at a state university (The University of Nebraska). He held no illusions of turning Nebraska into the Calvin College of his youth. Not that Calvin College was without these same

difficulties. But the place of the picture of education as suited to Jack and Jill as creatures of God made for glory and enjoyment was one that Bouwsma could only harbor for himself as an individual teacher. So his essay serves not simply to sort and order concepts of education, but to reconcile his own place in a large and multifaceted university underwritten by the state of Nebraska. Nebraskans do need to know something of the ways of beef cattle and soybeans.

Bouwsma, O.K. "Mr. Murphy On Good Will." *Journal of Philosophy* November, 1945: 42,630-638.

The article is a discussion of an idea in a chapter of Arthur Murphy's book *The Uses of Reason* (1943). The chapter is titled, "Moral Order and Moral Freedom." Bouwsma identifies several sentences of Murphy that he wants to examine. They have to do with good will. In his examination, Bouwsma asks if whatever we desire is good and what makes a good will good. These are ideas he has taken from Murphy and questioned. Bouwsma playfully presents illustrations – cases – of someone's denying something. Is this good? He considers "the good Samaritan" and a story from Samuel Johnson caring for a poor woman. Bouwsma follows out expressions of "good" and "good will," as well as other sentences of Murphy – exploring how they might actually be used. He explores the meaning of the specific words and sentences of Murphy. "Let's see what Murphy means" and "Let's consider what it would be like to actually use this word or this sentence." Bouwsma is inventing a way of doing philosophy here that he came to practice the rest of his life. He is, by and large, independent of Wittgenstein in this invention at this point in his life. The content of the paper is not so interesting as the style and method that Bouwsma is developing.
Midway through the essay, Bouwsma describes what he is doing is the following way: " I have tried so far to suggest by certain analogies . . . what he [Murphy] might mean by . . . 'A good will is good.'" Bouwsma, that is, is completely aware of his developing technique in doing philosophy. He is teasing sense and nonsense out of sentences by means of providing analogies. What you say is like what the provided analogy says. And we make sense of

the provided analogy in such and such a way. Is this the sense that your sentences have? No? Then what? Further, Bouwsma, in this aside, says that he wants to go "to study his [Murphy's] language in order to probe further what he is describing. In this he again acknowledges explicitly a self-awareness of his new developing method. The method is inventing, recalling, and examining the "language-games" in which the words of the philosophers might actually be used.

Bouwsma goes on to do this as he has done earlier in the essay. He examines Murphy's language – his claims, such as: we shall find it hard to deny that a good will is good. In his concluding paragraph, Bouwsma says that his examination of Murphy's language has led him to either not understanding him or understanding him and denying what he has said. In other words, Murphy has either claimed something that makes no sense or he has claimed something that makes sense but false. I believe that Bouwsma is not completely confident enough yet to merely reject the claim as nonsense. He still entertains the idea that the philosophical claim is false. Later, he no longer entertains ideas of refuting the false claims of a philosopher. In such a paper as "Berkeley's Idealism," he replaces the philosopher's task of refutation with showing the nonsense of what has been said.

Bouwsma, O.K. "Descartes Skepticism of the Senses." *Mind* Oct. 1945: 54,313-322.

Also in:

-----. *Philosophical Essays*. Lincoln: Nebraska Press,1965.

In the first part of this essay, Bouwsma presents Descartes' puzzlement in the dream argument. He represents the puzzlement in his own way – in a way aimed at making clear what the puzzle is in Descartes. The dream puzzle about the reliability of the senses follows a general argument about the unreliability of the senses. If one can sometimes be fooled, how can one be sure that he is not always being fooled by the senses? The dream argument mounts up skepticism to the same conclusion. A dream is a sense-experience that represents no real objects behind it. If one cannot see the difference between a dream sense

experience and a non-dream sense experience, then we have good reason to doubt the real object behind the waking sense-experience. Bouwsma provides the following analogy: If we can imagine a mirror reflection so fine that we did not see it as a mirror, we could take it as the real object itself. Now imagine two of the same quality. We cannot tell one from the other. This is Descartes puzzlement restated: Do we have here: a) one fact and one mirror reflection (dream); b) two real objects – facts; or c) two mirror reflections (two dreams)? Bouwsma notices that Descartes never goes for b – two factual worlds. Why is that? In any case, what we have here so far from Bouwsma is merely the presentation or re-presentation of Descartes' puzzlement. Bouwsma proposes that he will investigate how Descartes came to lose his confidence in a – that there is a factual world and a dream world – and slides into the skepticism that follows the loss of confidence.

Bouwsma examines Descartes' uncertainty about telling the difference between wakefulness and dreaming while asleep. "Am I really here by the fire?" leads to "Am I awake?" Consider the analogous questions: "Is he awake?" and "Are you awake?" Bouwsma puts these two questions into contexts and shows how they make sense and would ordinarily be answered. Notice the contrast between what we know how to do with "Is he awake?"/"Are you awake?" and Descartes' questions. We do not yet know what to do with Descartes' question by contrast to these.

Next Bouwsma considers contexts for the question, "Am I awake?" There are some: 1) I see someone I thought was long gone and ask "Am I awake or dreaming?" 2) I awake from a dream confused and ask "Am I awake?" I see the bedroom wall and the pillow. 3) I have an hallucination like Macbeth's dagger of the mind. I am not sure what is happening and ask "Am I awake or is this a real dagger?" So, there are contexts in which the question makes sense and, in those contexts, I know how to answer the question or recognize it as a statement of astonishment. In any case, it is not Descartes' question and the cases do not bear Descartes' puzzlement nor epistemological skepticism.

Bouwsma examines the question Descartes asks directly: Am I really here by the fire, writing, etc.? Am I awake or dreaming? How could one tell? Suppose that Descartes is awake, and he asks, oddly enough, "Am I awake?" He could examine himself to see if he were lying down, eyes closed, etc. Or he could get his landlady to come in and take a

look at him. Nonsense. Suppose the opposite – that he is asleep, dreaming. Same thing. He can ask the questions that lead to the criteria of being asleep and dreaming. Am I snoring? Do I say that I have been dreaming? I can ask the landlady these questions too. These are the criteria for being asleep and dreaming. And, of course, it is nonsense to apply them to Descartes' situation by the fire.

Bouwsma adds for our consideration the analogous question: Am I alive or dead? The criteria for one's being alive or dead, again, are well known. Notice here that we check for the condition of the body of another person. Bouwsma is interested in showing here that it matters whether we are asking the question of a body – potential dead body – one that might be alive or dead. He is calling attention to the fact that in Descartes' philosophy, there is a separation of the person into bodies (as it were dead bodies) and mental substances – "I." The criteria for alive-dead is fitted to bodies as is the criteria for awake-dreaming. Yet Descartes blurs the appropriate places for these criteria to be applied – applying criteria meant for bodies to mental substances (*res cogitans*).

Bouwsma, O.K. "Variations on a Theme by Mr. Costello." *Journal of Philosophy* March,1946: 43,157-161.

Also in:

-----. *Philosophical Essays*. Lincoln: Nebraska Press,1965.

This paper was written as a response to "The Naturalism of Woodbridge," by H.T. Costello collected in *Naturalism and the Human Spirit*, a book of essays edited by Y.H. Krikorian.

The old lady, obviously simpleminded, finds it fantastic that the pocket of the kangaroo is thought-up or conceived by nature. "You mean to tell me . . .?!" She follows the path of her language – her natural expressions – "conceived," "thought of," "ends and means," "accidental," etc. The interlocutor, "I," is not simpleminded; he is modern minded, scientific minded. He listens and tries to explain. He is "incredulous,"

"disgusted," "upset," even exasperated at her simpleminded difficulties. Although in the end, when she seems to get it at last, she compares the kangaroo developing a pocket to the elephant's developing a howdah (seat with an umbrella). Just when she seems to get it, she doesn't at all. Poor man, to have to deal with such simpleminded old ladies.

So there is indigestible language in the theory of evolution. The language of evolution even suggests design – a forbidden word. Maybe we should ban the language of the old lady – "conceived," "thought of," "means and ends," etc. The theory does not readily harbor this language. It only serves to confuse simpleminded people. Maybe then we should get rid of it.

Bouwsma is not putting this forward as an argument against evolutionary theory. He is, however, concerned with the metaphysical theory of "naturalism" held by philosophers, such as Krikorian, who have swallowed evolution together with naturalism's presuppositions. While a scientific theory is not refuted by language, a metaphysical theory can be "frisked" by a philosopher to see if it makes sense. And this does involve a linguistic investigation. Unlike evaluating a scientific theory, it is a conceptual as opposed to an empirical investigation.

Bouwsma, O.K. "Naturalism." *Journal of Philosophy* January,1948: 45,12-21.

Also in:

-----. *Philosophical Essays*. Lincoln: Nebraska Press,1965.

The paper was originally prepared for and read at a symposium of the Western Division of the American Philosophical Association Meeting in Iowa City, 1947.

The sentences Bouwsma discusses are taken from *Naturalism and the Human Spirit*, ed. By Y.H. Krikorian (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944).

In reflecting on how he will proceed with the sentences on naturalism, which he has in front of him, Bouwsma makes some interesting observations about philosophical method. He opines that there are three ways of attacking a philosophical theory: 1) misunderstanding it, 2) refuting it, and 3) trying to understand it. In the year after he met Wittgenstein, he chose 3, but here in 1945, he chooses 2. This is a telling fact about Bouwsma's development. It is also interesting that he is, at this point, conscious of all three options.

Bouwsma sets out on a course of refutation. The naturalist's claim is that all knowledge is scientific (experimental) knowledge. This comes to: There is no knowledge that is not scientific knowledge. And now Bouwsma reminds us that there are at least two kinds of knowledge that are not scientific: laws of thought and mathematical knowledge. So the naturalist's claim stands refuted, but not so for the naturalist. The naturalist knows about the truths of the logician and of the mathematician, but does not allow that "all knowledge is scientific knowledge" has been refuted. It must be, he posits, that the laws of thought and mathematics are not knowledge. As knowledge, for the naturalist, is of a certain sort, logic and mathematics are not of that sort. They are not really knowledge.

The naturalist's view of apriori knowledge is tied into this denial of logical and mathematical knowledge. Apriori knowledge of the sort as laws of thought and the mathematical are a historical accident. That is, the laws of thought are based on grammar and the grammar of our language might have been different. Likewise, mathematics is not based upon some reality; it is an invention, and so it might have been invented differently. These, what seem to be apriori principles, are merely tools invented for a particular purpose. Bouwsma playfully asks: May they, like species that have developed out of usefulness, outlive their usefulness and pass away?

Another refutation of naturalism is that the justification that it is successful is not itself a claim of naturalism. How do we know that "all knowledge is scientific"? If we say the we know this because "it pays or is a successful strategy to believe this," then we are not believing it to be knowledge on the grounds set down in the basic principle of naturalism that all knowledge is scientific. Bouwsma calls this a second kind of refutation and the reader may recognize it as a kind often used in philosophy. This is the kind in which one turns a principle

of a metaphysical position against itself. Eg.: of ancient skepticism we may object: If all knowledge is doubtable, then the claim that all knowledge is doubtable is itself doubtable.

This refutation too, however, does not move the naturalist. The scientist works to develop and refine our expectations. And if our expectations are refined – are successful – then everyone is happy. This confirmation of expectations is all that the naturalist needs. Here the issue comes to: What counts as a "proof"? On the one hand, we have the language of "since," "therefore," and "contradiction" as criterion of proof. On the other, we have the language of "success" used as criterion of proof. And so the dispute over the naturalist's claim is not settled, as what we mean by "proof" is not settled. And who will adjudicate this dispute over "proof"? – the naturalist"?

Bouwsma shows that attempts at the refutation of naturalism has not and will not work to stop the naturalist. This is the Bouwsma, on his way to a later Bouwsma, who sees that refutation in philosophy is a useless activity. He later comes to full realization that refutation presupposes philosophical claims to be intelligible.

The naturalist then is seen to be in a position like the following: He is really and only articulating a policy. He is urging us to be scientific. And he is urging us to renounce metaphysics. He must believe that science and metaphysics are pursuing the same truth and that science succeeds in discovering that truth while metaphysics fails. The success of science becomes the criteria for claiming the validity of the scientific method for producing truth. Bouwsma notices the irony of the naturalist, who, in denying metaphysics, puts forward such a circular and irrefutable, ie. metaphysical claim.

Bouwsma is direct in disagreeing with the naturalist claim that metaphysics and science pursue the same ends. Unlike science, he points out, metaphysics pursues truths about God, morality, the nature of world. Bouwsma agrees that the naturalist is right in denying that metaphysics can produce this knowledge, because there is no agreement about what counts as proof. But naturalism itself, like the metaphysics it rejects, has no clear notion of proof other than success, which is no proof at all.

In his last thought on these matters, Bouwsma says that he can continue to be "entertained" by metaphysics,

and "in one instance even love it."   Does he mean
Christianity here?   – a comparison he would not have
allowed himself at a later time.

Bouwsma, O.K. "Descartes' Evil Genius." *Philosophical
Review* March,1949: 58,141–151.

Also in:

-----. *Philosophical Essays*. Lincoln: Nebraska Press,1965.

The paper begins with another evil genius – the devil in
the Garden of Eden. He entices Adam to knowledge of good
and evil, but, as Bouwsma reminds us, we are not God –
without God's knowledge – and inherit the human condition
by Adam's yielding to temptation. He playfully hints at
the place of skepticism and human knowledge in the human
condition.
     Bouwsma proposes to take up Descartes' "Evil Genius
Argument" from the "First Meditation." That evil genius
creates the illusion of a real world by presenting sense-
images to our consciousness when in fact there are no
physical objects behind the sense-images, that is, no
objects that the sense-images represent. The key word
under scrutiny here is "illusion." Bouwsma proposes an
investigation into the language of the evil genius to show
that the evil genius himself is "befuddled" in claiming to
create such an "illusion." If we can come to see his
befuddlement, we can escape it ourselves.
     Bouwsma makes a brief and playful allusion to other
similar kinds of illusion to which men have succumbed,
namely to Thales' "all is water" and materialists' "all is
billiard balls." The evil genius is bolstered by the fact
that men have fallen for the illusion that what appears as
hills, trees, sky, and other people is really water or a
collection of atom balls bouncing off each other.
Bouwsma's insight is that the metaphysics of idealism and
mind-body dualism are illusions of the same sort as the
illusion of materialism. The key to understanding this
will be an examination of the word "illusion."
     For this examination Bouwsma creates a fiction. A
certain fellow, Tom, enters a world totally constructed of
paper by the evil genius. The evil genius has created a

paper world as an illusion for such humans as Tom, expecting that they will be fooled to thinking that the objects of the world are real flowers, real tables, real people (Milly), etc., when they are only paper. Tom, of course, sees what he thinks are flowers, tables, and Milly, but immediately recognizes them as paper.

The aim of the imaginary story is to lay bare the concept of "illusion." An illusion involves being deceived, to be sure, but it also involves the discovery of the deception. Bouwsma writes of an illusion that it involves being deceived, to be sure, but it also involves the discovery of the deception. Bouwsma writes of an illusion that it is "something that looks or sounds like, so much like, something else that you either mistake it for something else, or you can easily understand how someone might come to do this." And later, "... that Tom is not deceived, that he detects the illusion, is introduced in order to remind ourselves how illusions are detected." The grammatical point made here is that something is called an "illusion" only when the means of detecting it are conceivable. I may be under the spell of an illusion and not know it, but it makes no sense to call it an illusion until one detects it. This grammatical fact will undo the evil genius' plan to create a world made of sense images with no conceivable means of detecting it. The evil genius' paper world may work to fool Tom for a moment, but then he recognizes the paper. He detects that someone has set out to make flowers, tables, and even people out of paper. Tom detects the illusion, enabling us to see what it means for the evil genius to create an illusion. Descartes' "evil genius" cannot meet the criteria for an "illusion."

To continue the exploration of the evil genius' illusory world, Bouwsma writes a second adventure of Tom and the evil genius. In this one, the evil genius will think and act as Descartes' evil genius, that is, he will create the illusion of a world undetectable by Tom. Of course we understand from the grammatical investigation in the first adventure that such a project of the evil genius is not conceivable. The world he creates for Tom is a world that Tom recognizes as the familiar world he has grown accustomed to. He sniffs the flowers that are delicate to the touch and he leans on the table and speaks as he ordinarily does to Milly. There is no difference between Tom's everyday world and the illusion the evil genius has created for him. And what is called an

"illusion" in this second adventure is not what we ordinarily call an "illusion."

The evil genius is now frustrated. He has created an illusion (has he?) that cannot be called an illusion. It would make no sense to call it an illusion. Out of frustration, perhaps, the evil genius, who wants to be the creator of an illusion and realizing that it must be detected, enters into Tom's mind, through the pineal gland naturally, in order to introduce doubt. It is, of course, one thing to introduce an imaginary doubt, another thing to introduce a real doubt, and still another to provide the means of detection of an illusion. So we must understand the evil genius' accomplishment, if he were to accomplish it, to be that of introducing an imaginary doubt. He begins by whispering the doubt – the possibility of deception – to Tom. Perhaps these flowers are not real flowers. Perhaps this table is not really there to hold the flower vase. But what is Tom to make out of this proposed doubt. If he employs his means of detecting whether the flowers are real, he can only detect that they are paper or plastic etc. He can double check his eyes by using his nose and touch. But, of course, if all of his senses are ruled out as illusion detectors, the concept "illusion" is still beyond intelligibility for both Tom and the evil genius. It will not help to call real flowers "thick illusions" and the evil genius' duplicates "thin illusions"! The evil genius' illusion cannot be differentiated from no illusion at all. The nonsense of his project is now patent.

Language is at the center of Bouwsma's investigation. Descartes' word "illusion" is exposed as nonsense. The evil genius cannot create such an illusion for Tom. The deception must be in Tom's language. Descartes' evil genius must use the words "flowers," "table," "sky," "Milly" as Tom does. "Illusion" flowers must be smelled, touched, and regarded as real flowers, and when they are, they are no longer "illusions."

Bouwsma, O.K. "Remarks On The Cogito." *Toward A New Sensibility*. Ed. J.L. Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1982. [probably written c.1950]

There is no precise date to attach to this essay. It was probably written in the 1940's or 50's, when Bouwsma worked steadily on Descartes' *Meditations*. Skepticism is the theme Bouwsma repeatedly fastens on in the *Mediations*. The refutation of skepticism ordinarily leads to realism. Bouwsma takes up skepticism, but not to refute it in favor of realism. Rather he follows a new path to a new understanding of philosophy's task. He follows it to a new understanding of philosophy's task. He passes through Descartes' sentences, uncovering the hidden gears that drive the wheels of realism and idealism.

In "Remarks On The Cogito," Bouwsma selects several sentences from Descartes' "Second Meditation" as keys to uncovering the confusions leading to skepticism and the realist-idealist dilemma that follows from it.

"The Cogito" is an argument in Descartes' "Second Meditation." that follows from Descartes' doubts developed in the "First Meditation". Bouwsma identifies these doubts as confusions.

The dream argument can be thought to rest upon a simple fact that Descartes believes to be true. By means of the dream argument, he believes that one cannot distinguish between seeing something and dreaming something. One cannot distinguish between seeing a dagger and dreaming a dagger. In short, Descartes takes it as a fact that one cannot distinguish between what I see and what I dream. And this so called "fact" Bouwsma intends to show as a confusion. To show this, he plays with the word "distinguish." If two similar things were so close together that they looked like one, we might pass something between them to show that there were really two things here. But Descartes' seeing and dreaming are not like this. They are quite different things. What sense does it make to distinguish between two things that are quite different from each other? It is not as if one readily confuses very different things. It would be nonsense to distinguish between a pig's squeal and the color red or between high C and a peanut. On what occasion would we make such a distinction? These analogous distinctions are compared to making a distinction between seeing and dreaming. Outside the sort of philosophical doubting in the "First Meditation," we do not raise the question of how to tell the difference between appropriate places to use the words "seeing" and "dreaming." We are clear on their respective grammars. Bouwsma: "It comes then to this that the sentence 'I can distinguish between what I see and what I dream,' is senseless."

Bouwsma rehearses some other doubts of Descartes' that he, Descartes, uses to refresh his bewilderment the skeptical arguments of the "First meditation": 1) Everything I see is a fiction; it has no backup in the external world; 2) My memory is, possibly, fallacious and perhaps everything I remember never took place; 3) I do not have any senses; 4) Body, figure, extension, motion, place are fictions of my mind and not properties of a world outside of my mind. Bouwsma lets most of this pass with only minor hints of the nonsense contained in these worries. What would it mean for example, to say: "I remember the house where I was born, but I don't believe it," or "I suppose I have no senses"?

In the "First Meditation," Descartes alludes to his intention to make a "clean sweep." He proposes to sweep out everything that he believed to be true and to start with a clean nothing. Bouwsma plays with this. What would such a clean sweep be like? Having swept away the earth and seas and heaven, do they look any different than they did before they were swept away? Or is it that one looks out and sees nothing? Looks out from what, from where? Is this like looking out from a window? How can one think this thought? Descartes too wonders how he can think "these very thoughts." Were not "these very thoughts" swept out too?

Descartes is close to his *cogito* here. He has convinced himself that he has swept out everything – even his thoughts. And then: "But if I did convince myself of anything, I must have existed." That I existed yesterday does not prove that I now exist, but if I remind you that yesterday, when meditating, I convinced myself that nothing existed, then I must now exist.

Bouwsma patiently explores the path by means of which Descartes comes to his indubitable "I." That path goes through doubts to what he believes is indubitable. Descartes is convinced that he has convinced himself that nothing exists. The conviction that nothing exists will not deliver the indubitable I, but the conviction that he is convinced that nothing exists will. For who is it that is convinced? It is as if, Bouwsma writes, someone else is coming to you and trying to convince you that nothing, including yourself, exists. And you defiantly laugh in his face – a rhetorical "What am I, chopped liver!"

Descartes, it seems, is looking for something different amidst all the doubtful somethings in the universe – "a different not-something," Bouwsma calls it. That different not-something is the I. The I has

properties. It thinks. It doubts. It is capable of being deceived. And it is from these properties that Descartes concludes the indubitableness of the I. Bouwsma is exploring the path of Descartes' doubts and resolutions of doubt. The aim is to uncover the hidden temptations and analogies and suppositions that are in Descartes' expressions.

The expressions are teased for sense. "I convinced myself that nothing exists," does not make sense. And if I did convince myself of this yesterday, and that did prove that I existed yesterday, it would not prove that I exist today. I will have to convince myself of this everyday. Descartes will have to maintain this convincing each new day, for the proof to hold up. Continuing in this absurdity, Bouwsma represents Descartes' proof as: "If I doubt that I am convincing myself at the present moment, then I must exist." But, does the sentence, "I doubt that I am convincing myself" make sense? Compare it to the sentence: "I stick a pin in my conviction." On what occasions do we raise the doubts of our convictions? There are such occasions. But what occasion is there for convincing myself that nothing, including myself, exists? Bouwsma's philosophical method involves teasing Descartes' sentence for sense. It is a kind of *reductio ad absurdum* argument, but not of the usual kind. The reduction here is not to a contradiction but to nonsense.

Bouwsma has the insight that Descartes has two "I's" confused in his thoughts. The one "I" is "I-Descartes," a Frenchman with eyes, nose, ears, owns a nightgown, and sits by the fire. The other "I" is an abstract "I," call him "Mr. I," who cannot distinguish between seeing something and dreaming something, has no world to live in, has no senses nor memory, doubts and is deceived, but surely exists as something different from all other somethings whose existence are in doubt. This Mr. I is a discovery that Descartes has made. But this discovery is quite unlike the discovery that one may make of another's existence. We may read about Napoleon, for example, in history books, find his house, interview Josephine, etc. But the discovery of Mr. I is not made along these lines. Mr. I has no history, no sense, no memory. Discovering him is very difficult and is done through philosophical meditations that begin with such considerations as: "I cannot distinguish between seeing and dreaming"; "Whatever things I see are illusions"; and "If I convince myself of

anything, I must exist." Out of these confusions arise the Pheonix "Mr.I."

Bouwsma closes with an insightful grammatical remark about the word "I": "'I' is one of those words, which, like proper names, has no meaning. No one who knows any English, who can speak it, can ask: "What does 'I' mean?"

Bouwsma, O.K. "The Expression Theory of Art." *Philosophical Analysis: A Collection of Essays*. Ed. Max Black. New Jersey: Prentice Hall,1950.

Also in:

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Bouwsma sets out to understand the expression theory of art and to examine confusions involved in it. At the end of the essay, he says that it seems that he has been echoing the words of Benedetto Croce that he read many years ago: "Beauty is expression." So, then, while the essay examines the puzzlement generated by a sentence, "The music is sad," which reflects the expression theory of art, Bouwsma is not attempting to overthrow the idea of art as expressing emotion. He, rather, is attempting to understand the idea that music, as an instance of art expresses emotions – emotions such as sadness. How can that be? What do we mean by, "The music is sad"?

Croce, in the early 1900's and his follower, R.G. Collingwood in *The Principles of Art* in 1938, give an account of the expression theory that must have interested Bouwsma. Independently of reading Croce, music was an important part of Bouwsma' family life. His love of music in itself could have given rise to the philosophical puzzlement over the sentence "the music is sad." Nevertheless, Bouwsma, in his earlier idealist frame of mind would have been attracted to Croce's expression theory and may well have read Collingwood's version of the theory as well, as it was published only a decade prior to Bouwsma's essay.

Collingwood describes art, not as arousing emotions, but as expressing feelings through the imagination. The artist, Collingwood says, does not fully know what he is

expressing until he has done it through the artifact. Art is not the same as language. Language can be a tool to describe feelings or create feelings in another, but technique used as such a tool is not art. There is, however, an analogy to art in language in that we may not know what it is we want to say until we found the words to say it. Further, we can express ourselves in language and this makes it look as if the expression is of something – not fully conscious feelings or thoughts – that are somehow present and needing to be expressed. Bouwsma was occupied with such philosophical issues as these – thought, language, expression – throughout his philosophical life. And, he was particularly focused on these issues at the time he wrote this essay. His notebooks show that he discussed the ideas for the essay with Elizabeth Anscombe during the year he gave the John Locke Lectures and at the same time that he was discussing philosophy with Wittgenstein (1949-51). One can readily see Wittgenstein's influence in Bouwsma's developing examples of expressions.

The essay is divided into the three sections.

I

Bouwsma proposes to try to understand the "Expression Theory of Art" by identifying the puzzlement and the question to which the Expression Theory is an answer. How do the proponents of the theory come to say that art is the expression of emotion? What does "expression of emotion" mean? Bouwsma chooses the case of music to explore the idea of expression of emotion – "The music is sad." It is not insignificant that music is chosen rather than the other arts. The absence of words in music highlights the contrast between the wordless medium and the words necessary for the expression of emotion. And so with music, we feel more keenly the pinch of the problem: How can wordless art express emotions that ordinarily require words to identify and convey? He proposes, accordingly, to examine the sentence one might say upon hearing a sad piece of music: "The music is sad." How can music be sad?

Bouwsma presents the puzzlement though a story. Two men – Octavo and Verbo – during intermission at a concert describe the music they heard as sad. Verbo, the philosopher, preoccupied with the words, cannot see how music can be predicated with an emotion. "The music is loud," or "the music is played too fast," by contrast, present no such puzzlement. Pinched by the felt clash of the concepts of music and emotion, Verbo asks: "How can

the music be sad?" If Cassie is sad, and Cassie has a soul, does this mean that the music has a soul? "Soul music." Does the sadness of the composer somehow "overflow" into the music or into the soul of the listener?

The form of philosophical puzzlement may be seen as a paradox – How is it possible that X and Y are true at the same time. Is the music paradox like Zeno's paradox? How is it possible that Achilles can catch a tortoise from behind? How is it possible that a racehorse can catch another horse from behind? It will not do, it seems, to adopt Parmenides' solution to the puzzle. Parmenides would have us stop using the words "music," "sad," etc. He would have us deny ordinary talk, because such talk is full of paradox. So we cannot predicate anything of anything. This is futile. The puzzlement will not subside. Notice that the puzzlement arises out of ordinary language and that we cannot be rid of it by ceasing to use ordinary language. The puzzlement is in the language, and must be resovled in the language.

The expression theory of art arises out of the attempt to explain this puzzlement. One must first hear the question and feel its puzzlement to begin to understand the theory. One asks: "How is it possible that music is sad?" The Expression Theory then quells the puzzlement: "The music *expresses* sadness?"

When we look closely at the music – the succession of notes on the flute, etc. – to see exactly what it is about the music that is sad, the puzzlement returns. How can notes be sad? The relief does not come from examining the music. The sadness is not in the music. Neither is the puzzlement to be found in the music. Verbo returns to the concert, undisturbed, to his sad music. The puzzlement, rather, is in the words surrounding what we say about the music. So we must examine the various expressions in the language, if we are to find relief from the puzzlement.

<center>II</center>

Bouwsma provides illustrations of different circumstances in which we may understand "Cassie is sad": Her cat has died; her fiancé will never return; she reads a sad passage from a book. Bouwsma provides variations on sentences for comparison: "Cassie's dog is sad"; "Cassie's cousin is sad"; "Cassie has a sad face"; "Cassie's book is sad." How are these like: "The music is sad"?

Bouwsma wants to compare these sentences saying that one is sometimes like another and sometimes not. We

sometimes look, for example, in the reading of a passage for the sadness and sometimes look for it in the person. But the various analogies to our sentence gives us one picture and then another, and this produces the philosophical puzzlement.

III

The "Expression Theory," comes to: "The music is sad," means: the music is the expression of sadness or of a certain sadness."

This makes it look as if there are two things: the emotion and the expression of the emotion. The emotion (sad) is what Cassie has when her cat dies. The expression of the emotion is Cassie's tears, her sobbing, her confiding in others, her talk.

Bouwsma notices the metaphor of liquids in connection with emotion: emotions flow and overflow.

In poetry there is, in this picture, a build up of emotion. The poem then becomes the overflow. It, the poem, is the poet's expression of emotion. The reader of the poem expresses his emotion at the reading of it.

Notice: that poems and music are quite different, and yet are being compared. Notice that piano tones, dying cats, and lost loves are all quite different. But both piano tones and the subjects that make us sad are said to "evoke" emotions in us. So the comparison of music and poetry seems apt because of this aspect of evoking.

Bouwsma considers Santayana's phrase that "the joy and sweetness [the emotions] are in the very words," and by extension in the very music. It would be strange if we were to say this about the sentence: "The elephant ate a jumbo peanut." – Does this mean that the elephant and peanut are in the very words? The suggestion that the emotion is expressed in the sentence is connected to the question: What is the meaning of the sentence? Its corrective is to understand what one means by the question: What is the meaning of the sentence? In ordinary contexts it might mean: How do I understand this sentence . . . ? And the answer to this question might, in its general form, be: read or speak the sentence in a different way; give it a different reading or speak it in a different way. This will be good advice if you do not understand a piece of music or a poem. Read it again or play it again.

Bouwsma is concerned to point out misleading analogies that lead to confusions with respect to music and poems

expressing emotions, sadness for example. He sees that there may be a comparison to ordinary sentences here. A sentence, unlike a piece of music or poem, will express a meaning. The meaning may be stated. Likewise the sentence may be translated to another, and the translation may be judged on the basis of whether the translation has captured the meaning expressed by the first sentence. But this is not how it is with music and poetry. Music and poetry do not express meanings in this way. They are not translated. The emotion, accordingly, is not the meaning expressed by the music or poem. One may see the disanalogy between a sentence and a piece of music by asking the question of each, respectively: What does it mean? We answer the question of the sentence with another sentence, but the question put to the meaning of a piece of music – What does it mean? – makes no sense.

   These various analogies are not distinguished in the thinking about the expression theory of art, and are, consequently, the source of confusions. Bouwsma's task is to identify these analogies to help guard against their incursions into one's thinking about art, particularly music, as the expression of emotion. He concludes that an analogy may be aptly drawn in one setting and useless or misleading in another.

   Should we drop the word "expression" from our talk? – No, but we must understand it. Think of the uses of the word "expression." Each word has a character – a particular feel – in its usages. In a poem the character of the word has expressiveness. "Hi diddle diddle!" But do not ask: What is its character? Nor: What does it express? It is not like that. Art expresses. Music expresses. But we are confused if we go on to ask: What does music express? Music and art are not nonsense. But they do not express meaning nor emotion. The expression theory is meant to answer a felt puzzlement: How can music express an emotion when the sadness is not in the music?! But this puzzlement is based on the presupposition that music and poems express a meaning – on the analogy with meaningful language. This is the presupposition that Bouwsma is exposing. There is a use for the language of expressiveness. We need not be barred from it. We need to understand the language of expressiveness in connection with art. Words have character. Notes have character.

Bouwsma summarizes his reflections on the Expression Theory. He has not refuted the theory, nor has he tried to. But neither has he shown, in his usual manner, the main expression of the theory – "The music is sad" – to be nonsense. What he has done is to show the theory to be a response to a confused puzzle and to show how the puzzle develops out of expressions such as "The music is sad." He feels he has accomplished a mission with a limited objective. This might be frustrating for a reader who wants either a knockout refutation or even a clear display that the theory makes no sense. The expression "The music is sad" does make sense and grasping its sense enables us to avoid the confused ideas of the Expression Theory.

"The music is sad" leads the philosopher proposing the expression theory to look for an emotion in the music. But where is it? Bouwsma compares "The music is sad" to "The geranium is living," but if we ask where the life in the geranium is, we are puzzled by the question in a similar way to the way we are puzzled by where the sadness is. Such expressions make it sound as if there is some ineffable something harbored in the geranium or in the music. The expression leads us to look for something in addition to what is evident in the music itself.

And what is evident in the music itself? Bouwsma prefers the word "expressive" to "expression" – the music itself is expressive, rather than "an expression of an emotion." He gives us the word "character" and its grammar as a helpful parallel expression. Words and faces may have a character. They can be expressive. They carry characteristics with them, but not a separate something such as an emotion or conscious state. A face has the characteristics of a sad face – a trembling lip, a teary eye. The face may be expressive in this way. Likewise music.

There are, too, characteristics of sadness in people that are characteristics of music. A sad person may speak in a low voice and at a slow pace. And sad music may well be at low pitch and have a slow tempo. And more such comparisons of sad people to sad music may be given. It may also be sensibly said of sad music that it evokes sadness in a person. Such remarks may be given in answer to the question what makes the music sad? So the question "What makes the music sad?" is a sensible question – it may be asked and answered in our ordinary discourse. But this question and its answers are not exhaustive of what the Expression Theory contains. The Expression Theory claims

more; namely that the music somehow bears an emotion. And that emotion is what is elusive when we examine the music.

Santayana is caught up in the confusion of the theory. He says, remember, "Not until I confound the impressions (the music; the sentences) and suffuse the symbols with the emotions they arouse ..." Music is "confounded" and "suffused" with emotion. But how can that be? Bouwsma, instead of explaining how it can be, uncovers and highlights an unnoticed analogy that makes (Santayana) us want to confound and suffuse emotions in music and sentences. Music is like a sentence. A sentence can express an emotion or a feeling. "Cassie is sad because she lost her cat." We can ask what the meaning of such a sentence is. We can explain the meaning if asked. But in pointing out the analogy, Bouwsma also points out the disanalogy and that not noticing the disanalogy results in the confusions of the Expression Theory. The disanalogy is that unlike a sentence, music does not have meaning. We do not ask what the meaning of the music is and could not imagine getting an answer to that question. When we hear the claim, "The music is sad," we may think of it as the answer to the question: What does the music express? And while this is a sensible question and answer, it covers over another nonsense question: What does the music mean? As if the music were a sentence that could express meaning. Seeing the analogy and its disanalogous aspect, cuts us loose from Santayana's temptation to confound and suffuse the music with emotion.

The Expression Theory of Art, Bouwsma says, is a "thicket of tangle-words." He has tried to pick his way through this thicket. He has neither refuted the theory nor cleared it of confusions, making it fit for duty. He has shown us a way through a thicket.

Bouwsma, O.K. "The Flux." The John Locke Lectures. Ed. Ronald E. Hustwit. Oxford University. Winter,1951.

These John Locke Lectures were delivered during the winter term of l951 at Oxford University. Bouwsma had been awarded a Fulbright Lectureship to lecture in England for the academic year l950-51. He was appointed as Honorary

Professor of Philosophy at Magdalene College, Oxford and was sought out to deliver the lectures later in that year.

Bouwsma called the subject matter of these lectures "the Flux." The title surely refers to Heraclitus: "All things are in flux" or "All things flow." As the flux in Heraclitus refers to the continual change or flow of sense experience, so too Bouwsma uses it to refer to the flow of sense experience in consciousness. But Bouwsma's interest is not in developing or refining the concept nor, really, in tracing its history in Plato, James, Bergson, etc., though he does some of the latter. His interest rather, is in understanding the flux as it relates to the conception of the meaning of a word – the meaning of a word is its referent in the flux. Various philosophers, including James, Plato, and Bergson have written of the flux in different ways, and some even of naming in relation to the flux. But Bouwsma wants to come to understand or to be satisfied that he does not understand what they have said with respect to how what they have said about the flux is a function of their conception of the way words have meaning. They, of course, have operated without benefit of Wittgenstein's insights into the workings of language – specifically, that the meaning of a word is its actual use in the language and not some piece of the flux for which it stands.

Bouwsma takes up William James' "stream of thought" in the first lecture. Typically, his style of writing on a philosophical problem appears baffling at first. He begins with some seemingly aimless banter about the authorship of Shakespeare's plays, Plato's figure of the aviary, and Locke's "sheet of white paper." But the latter is relevant background for thinking about James' stream of thought. Why should James think of thought as a stream? This type of question sets the tone for all of the lectures. How are we to understand James or Plato or Bergson on some particular idea relevant to the flux and the problem of meaning? Bouwsma proceeds to dissect selected ideas of these thinkers as they relate to his topic. Why does James think of thought as a stream? His predecessors, including Locke and Hume, thought of consciousness in terms of individual units of sense ideas. Consciousness was thought of as a series of sense ideas in the way a train is a series of cars or word is a series of letters or a kaleidoscope is made of bits of colored glass. But what now of the flux – the changing continuous flow of consciousness? How can sense ideas be discrete if they are as discrete as cars and letters and bits of colored glass?

They must be thought of, then, as continuous. They are like a stream. If our ideas are like water and if we think of them as discrete, then it would be as if they were a collection of cans filled with water. It is not like that. The stuff of ideas is like a fluid, but the fluid is connected, it flows in and around the cans – as if in a stream. And now the cans fall out of the picture as unnecessary. Our thoughts flow as our sentences flow. Sentences are not sets of separate words. Sentences are all of a piece. What connects them? Tiny words such as "ifs" and "buts" and "ands" and many more connect them. And what are these? They are the names of feelings James says – feelings that flow together with many other named feelings. And just as feelings flow together and flow on in our consciousnesses, so too our sentences flow together and on from our mouths and pens. Sentences flow and mean as names of feelings that flow in our consciousnesses. Thought is the flow of consciousness, and sentences are the sets of names of the flowing consciousness. The meaning of a word is the thing named in the consciousness. And so Bouwsma's interest focuses on James stream of thought. If one were to read the *Principles of Psychology* alongside Bouwsma's lectures, one could see how closely Bouwsma was reading James, how he took pains to try to see why James wanted to say what he did, and why he choose the particular images that he did. This is true as well for the particular themes he takes up in Plato, Bergson, Ayer, etc. in the remaining lectures.

"Lectures 2" and "Lecture 3" have subjects similar to each other. In them, Bouwsma looks into the fascination that philosophers have had with the idea that a word is the name of something. A consequent of this idea is that a word is an image, somehow, of the thing it names. Under this conception, a word, of course, means because it names an image (something in the flux). The word, however, also has some of the properties of the image itself. There is something "fitting" or "natural" about the relationship between the word and the image. Is this perhaps why James thought that a word could go proxy for its image or mental accompaniment in the stream of consciousness? Socrates, in *Cratylus*, speaks of this fit between a word and the thing named: "... have we not several times acknowledged that names rightly given are the likenesses and images of the things which they name?" (Plato 439). Bouwsma, quoting the longer passage from which this comes, discusses this idea of "names rightly given" in Lecture 3. What makes it seem right that a word would fit its referent? Bouwsma refers

to this as the "theory of natural names" – an eagle is named naturally by "eagle." Why? Because "eagle" must carry an idea with it that looks like an eagle. This idea is not unique to Plato but is "one of a family which has kept philosophers itching and uneasy" for some time. The other family members are: "The conception of form, the sentence as picture, ideas as images, the proposition, the correspondence theory of truth, the problem of imageless thought, etc." Consequently, the understanding of the roots of this misconception of the theory of natural names has importance for a widening range of philosophical problems.

In "Lecture 4" the theme of the flux is continued in Henre Bergson's interest in consciousness and self in his book *Time and Free Will*. My guess is that this book was of more general interest in 1951 than it is today. Bouwsma presupposes that the audience will recognize the book and his interest in it. He copies a number of sentences and phrases from the book. They are generally reflective of Bergson's interest in the self as composed of continuous consciousness – as if in a "deep pool." More specifically, Bouwsma's attention turns to Bergson's idea that those who deny the freedom of the will are thinking of the soul as a string of cars "bumping and pulling" one another. Bergson intends to correct this misconception and replaces this picture with that of the soul as a deep pool. Here again, the flux, as in James, is seen as a correction to a mechanical picture of consciousness. As he did with James, Bouwsma proceeds to try to understand the phrases and images of Bergson. Similarly, he appreciates the corrective that Bergson is trying to affect, while struggling to understand what prompted Bergson to offer this corrective. Bergson too, then, is a proponent of the flux. He proposes that we see consciousness as flux rather than as measurable elements – "psychical states." In the process, Bouwsma produces some typically fine philosophical analysis of the mechanistic theory that attempts to compare psychical states to each other as if they were measurable units of consciousness. What use do such expressions as "I am not as tired as I was" and "I am sadder than I was" actually have? Here Bouwsma practices the same kind of analysis, though not in as much detail, as he does so markedly in his later papers that bear so distinctly the mark of his work after the *Philosophical Investigations* was published. The lecture ends with an unusual twist on the idea of the flux being similar in a certain respect to the idea of meaning is use. Bouwsma reflects: "And should

anyone now seek rather to escape the discovery of the flux, hiding himself as it were from what by strenuous effort he may see, what are we to tell him? Tell him that words like chameleons, have their environments, and like the chameleons they change color; ... The words 'more' and 'less' may be pink in one context and green in another; shaped like dice in one context and like fog in another." As he does throughout the lectures, Bouwsma attempts to practice analysis in the form of the question: Why is X saying or trying to say what he does? And in the case of Bergson, as with James, Bouwsma is noticeably appreciative of what Bergson is trying to do.

Bouwsma takes up some of the language of sense-data theory in "Lectures 5" and "Lectures 6" as connected to, but not so easily identifiable with, the flux. The language of the flux in James and Bergson contain pictures of consciousness flowing and changing – "all things flow," "stream of thought," "the river of elementary feeling"– that were easily identifiable as presenting the idea of the flux. But the language of sense-data theory is not so easily recognizable as being connected to the very same problems. The language of sense-data theory is "so simple"; it is "such a little word language." It contains such sentences as: "I see a patch," and "I see a match-box." "Speculum" and "sense-data" are also seen. Bouwsma frisks a handful of sentences from the sense-data theorists. Ayer and Price are mentioned by name, but the sentences for consideration are presented without direct identification of any particular philosopher. For example, Bouwsma writes: "Well, this first friend of mine said: 'A sense-datum is an object of acquaintance.'" And what follows is a classic piece of analysis identified uniquely with Bouwsma. He has acquaintances and he is always glad to make new acquaintances, but he is not acquainted with these people as one is acquainted with sense-data. The latter, sense-data, he does not understand yet. "An object of acquaintance" – is this like knowing Dublin, McConnell Bridge, Walnut St., etc.? Bouwsma tries repeatedly to "pick up an affinity for the word 'acquaintance'" and fails. This is the dominant method of analysis throughout the final two lectures. Later in his work, Bouwsma came to call this method: "the method of failure." He tries to understand some piece of philosophical language by placing it in circumstances where it looks as if it might belong. "'Acquaintances,' I know something of the word 'acquaintances.' Let me show you." But then what he knows only shows that we cannot understand what the philosopher

who used the word meant, for the latter is not using the word in ways with which one is familiar. And so, on it goes with seeing tomatoes and speculum, and with "there exists some object." The analysis of "I see a match-box" concludes with Bouwsma's confession: "It must be that I don't understand this" and "I don't get it." The country visitor from Nebraska was not feigning ignorance here, he was patiently and deftly showing that the language of the sense-data theorists failed to make sense. The lectures end appropriately with a joke. After teasing out the sense of "speculum," Bouwsma says: "How it [speculum] glances off the surfaces of tomatoes and match-boxes is another story which I hope to discuss in the next lecture. Null class."

The "John Locke Lectures" preceded the publication of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* by several years. Subsequently, Bouwsma developed a fuller understanding of that work with much reading, writing, and discussing. Later he would not write about five philosophers in one study, but the essential ingredients of his analysis are present in these lectures. The idea that the meaning of a word is its use is central to the lectures, and Bouwsma knows how to apply this idea to a central theme in the history of philosophy – that fluctuating states of consciousness are the referents and meanings of our words and are the objects that compose the world. He understands that the important flux is context – as the context of a word fluctuates, so also does the meaning of a word. And, he demonstrates several, though not all, of the full range of analytic skills and techniques that he commands in his later works. He demonstrates here the techniques of trying to understand a philosophical expression by replacing it in the original context, by developing appropriate analogies to make another's ideas clear, by looking for the motive of a philosopher's statements, and by making the nonsense of a statement apparent by contrasting it with sense. Later Bouwsma would use more techniques and use them more patiently, but what is here in the John Locke Lectures is, nevertheless, the work of a mature philosopher who had nurtured himself on the *Blue Book* for ten years. It is work that merits attention, not merely as a milestone in Bouwsma's journey, but as an impressive piece of philosophical work.

Bouwsma, O.K. "The Mystery of Time (Or the man who Did Not Know What Time Is)." *Journal of Philosophy* June,1954: 51,341-363.

Also published in:

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The essay opens with the story of a man who is puzzled by time. The puzzle arises for him through the idea of measuring time. By trade, the man lays linoleum, where he regularly needs to measure and cut. With linoleum there is something to measure. He is fascinated by the analogy of linoleum to time. If linoleum can be measured and if time is measured by clocks, then where is the equivalent of linoleum in the measurement of time? Where is time? What is time?

Bouwsma reminds us of the Lilliputians who find a watch in Gulliver's pocket. What is it? They have never seen such a thing. And how is it constructed? What is it designed to do? – to measure time. Now the hero of the story asks again what is it that clocks measure. Does it help to visit a clock maker? – a clock store? Apparently not. Is a clock like a water meter? Again, a water meter measures something – water. Time should, by this analogy, flow through the measuring machine – the clock. But where is the time? What is it?

Our attention is drawn to analogies in the philosophical puzzle of time. These analogies of measuring flooring and water meters suggest something to be measured – something in space. The analogy of measuring space is extended to time. Question: Is this the analogy behind the puzzlement of time? Philosophy's task: to uncover the hidden analogy.

There is an interlude in this essay, Section II, between the business of Sections I and III. The interlude, Bouwsma describes as like a child's playing in a large house. It may also be thought of as a labyrinth. The play is with the expression of time. And, not only is there a rehearsing of many expressions in which "time" occurs, there is play with those expressions. Bouwsma plays, by extending an ordinary expression by what one would say next about time in the expression, by connecting expressions of time to other concepts, by noting analogous expressions to

those of "time," and more. Here is a sample: "It will soon be time. What was it before? A month of Sundays. Five minutes late. Which five minutes? Times overlap. It seems so." There are six pages of such play with expressions of "time." Here one can clearly feel the influence of James Joyce on Bouwsma. But he is not aimlessly echoing Joyce's style here. He describes the point of his play in this labyrinth as reminding the one confounded by the question of time that it is an odd thing that a speaker of English who can play in the labyrinth of "time" expressions without puzzlement can at the same time be baffled as to what time is. The puzzlement makes it look as if he does not know what he clearly does know. Now, how can that be? The form of a philosophical puzzle, Wittgenstein says, is: "I don't know my way around."

After the play in the labyrinth, there is another narrative: "the mystery of the sea" – Section III. The narrative paints a majestic picture of the sea. He gives himself permission to enjoy imaginative roaming in pursuit of a philosophical point. Grasping the point is up to the reader. What reader of a philosophical journal will read with the patience for literary description or with a relish for play in language? "The mystery of the sea" is so presented and embellished.

There is another mystery – the mystery of the heavens, of the stars and the sky. Bouwsma reminds us through quotations of others who write of the awe, majesty, and mystery of stars and sky. But does the comparison of these mysteries to the mystery of time help? It looks on the face of it that the comparison does not help. The expressions look alike: "The mystery of -----" But the mystery of the sea, sky, stars are sung of, praised as majestic and grand. But the philosopher-linoleum-layer is not a poet singing the praises of time. His mystery is not produced by awe, but by philosophical puzzlement brought by a variety of submerged analogies. Such analogies are brought to the surface.

Bouwsma supposes that the expression "the mystery of time" is, nevertheless, like "the mystery of the sea." That is, though these other mysteries do not shed light on the "the mystery of time," nevertheless, the expression itself bears similar marks to the expression "the mystery of the sea." He wants to digress to bring out the comparison of time to sea – how time is like the sea. This may shed light on the grip that the images of the sea have on our thinking about time. To do this, Bouwsma explores five metaphors of time that could be as easily applied to

the sea. They suggest the sea because the sea could just as easily be the subject of the same sentences. The five sentences are: 1) Time is illimitable; 2) Time is silent; 3) Time never rests; 4) Time rolls, rushes on; 5) Time is all embracing. Try substituting "the sea" for "time" in each of these sentences. Bouwsma, again, explores these sentences, one at a time. Each exploration is full of expressions of the word "time" as well as snippets of free associations following these expressions ala James Joyce.

The final comparison of time is to aether. In particular, Bouwsma sites a lengthy quotation from Newton on the aether. Aether, Newton describes, is like air but more rare, subtler, more elastic. And what is aether? It is a mysterious stuff something like air only different. It is hard to get a handle on – it is mysterious. So too, time is something like aether and something like air. And, of course, the analogies to air and aether suggest, in covert ways, how it is with time – that it is a something, that it can be measured, that it flows, etc., and of course that it is mysterious.

On reading this paper soon after it appeared in *Philosophical Essays*, a philosopher might say that Bouwsma does not say anything in it – that he does not advance any thesis about time. It does not, in fact, put forward any claims about time. And Bouwsma does not argue for any such claims about time. This, of course, is generally true of Bouwsma's essays, and explains why he was not received well by some philosophers.

So what is Bouwsma doing in this essay, if he is not advancing a thesis about time? Why does he play and dally for these pages, in his Joycean style, with expressions of and free associations with "time"?

The linoleum layer is a philosopher. This philosopher gets his philosophical problem about time from the similitude of time to other ordinary things, such as linoleum, sea, air, sky, aether. These similitudes come from the similar kinds of grammar surrounding such things. Linoleum, sea, air, etc. are substances – somethings. They are extended in space. Sea and air flow. All of them can be measured. Some of them – sea, air, sky – are mysterious; even the idea of their mysteriousness can be compared to the mysteriousness of time.

These analogies are misleading when overlaid with time. Therein lies the point of Bouwsma's essay. The essay, to be sure, is playful, digressive, imaginative, artistic, etc. – none of which seem appropriate for a

philosophical essay. But they are presented in the service of uncovering the hidden and misleading analogies that lead to the philosophical knot that passes for "the mystery of time" – a mystery, like and unlike, the mystery of the sea and Newton's mysterious aether. The essay bears Bouwsma's distinctive mark of uncovering the hidden analogies in a philosophical problem.

Bouwsma, O.K. "Some Reflections On Moore's Recent Book." *Philosophical Review* April,1955: 64,248-263.

Also Published In:

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In this paper, Bouwsma focuses on a passage from the essay, "What is Philosophy?" in Moore's book *Some Main Problems of Philosophy*. There, Moore describes the task of the philosopher as that of giving "a general description of the whole of the universe, mentioning all the most important kinds of things that we know to be in it." Bouwsma sets out to reflect on Moore's conception of this task of philosophy. We know from Moore's work that some of the most important kinds of things in the universe, which some philosophers have asserted to be a part of its description, are sense-data, material objects, and universals. Bouwsma proposes an analogy for the philosopher's task of describing the universe: It is like an explorer's traveling the world and making discoveries about previously unknown wonders.
　　Bouwsma proposes a dis-analogy to an explorer: "In order to understand this [the philosopher's task] I should like to revert to an aspect of what makes the traveler's account interesting. The traveler goes far away. He visits, and he tells about what others have not seen. He tells about what is covered by great distances, about what is hidden from eyes that stay at home. Let us say then that the traveler describes the hidden, and this is also what the philosopher does. But the hidden is now obviously of a different sort; for whereas sailors sail the seas, the philosopher stays at home. I should like now to try to understand what it is that stirs the mind and heart of the philosopher."

By this analogy to an explorer, Bouwsma portrays the task of the philosopher under Moore's conception of philosophy as making discoveries. There are things previously unknown – hidden from view – and the philosopher's task is to discover those things. But the hidden things of the philosopher are "of a different sort" from those of the explorer, for the philosopher is investigating something quite familiar in order to discover the hidden. When the philosopher stays at home, he looks in familiar language for the hidden. The philosopher's discoveries of sense-data, material objects, and universals are made by looking through language as if it were a wall (another analogy) that had chinks in it, allowing glimpses of something on the other side. And Bouwsma's interest now becomes that of explaining how language leads or misleads one to the discovery of these entities. "I should now like to understand what it is that stirs the heart and mind of the philosopher." What stirs the heart and mind of the philosopher is the analogy. The analogy gives the glimpse through the wall. It is by studying the analogies that led or might have led Moore to the discoveries of sense-data, material objects, and universals that Bouwsma hopes to still the urge to peer through the wall and speak of wonderous entities on the other side.

The analogies serve as clues to Moore by means of which he is led to the discovery of such entities. Bouwsma in uncovering and presenting these analogies, is serving as detective of a detective. He traces Moore's detective work in his following of those clues.

The clue to Moore's search for the hidden in connection with sense-data lies in the uses of two sentences: 1) the envelope is rectangular; and 2) the envelope looks like a rhombus. Moore holds up an envelope, noting its rectangular shape. As he moves it around, he comments on its changing appearances including the fact that from a certain perspective it looks like a rhombus. By analogous sentences to this sentence, "The envelope looks like a rhombus," we grasp that something may look like something and not be the thing it looks like. Bouwsma develops the case of one who puts on the clothes of a policeman and thus looks like a policeman. He is not a policeman but may be mistaken for one because he looks like one. Likewise a rectangular envelope may look like a rhombus but not be a rhombus. Its sight or look or apparent shape is one thing and its shape another. And how did this come to be? It is as if there is another entity slipped between the object and the eye – a sense datum.

Bouwsma compares the sense-datum to the placing of a piece of paper in the shape of a rhombus over the rectangular envelope. There are rhombus shaped pieces and other shaped pieces all of which may be inserted over the rhombus shaped envelope. These thin sheets of paper are what we see and not the rectangular envelope itself. Even in the case of our seeing the rectangular envelope, we are seeing a rectangular insert layed over the rectangular envelope. This is a clue, then, for Moore's search for and discovery of sense-data. The clue, notice, is not that one saw something about the piece of paper inserted, like a frayed edge or smudge, but that one saw something in the analogous use of a sentence. "The man looks like a policeman, but he is not" – "The envelope looks like a rhombus, but it is not."

The clue for the presence of "material objects" is the first sentence of this same pair, namely: "The envelope is rectangular." If the envelope looks like a rhombus and so many other shapes including a rectangle, then these various shapes are the appearances or sense-data of the actual rectangular envelope which itself is never seen. If all seeing of X's produce what looks like Y's, then Y's are always seen and X's never are. Sense-data always intervene between the "material object" and the viewer. Again, if one in putting on the clothes of a policeman merely looks like a policeman, then what does he look like if he takes off the clothes? The person in the skin is still clothed in sense-data. He still has a look; he still looks like someone dressed in the emperor's new clothes. And so there must be a something with no look at all – a something unseen behind all sense-data. This is the hidden something for which the philosopher searches – the "material object." And the clue for this material object is the analogy tucked away in the language of: "The envelope is a rectangle" and "The envelope looks like a rhombus."

Finally, there is the case of "universals," also one of the most important kinds of things and something hidden. What are the clues to their existence and discovery? In this case, Bouwsma suggests, the clues lie not with the sentences but with words – words such as "two." Words lead one to believe that there are universals by means of various analogies. One analogy is that a word, the word "two" for example, as a sign or noise, seems to be a dead thing. So where does it get its life, its meaning? It gets its meaning from the thing to which it refers. It refers to two, and two has lived a long time and lived a life independent of the word "two."

A second analogy is to that of an arrow. Words point like an arrow to something they name. It is striking that the word "two" names only one thing each time it is used. It is as if there were an arrow in the sign that points somehow to the thing it names. And each of us, if we speak English, is able to understand what the arrow is pointing toward when we hear "two." The intentional arrow points to something hidden – something that must be, even though it is not in full view.

These analogies of life and arrows suggest that something hidden corresponds to the visible or audible sign. It is as if, to use a third analogy, the word "two" in the question, "What is two?" is functioning the way "Elizabeth" is functioning in the question, "Who is Elizabeth?" One asks, "And who is Elizabeth?" The question might be answered by pointing to Elizabeth. The proper name names the person whom one identifies by pointing to the one called "Elizabeth." So too the word "two" might be explained by pointing to the set two that the word "two" names, only this two remains hidden. "Two," that is, is mistaken to function as a proper name. And what is this thing that the name names? It is the two that is always there behind all uses, the two which is pointed to by the word "two," and the two which gives life to the dead noise "two." It is the two that must be there in some hidden mental form to be the meaning of the word "two." It is what philosophers have called a "universal." It is hidden but discoverable.

By means of the analogies, Bouwsma shows how it was that Moore came to search for and believe he had discovered these entities. Bouwsma takes Moore to be representative of other philosophers in that they make discoveries by means of clues found in language. Moore is more careful and more rigorous than others. If a philosopher as careful and rigorous as Moore could be misled in these ways, it is no surprising that any other philosopher could be misled in the same ways. In this essay, one should notice, Bouwsma not only uncovers and provides analogies that led or might have led Moore to believe in the existence of these entities, but he also provides the analogy of the explorer making empirical discoveries in his travels. The explorer contrasts to the philosopher who stays at home while making what appear to be empirical discoveries. How can empirical discoveries be made by conceptual investigations?! In an essay with this title, Morris Lazerowitz calls this puzzle "Bouwsma's paradox." His essay, as Bouwsma's essay, is meant to display what goes wrong with philosophy – that

philosophy, through misleading analogies embedded in our language, confuses empirical with conceptual investigations.

Bouwsma, O.K. "On Many Occasions I Have In Sleep Been Deceived." *Proceedings and Addresses Of The American Philosophical Association* Oct.1957: 30,25-44.

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Bouwsma proposed an examination of the sentence fragment, "On many occasion I have in sleep been deceived," from Descartes' "First Meditation." It comes to "In dreams we are deceived." The fragment is crucial in the "dream argument," which concludes that we are not to trust our senses to report accurately on the world.

"In dreams we are deceived," can be compared to "in Chicago I was deceived." And how might that have come to be? I might have been deceived by a panhandler – someone who did not really need the money, but spun a fanciful and pitiful story to get a handout. There are other imaginable cases of how one might be deceived – mistaking a manikin for a person, falling for a made up story, etc. There are two aspects of this comparison. The first is that there seems to be a place in each where one is deceived, in Chicago and in a dream. The second is that there is deception going on in both places, i.e. one mistakes something for something else. Notice how Bouwsma goes to the grammatically analogous sentence. His strategy is that the similar sentence will shed light on the grammar of the initial sentence.

Consider what it would be like to treat a dream as a case of deception. If one is deceived, one may well be embarrassed by the deception. Is that then true of dreams? No, of course not. We do not keep our dreams a secret because we are embarrassed to announce that we had been deceived. "I was swindled out of money by a con-artist" – might well be something we would not announce to others out of embarrassment. But we do not refrain from telling our dreams for fear of embarrassment that we had been deceived. We might not want to tell a dream because we were

embarrassed by the content or because it revealed a possible truth about us that we did not want known. But embarrassment at deception does not carry over to dreams. The analogy, when examined, shows dissimilarity.

Is the deception – the supposed deception – of a dream like a practical joke that someone plays on a friend? But what is the joke? Where is the laughing matter? And who played the joke? Again, the similarity disappears on examination of the comparison of deception in practical jokes to dreams.

When we examine the use of the expression "You have been dreaming," we see that it is not interchangeable with "You were deceived." We do not teach children who are frightened by dreams that they have been "deceived." The expressions do not mean the same things. This runs counter to what Descartes thinks. The grammatical facts stand against his idea that we are deceived in dreams.

Can a dream be mis-told or misremembered? A dream is as one tells it in the morning. There is no correcting a dream account. In this regard, there is no deception. It is not as if I could be fooled about my dream when I tell it in the morning. But Descartes says there is deception. Where is the deception? Who is fooled about what? There is no room for deception in the telling of a dream.

There is a setting in which Descartes' claim that we are deceived in dreams does make sense. Joseph was an interpreter of dreams for the pharaoh and others. He took dreams as presenting a truth. There are some, like Joseph, who seek the truth in dreams. Dream interpreters offer interpretations, and in doing so may get the interpretation wrong. That is, they may misunderstand the dream. In interpreting dreams, there may be dreams that are difficult to interpret. One might be deceived by such a difficult dream. This situation could give rise to the sensible claim that we can be deceived by a dream. Of course, this is not what Descartes had in mind by deception in dreams. Bouwsma however, provides a case in which we might understand the sentence to show what it would be like for the sentence to have sense – make sense. Here is a context in which it makes sense – take notice. Now where is the context that will make sense of this sentence as Descartes intends it.

Bouwsma returns to the question: Is it true that we are deceived in dreams? Yes or no? If one were to answer the question yes or no, that would imply that the claim "we are deceived in dreams" makes sense. But that is precisely the point of this exercise. The sentence has yet to be

shown to have sense. Bouwsma's work resists the claim and
its refutation. The insight he offers is that the sentence
does not make sense. Philosophy's task is to shift from
proofs and refutations to showing nonsense. Bouwsma pauses
to reflect on analogies at this point. Looking at things
through glasses with designs on them. We see the design in
the objects observed without being aware that the design
was on the lense. Our job in philosophy is to detect the
analogy – the design on the lense – through which we see
the objects.

Bouwsma calls our attention to a misleading analogy
that originates in the similarities of the expressions
"telling what happened" and "telling one's dream." They
look alike – sound alike. There is a recounting of a story
in each case. But take notice of the difference. In
"telling what happened" there is getting it wrong or right;
there is the opportunity for someone to correct our
account; and there are other means of checking the facts.
But "telling the dream" does not have these features.
There is no going back, no facts to check, no one else who
is involved. Compare telling what happened when I thought
a bear was in the bushes. Here we can doubt whether there
is a bear in the bushes. And there are ways of resolving
the doubt. But not with the dream.

The theory of sense-data comes into the bear dream.
The doubt is not about whether it is a bear in the bushes,
behind the sense-data, but whether the sense-data of the
bear reports a bear. Notice now that there is no setting
for doubt about this. Neither is there a way of checking
to see if there is a bear behind the sense-data. Checking
merely produces more sense-data, which apparently can be
doubted too. The analogy to telling what happened and
corroborating the account with the facts breaks down, when
we slide into the "telling of a dream."

Is Descartes' problem with dreams like this: Suppose
someone looks out of a window and then returns saying, "I
saw Andromache standing on the walls of Troy." Now how
could that be? We send the person back to the window to
check. "Yes, she was there" or "No there was no such
thing." So there is a checking of the report by going back
to the window. Bouwsma sets up this imaginary case to show
that it does not happen with dreams. There is no going
back to the dream to check if what I reported was really
there. The point of the exercise is to show the conditions
necessary for deception. In deception there is checking
and discovering that one got it wrong the first time or
right the first time. But with dreams the circumstances

necessary for deception are not there. There is no deception, because conceptually "deception" does not make sense in the circumstances of dreaming.

Bouwsma explicitly connects the cleaning up of this confusion about deception in dreams, with the problem of skepticism. The dream argument is an argument meant to establish skepticism of the senses – whether there is a real world beyond sense-data. This is a part of Bouwsma's general program in his several papers on Descartes. They are not merely demonstrations of techniques of analysis, they are that, but they aim at a general clarification of problems contributing to and surrounding skepticism.

Here is another analogy. This one may help one to see how things are rather than uncovering a hidden problem. If one were hit on the head and said that he saw stars, we would not be inclined to say that he was deceived. Now imagine his getting hit on the head a little harder and he hallucinates telling a story (as a dream is told later). We do not extend the word "deception" to this case any more than we would to his seeing stars. It is not a matter of deception.

Dreams and deception are different kinds of things. We say different kinds of things about them – they have different grammars. Bouwsma reflects on his method of approaching this problem at the end of the essay. He says that he has examined the grammatical patterns of dreaming and of deceptions and that he has pointed out how different they are. He closes, acknowledging that he has taken this strategy from someone else (Wittgenstein, presumably). But how much credit should Bouwsma take for this method himself? He has clearly mastered for himself the skill of laying bare the analogies underlying philosophical confusions. It is Bouwsma's great single-minded strategy in the essays he wrote in this period.

Bouwsma, O.K. "Failure I: Are Dreams Illusions?" *Toward A New Sensibility*. Ed. J.L. Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1982 [written 1957].

Although the essay is lengthy, the essence of it can be explained briefly. The sentence under investigation is: "Dreams are illusions." It is a pivotal sentence in Descartes' skeptical argument against the senses. If

dreams are images of senses and if dreams are illusions, our senses are illusions too. We never know for sure then whether our sense images are presenting the world as it is or not. So, "Dreams are illusions," is worth examining as a keystone in a well known skeptical argument.

Bouwsma hears the oddness, the queerness, as he calls it, of the sentence. It does not appear queer to Descartes. Bouwsma's project is to bring out the queerness of the sentence so that all may hear it. He notices that one can have fun with the sentence, "If wishes were horses, beggars would ride." And he does play with it for while, as with "If 'ifs' and 'cans' were pots and pans." While we understand the aphorism, we could extract the sentence "wishes are horses" from the antecedent clause. This however would collide with our good sense. Wishes are not anything like horses. The sentence immediately strikes us as odd. Bouwsma hears that the sentence "Dreams are illusions" is just as odd, though we do not hear the clash of concepts as readily as we do in the sentence about wishes. He sets out to make the clash loud and clear.

He does this by displaying the grammar of illusion and then trying to make it fit with the grammar of dreams. The exercise is simple and effective. An illusion is something that fools us. We are taken in by it, deceived by it. With visual illusions, we see something and then later discover that it was an illusion. So an illusion has the expression, "I thought I saw . . . " associated with it. The aspect of illusion that it is detected later is the aspect Bouwsma tries to apply to dreams. He, of course, fails. Hence the title: "Failure I."

We are not deceived by dreams. We do regard them as deceptions or mistakes. We do not say that we dreamed something and found out later that we did not. We do not have an expression parallel to "I thought I saw.." in connection with dreams. In my dream I thought I saw a dog lying in the street, but when I got closer I realized it was an old coat. We might dream this illusion, but the dream itself is not an illusion. We do not respond to one's telling a dream as we would to an illusion.

If we hear the "queerness" of the claim that dreams are illusions, we are able to begin disentangling ourselves from the skeptical argument. The skeptical argument, however, involves sense-data or Descartes' sense images. Bouwsma brings them into the demonstrations of the queerness of "Dreams are illusions." How would an image be an illusion in a dream? Images and illusions must follow the same grammars within dreams as without. Bouwsma

patiently draws out and displays those grammars. In my dream, I might see a dead dog in the street. I discover, by walking closer to it, that it is not a dead dog, but an old coat. It was an illusion. "I thought I saw . . ., but it wasn't." So a dog is a sense image in a dream, so too is the brown coat. Nothing changes from the discovery an illusion outside dream to the discovery of one inside a dream. No doubt is generated about sense images because of the dream. Everything stays the same with respect to whether our sense images present the world.

This essay is enjoyable. The exercise is simple. It fits nicely with the essay "On Many Occasions I Have In Sleep Been Deceived." Both essays are demonstrations of what Wittgenstein describes as: making disguised nonsense appear as patent.

Bouwsma, O.K. "Failure II: Meaning … Is … Use." *Toward A New Sensibility*. Ed. J.L. Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln: Nebraska Press,1982 [written 1957].

Understanding the expression "Meaning as use" is central to understanding Wittgenstein's project in the *Philosophical Investigations*. #43 "the meaning of a word is its use in the language." This idea crystallized Bouwsma's thought. Bouwsma continually struggled to understand it. "Failure II" reflects Bouwsma's struggle and reveals the depth of his understanding of it at the same time.

We come across many words that we do not understand. In reading Tolstoi, Bouwsma came across the word "izba," a word he did not understand. He looked it up and was give the explanation: An izba is the loghouse of a Russian peasant. Now it may look as if the loghouse itself is the meaning, but then it would seem that the meaning was made out of wood and could be located in a field. It may seem that the loghouse is the meaning, but then it would seem that meaning was mind stuff and was in someone's head. These accounts of meaning will not do. The recommendation is that we are to think of meaning as use. In this case, Bouwsma suggests, we will do well to think of the use of the word "izba" as like the use of the phrase "the loghouse of a Russian peasant." The phrase may be substituted for

the word in Tolstoi's sentence and we will now be able to understand that sentence.

Meanings appear illusive. Where are they? They are not in fields, outside of heads as it were. And neiter are they in heads. They look like somethings accompanying signs – somethings existing independent of and alongside of the signs: the sounds and marks we call words. "Meaning as use" is meant as a corrective to this. To see the meaning of a word as setting in its use is to demystify meaning. It pulls meaning out of the accompaniment mode and relocates right in its use. We are no longer inclined to look for it in some hidden place – in a mind. It is in front of us, as it were, in the language.

"the meaning of a word is its use," should be thought of as a grammatical remark. A grammatical remark is one that points out something about the way a word is used. In this case, the remark is pointing out something about the word "meaning." It comments on the use of the word "meaning." Notice that the following sentences do not comment on the use of "meaning," but rather simply use it: "The meaning of the word "izba" can be found in a Russian dictionary." "A scientist can explain the meaning of the word "photon." "One word can have two meanings." These sentences are used in different contexts. They are not, however, descriptions of how the word meaning is used.

Granted that we must see "the meaning of a word is its use" as a grammatical remark, we also need to get some perspective on its relevance. It is not merely describing the way the word "meaning" functions. There is an important philosophical point in giving the description – in making the grammatical observation. The philosophical point is that we have taken meaning in some other way than use. We have thought about meaning as the object to which the word refers. "Meaning as object" is a description of how we had been thinking about meaning. "The meaning of a word is the object to which it refers," is also a grammatical remark. And now, Bouwsma-Wittgenstein are intending to replace one grammatical remark with another. The first was accepted uncritically and without one's being fully aware that it was at work. It's replacement, "meaning as use," must be understood as a corrective grammatical remark.

Self-indulgent, Bouwsma plays with the idea of use. There is not one way that a word is used, nor several, but many uses. Bouwsma illustrates by means of Shakespeare's Hamlet. Words can be used to: report, order, pray, direct, thank, exhort, wish, express fear, request, and more. He

illustrates each with a line from Hamlet. With the same self-indulgence for play, he illustrates imaginary cases of mistaking meaning for referents. Such a mistake can be the material for humor: mistaking the meaning of "izba" for wood. Bouwsma reminds us of all that one can do having understood the word "izba." It involves more than merely substituting "the loghouse of a Russian peasant." One, in being able to use the word, owns the form of life of the Russian peasant.

"The meaning of a word is its use," may be compared to a nut. What is the use of a word? What is the use of a nut. On the one hand a nut may be explained in terms of a bolt, threads, and tightening. On the other hand, this explanation can be given and we will know nothing yet of all various structures in which a nut and blot are used: lawn mowers, backyard grills, shelves. Likewise a word may be explained for someone and yet he may not yet know all the various structures in which it can be used. Bouwsma points out that it will matter what grammatical directions are given in the initial explanation of the word. If we were to explain the word "orchid" to one who did not know it, we could begin by saying that an orchid is a flower. This gives grammatical directions for the use of "orchid." Other grammatical directions are possible: an ostensive definition, for example, will help place the word by showing the object. These explanations or directions prepare us to use the word. But it is only when we are able to go on to use it, when we have "got the hang of it," that the initial explanations or directions will have brought about the desired effect. Can we now function skillfully with the word "orchid" when we need to? Use is the test of understanding meaning.

The use of a word is exhibited in the grammar of that word. The grammar of a word is a description of the structure of sentences in which the word is used. Words might have different aspects of grammars. Some words will actually be different words, having widely or completely different grammars. Bouwsma gives the example of the word "spring." We had better think of a spring of water, the spring of the year, and the spring of a mattress, as being different words and having different grammars. Grammars too may be extended from one use to something quite different. Is the newness and rejuvenation of the springtime connected to the expression, "the spring in one's step"? Notice that the concept of grammar here is supple compared to that of the "formal rules" that one might seek in developing in a logical language – rules

governing connectives, names, etc. Here Bouwsma feels and
exhibits the fluidity of language that Wittgenstein comes
to discover in his growth from the *Tractatus* to the
Philosophical Investigations.

Bouwsma, O.K. "What Is Meaning?" *Toward A New Sensibility*.
Ed. J.L. Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln: Nebraska
Press, 1982 [written no known date].

I
     The question is a philosophical question. It will not
be answered by looking in a dictionary nor by asking people
for its use. The question is one that philosophers stumble
over: What is meaning? What is it for words to make
sense?
     Bouwsma compares the understanding of the question to
the question of understanding the meaning of the
expression: "a bull in a china shop." And where is the
bull?   –   Understanding   the   expression   involves
understanding that it is an analogy. And there is no bull,
even though the expression in itself makes it look as if
there is one. Analogies are everywhere in our expressions
and we may not notice them. In philosophy the analogy is
important – finding the analogy, identifying, and showing
it may lead to undoing the philosophical confusion. "What
is meaning?" is analogous to what? And what do we look for
when we ask the question? Is meaning a something? – a
bull?

II
     Bouwsma explores the analogies connected to meaning.

  – Language is the dress, the garment, the vesture of
    thought.
  – A sentence is like a window through which one sees
    the meaning.
  – Words are packed with meaning.
  – Words are charged with meaning.

     Bouwsma notices that the first two analogies suggest
that meaning and language – the sentence – are separate.
They make it look as if the meaning exists separately from

the sentence. Take the sentence away and where is the meaning? – someplace. (It must be in the mind.)

In connection with these analogies, Bouwsma supplies many more analogies captured in the many expressions we use. Here his writing style reflects his years of reading James Joyce. Eg.: "Lucy locket, nothing in it, but he wording round it. Good solid stuff. Tinsel. Meaning in a haricot bag. He spilled the beans. A load off my mind. A key to his meaning, the key word. Intellectual treasure. That wraps it up nicely. The meaning his deep, buried in syllabub fat. We'll have to dig for it. It's superficial. Plagiarism: You took the words out of my mouth." (p.41) He continues such play with the expressions bearing the analogies of meaning for many pages.

III

Bouwsma compares the question: "What is a ptarmigan?" to "What is the king of Swat?" Grammatically they look alike. We may point to Babe H. Ruth across the room and say, "There is the king of swat." A proper name and a definite description function in a different way than a common noun. We may point to the bird saying the word "ptarmigan," but this is different. The bird is not the meaning. It is odd to say that the meaning is pointed to or present in the bird. "I asked for the meaning and he gave me a bird." The meaning of "ptarmigan" must be explained in a different way, although pointing to a picture might be a part of it.

The choice of "the King of Swat" as comparison to "a ptarmigan" is, of course, meant to be a parallel to Russell's definite description expressions: "the present king of England" and "the author of Waverly." Bouwsma is parting with Russell who thinks there must be a referent for definite descriptions even if the referent is a null class such as "the present king of France." Russell insists on meaning as dependent upon reference and truth. Bouwsma, by contrast, reminds us of how we use "the King of Swat." Yes it refers to Babe Ruth, but the expression has meaning independent of the referent – as does "ptarmigan." I asked for the meaning and you pointed to a bird or a chubby man. If you want to understand "the King of Swat" you had better learn some baseball.

IV

Bouwsma explores invented cases that reflect a picture of meaning. (Egs. "Houdonit" a magician – communicating by

magic. Lady Diotima said and meant . . . – communicating meaning by translation. Communication at the fire station. Communication at the table.) Words are spoken and reactions take place. Communication happens as if by magic. It is transmitted as if it is in a special invisible (mental) medium. The analogies make it look as if meaning is mental and is communicated through a mysterious mental medium. Bouwsma ends with a final image of comparison: the smile of a Cheshire cat in *Alice In Wonderland*. The smile is left after the cat disappears like the question of meaning is left after the words of communication disappear.

   The essential question that Bouwsma raises in this essay is: Is meaning separable from speech? Of course, he does not provide an answer – "Yes" or "No." Instead, he identifies the hidden analogies that draw us to the conclusion that meaning is something separable from speech and harbored in minds. Exposing the suppressed analogies that bring us to this picture serves to release us from the hold the picture has on us.

Bouwsma, O.K. "Notes on Berkeley's Idealism." *Toward a New Sensibility*. Ed. J.L.Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1982 [written 1957].

I

   In part one of his essay, Bouwsma takes up an examination of the concept of "refutation." Dr. Johnson, in Boswell's account, has given us a famous refutation of Berkeley's idealism. Kicking a stone, he claims to have refuted Berkeley. Bouwsma notices the similarity of this refutation to Moore's refutation of idealism by holding up his hand. But what must Johnson be refuting if he refutes Berkeley by kicking a stone? Refutations are showing false claims thought to be true. And what must Berkeley think true for Johnson to refute it by kicking a stone? Is it something as silly as no one can kick a stone?! Obviously not. So what was Berkeley saying? Is it that there are unkickable stones and this stone is one of them? This will not do either. Berkeley seems to be saying that all stones are unkickable. That is, if Johnson's kicking this

particular stone is a refutation of some proposition, it must be that this stone or any stone is unkickable, and I, Johnson, will show these claims to be false by kicking this stone. Of course, it is not like this either. It is not that Berkeley is saying that stones are unkickable, because Berkeley believes that feet are in the mind as well as stones.

So Bouwsma walks Berkeley's idealism through Johnson's refutation in order to see how Johnson's kicking could possibly count as a refutation. Of course, none of the formulations of Berkeley's thought are what Berkeley meant and so the refutations do not refute Berkeley's claims, but refute some other claims such as "No one can kick a stone." What will it take to refute Berkeley? First we must get clear on what Berkeley meant. A refutation showing a proposition false requires a clear proposition thought to be a true report about the world. The refutation shows such a proposition false. Bouwsma intends to show that a refutation is not at all what is called for here. If what Berkeley meant cannot be stated in an intelligible proposition, it will be impossible to show that unintelligible proposition to be false. Bouwsma shows that in Berkeley's idealism we do not have a proposition to refute.

II

Ordinary refutation proceeds by showing an internal contradiction in what is said. If the theory is true – has true statements within it – one of these statements will be shown to imply a false statement or some contradictory statement. Bouwsma proposes another tact than that of refutation in connection with Berkeley's idealism. He proposes to show that Berkeley's theory confuses concepts. For this he suggests a different word, "disfutation," which calls attention to the difference between his project and a refutation. The idea is central to understanding Bouwsma. His task in philosophy is to shift from asking, "Is this philosophical proposition true?" to asking "Does this philosophical sentence make sense?"

For this task, sentences from Berkeley are necessary. Bouwsma quotes a lengthy passage from Berkeley's *Principles of Human Knowledge*. He remarks that Berkeley uses and confuses the concepts of material objects, sensible qualities, appearances, and sensations. Bouwsma proposes to show how Berkeley's discussions of these concepts are overlaid with each other and thereby confused. To begin

his project, he presents four parodies of the language Berkeley uses in the quotation. Playing with the language of "inside" and "outside" the mind, the upshot of the parodies respectively treat Berkeley's overlapped concepts of material objects, sensible qualities, appearances, and sensation: 1) tables (material objects) are said to exist outside the mind, though "exist" means composed of sensations; 2) redness (sensible qualities) exists where apples do; 3) (apparent) tables cannot exist otherwise than in the in which they appear; and 4) itches (sensations) are felt and cannot be conceived apart from being felt.

These parodies of Berkeley's language appear to lead sensibly to conclusions locating the place of material objects, sensible qualities, appearances, and sensations. But the parodies reveal nonsense lying close beneath the surface. Bouwsma, for example, notices the overlapping of the grammars of "material objects" and "sensations." As one can ask where a lamp is and be told, "Next to the table," one can ask too where a sensation is and be told, "In one's finger," but not like the bone in one's finger. From these grammatical overlaps, Berkeley gets the picture that sensations are in the mind. And why not, Bouwsma asks, produce the particular sentences corresponding to Berkeley's sentences? "Where is the itch?" – "In the corner next to the lamp." – "In my mind next to the pain."

The overlay of grammars "hold[s] several concepts in confused perspective." Parts of the grammar of material objects is layed over parts of the grammar of sensations. Material objects have parts; they are composed of parts. Tables have tops and legs and drawers. When we see and feel a table or smell and taste an apple, we have sensations of qualities – squareness and redness, etc. These sensations and qualities, then, are thought of as parts of the table. So Berkeley comes to speak of an apple as the collection of the qualities of red, round, and sweet. As the qualities are sensations in the mind, the object apple becomes a collection of sensations. Again, the idealist's apple is modeled on the overlay of "material object's" grammar with that of "sensation." Bouwsma admonishes the idealist of another aspect of the grammar of these concepts: 1) "Things are not composed of sensible qualities" and 2) "Qualities are not parts."

Bouwsma proposes to examine Berkeley's expressions "without the mind" and "in the mind." Everyone will allow, Berkeley says, that such things as thoughts, passions, and ideas exist within the mind. We suppose, however, that such things as houses trees and rivers exist outside the

mind.   But Berkeley reclaims them as objects existing within the mind as well.

Again examining grammars is the essence of the investigation. Of material objects – a house, for example – we ask: Where is it? How large is it? How much does it cost? But it makes no sense to ask such questions of a thought. Where is a thought? How large is a thought? How much does a thought cost? – a penny? Sense and nonsense.

Another way to come to see the nonsense of these expressions of "in the mind" and "without the mind" is to follow the question, "How would one discover that X was in the mind or outside the mind?" Did Berkeley ransack the mind looking for houses and trees and then conclude after much searching that none were there? Or how, for that matter, does one arrive at the ordinary view that everyone will "allow" that thoughts exist in the mind? Was this discovery made by searching the mind" And is it thinkable that some do exist without the mind such that we should go about searching for those thoughts. If we failed to discover any such loose thoughts that had escaped the coral of the mind, does that mean that no such mindless thoughts exist? Berkeley's expressions of "inside" and "without the mind" suggest two places and the language of "place," but the language of place is out of place for thoughts, sensations, and perception.

Berkeley erases the line drawn between the expressions "in the mind" and "without the mind." Ignoring for now the nonsense surrounding these expressions, how does this happen? Bouwsma pushes to uncover how Berkeley's confusions come to be confusions. How do houses, trees, and rivers come to be sensations? That sensations are in the mind and that everyone will allow this, Bouwsma notices that Berkeley offers nothing to convince anyone of this. Again, is it sensible to claim that sensations are in the mind? In any case, the focus now is on how Berkeley comes to say that houses, trees, and rivers are sensations, which everyone allows are in the mind.

Berkeley's sentence is: "Sensations or ideas imprinted on the sense . . . cannot exist otherwise than in a mind perceiving them." A sensation then is imprinted on the senses (the eye presumably is the model here.) This comes to "we perceive sensation," which is quite like, "we perceive sense-data" of Moore and later philosophers. Notice the queerness of this expression over against how we actually talk. We "see houses" and "hear leaves" rustle in trees. We see houses, not sensations, not perceptions. The grammar of seeing screeches out against Berkeley's

claim that we see sensations rather than houses that internalizes the house and erases the distinction between "in the mind" and "without the mind." Berkeley reduces houses to sensations.

There are several other confused expressions associated with the other tangle of confusions surrounding Berkeley's claim that an object is a collection of sensations. "X exists in that it is perceived." "The table I write on exists, that is I see it and feel it." And "There is a table in my study, that is, if I were in my study I could see it and feel it." And, "There is a table in my study even when no one is in my study, that is, some spirit, (God) actually does perceive it." Bouwsma compares each of these sentences noting that there are no natural contexts for their use in which we can make sense of them as Berkeley intends them. "Seeing" and "feeling" are not equivalent to "existing" in our ordinary language. What would a mover say of someone who said "There is a table in my study, which I might see or feel if I were there, and I want you to move it?" And we would suppose a person extraordinarily pious, if he believed that God watched over the table in his study when no one was present. Berkeley's claims equating perception with existence are "screamingly wrong," Bouwsma says, when put over against the melodious sounds of our ordinary language.

The form of certain foundational sentences in Berkeley's thought is: "There was an odor, that is, it was smelt." The same form reappears in "There was a sound, that is. It was heard." Similar sentences are repeated for color and figure. Bouwsma notices the temptation that might well bring Berkeley to say such things. Sounds for example, are learned in connection with hearing as are colors learned in connection with sight. The deaf have no use for or different or adapted uses for words ordinarily learned in connection with sight, as likewise, the blind for color words. The learning of the words then connect odors with being smelt and colors with being seen, in Berkeley's mind. Berkeley has a theory of meaning operating behind the scenes, which gives rise to and completes the identification of qualities such as odors and colors with their respective perceptions. The theory of meaning is that the meaning of a word is the object it names. The meaning of "odor" then is the smelt odor, the perception. The meaning of "red," then is the perception of red, and so on. As perceptions are in the mind, the quality is brought into the mind and the object is brought in along with the qualities. The philosophy of Idealism is

now complete. Bouwsma in reflecting on what he, Bouwsma, has done remarks: "And my question now is not at all as to whether this [Idealism] is so, but as to how Berkeley comes to say this." Bouwsma's task, here as elsewhere in his developed method, is to uncover the hidden sources. i.e. analogies and grammatical forms that give rise to a theory – "disfutation" as opposed to refutation.

Berkeley's equation of qualities with sensations is equivalent, Bouwsma thinks, to the contemporary philosophers equation of sense-data with sensations. His interest in how this comes about in Berkeley is also an interest in how it comes about for the Twentieth Century philosopher. Bouwsma sees the same traps in our language as in Berkeley's. Sensations come to be thought of as things seen. "I see the perception of color." "I see the sensation red." But specifically, how might it come about that one would think of a sensation as an object seen? Bouwsma makes another suggestion as to how it might come about from our own language. We do, he says, speak of the blind as having no sensation in their eyes. A doctor, for example, might say such a thing or a psychologist, in writing generally of perception in terms of stimulus and sensation, might also say such things. But neither doctor nor psychologist, in speaking of sight or hearing as sensation mean by it that sensations are what is seen. They mean by it, merely, that sensation is stimulation of the eyes or ears. They mean, that is, merely to give another word for perception in psychological terms. So while the word sensation might be brought into the physiological language of seeing, hearing, and perception in general, it is not thereby the use of these words that would give the meaning to the philosopher's words: "I see sensations" or "I hear sensations." Such expressions remain unintelligible.

Bouwsma concludes with a summary of the main points he has made. These points, however, (such as: We do not see sensations) are not refutations of idealism. Rather, he has given an account of how the theory of idealism is confused and how the confusions arise out of grammatical analogies. In this task he operates, albeit on his own, under the influence of Wittgenstein.

Bouwsma, O.K. "The Race of Achilles and the Tortoise." *Toward A New Sensibility*. Ed. J.L. Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1982 [written c.1950].

"Achilles could not catch the tortoise." This sounds like an empirical statement. Compare it to: Achilles could not lift a weight or run as fast as Astaganax. As an empirical statement it seems to be blantantly false. But perhaps we misunderstand the remark. Bouwsma then provides some contexts in which we might properly understand the sentence. Perhaps, for example, the remark was made as a jest. Perhaps it was meant to say that Achilles' speed was mythical, and that in reality, he was slow. Perhaps the remark is not understood yet and future scholars will find out what was really meant. So context supplies the meaning and what seems to be a false empirical claim was not meant as the empirical claim that Achilles could not catch a tortoise. So perhaps it was meant in a different way.

As a sensible empirical remark, we might consider some of the possible reasons why Achilles could not catch a tortoise. 1) Achilles was sulking in his tent. 2) Achilles was tired. 3) Achilles was sympathetic with the plight of the tortoise. 4) Achilles thought it pointless to race a tortoise. 5) Achilles knew of a law against such races.

To provide background for a sensible reading, it might also be worth considering some other deeds that Achilles could not accomplish: Achilles could not outrun Mars, give as good counsel as Nestor, nor catch Nestor in years. Is the claim about Achilles and the tortoise like these?

Bouwsma explores the various ways in which one could make sense of the claim. "Achilles could not catch a tortoise," has the form of an empirical proposition and so Bouwsma pursues it as such with these various backgrounds that might give it sense. But, of course, none of these explorations of the remark gives sense to the proposition as Zeno conceives it. These sensible fantasies are not what Zeno has in mind. They are not the expression of the paradoxes of space.

Bouwsma now gives an account of the paradox. He has Achilles place a spear at the tail of the tortoise when he catches up to it. Then, of course, the tortoise has moved. He continues. One needs smaller and smaller spears, toothpicks, hairs, and split hairs for finer measurement. Achilles tires of this. He realizes that he will never catch the tortoise with such a procedure. But there is no

paradox in this explanation. We do not understand the paradox yet. We do not yet know what the paradox is.

Bouwsma alternates between understanding and failing to understand. We may treat the proposition that Achilles cannot catch the tortoise as an empirical proposition. He fills in the cases to help us understand, but what we understand is not the paradox that Zeno has in mind. There is no paradox in the aids he provides. But when he provides an understanding of the paradox, fantastic in itself, there is still no paradox. Achilles simply tires of splitting hairs, placing them behind the tortoise, and catching up to markers.

When writing of Zeno's Achilles paradox, Bouwsma explores the everyday grammar of "Achilles cannot overtake the tortoise." Why not? – Because he is sulking in his tent? – Because he is too tired? Etc. This is how we would ordinarily speak of not being able to traverse space on the ground. This is the sense of "not being able to catch" [traverse a space]. Of course this is not Zeno's puzzle, yet it speaks to that puzzle. It says that the concept of "space traversing" works like this . . . . But Zeno got his mental cramp through the grammar of "catching and not catching" as well as the grammar of "dividing lines." The work here does not show that there is no paradox. It aims, rather, at showing that the expression of the paradox makes no sense. But how does it do this? The paradox arises out of different expressions pointing in quite different directions.

We can understand the claim "Achilles cannot catch the tortoise," but when we understand it, there is no paradox. In "Achilles cannot catch the tortoise," "can't" is a logical not an empirical "can't." But all of the uses that we imagine for "Achilles can't catch the tortoise" are empirical. So what does this say about the paradox? How does Zeno's paradox come about? Isn't it by Zeno's trying to think through the problems of Anaxagoras and Democritus? What is the nature of the material *phusis*? – matter in its ultimate form? If we think of matter as extended in space, then we can divide into half and half again, etc. until we have pieces that we can't see. Are those pieces always divisible or do they come to pieces that are not divisible (atoms)? So, on the one hand, the paradox comes from imagining a line that can always be divided further with some matter left to divide. And on the other hand, we need extended parts of matter to build up to where an object is big enough to see. We need to have definite rather than indefinite pieces to add together in order to make

composites. So we need both pictures to think about matter, but both cannot be right – hence the paradox. The paradox of Achilles and the tortoise is like this in its essential features. It is about dividing a line that is thought of at once as both material and non-material. It also involves time. It takes time to traverse a line and to move from behind the tortoise to the point on the line from which the tortoise left.

 Bouwsma's analysis is merely of the sentence: "Achilles can't catch the tortoise." It does not analyze the language of how the paradox arises. Bouwsma does not analyze the question or the problem, but, rather, analyzes the sentences that express the paradox. There is something wrong, Zeno says, with the conclusion: "Achilles can't catch the tortoises." Bouwsma shows that there are senses for the sentence (the empirical uses of the sentence). Zeno knows that in the empirical use of the sentence, in a fair race, when Achilles is not tired or sulking, he will win. This sets up the paradox, because the conclusion that Achilles can't catch the tortoise counters the obvious empirical fact that Achilles, all things considered, wins the race. But this conclusion makes the "can't" a logical "can't." Zeno has, in effect, arranged the collision of a logical "can't" with an empirical "can't."

 Bouwsma has shown that the sentence has empirical uses but no logical use. There is nothing about the concept of Achilles, a tortoise, and running that yields a logical impossibility. There is no paradox, because there is no meaningful use of "Achilles can't catch the tortoise." Accordingly, neither is there a refutation of the claim "Achilles can't catch the tortoise," as it is not meaningfully made as an empirical claim.

Bouwsma, O.K. "The Terms of Ordinary Language Are … " *Philosophical Essays*. Lincoln: Nebraska, 1965 [written 1960].

This paper was originally read as a response to a paper by Herbert Feigl and Grover Maxwell at the Western Division of the American Philosophical Association Meetings. Their paper, "Why Ordinary Language Needs Reforming," was published in the *Journal of Philosophy* August,1961: 58,488-498.

Feigl and Maxwell argued in their paper that the terms of ordinary language were vague and not suitable for solving philosophical problems. Like others at this time, they were much impressed with the project of developing an ideal language suitable for philosophical work.

Bouwsma begins his remarks amused by how Feigl and Maxwell expected their listeners to understand their worries about the vagaries of ordinary language in that very ordinary language. Or, if it were not presented in ordinary language, how is it to be understood without guides or rules for the usage of the new terms?

Bouwsma proposes to keep it simple: Mrs. Protheroe calls her chickens, Maxwell reads the story "The three Little Pigs" to his daughters, and people order merchandise from the Sears-Roebuck catalogue. All of this is done in ordinary language with chickens, daughter, and Sears-Roebuck understanding. Bouwsma plays then, showing what it would be like not to understand, and thereby reminding us what understanding ordinary language is like.

Feigl and Maxwell are influenced by the model of science. They see ordinary language through the "spectacles of certain science." They expect ordinary language to have the precision of certain aspects of scientific language. Feigl and Maxwell have taken geometry as the model for language. As definitions, rules, and postulates are laid down in geometry so that one knows exactly what can be done with words in the system, Feigl and Maxwell want that for ordinary language – presumably to make it suitable for philosophical tasks. They regard ordinary language as "wanton" and "vague."

Bouwsma asks us to imagine the opposite scenario: Someone looks at geometry and notices that there are no tenses, no psychological verbs, etc. and then tries to reform the language of geometry to do what can be done in ordinary language. Why would one do this?! The language of geometry gets a certain job done. It was constructed to do that job and completes its assignment. Our ordinary language, while not constructed consciously, gets its job done as well. It has other functions and, on most occasions, completes its assignment quite well.

The issue of constructing an ideal language is at the center of Wittgenstein's and Bouwsma's interest in philosophy. Wittgenstein, as a student of Russell's, was thought by Russell to be a philosopher of great promise. Russell told Wittgenstein's sister when they met that Wittgenstein would "make the next great breakthrough in philosophy." He hoped that Wittgenstein would provide the

solutions to the remaining difficult problems in developing a logical language. But Wittgenstein, rather than solving problems, found more. Wittgenstein's insights showed what would not work. These difficulties led ultimately to Wittgenstein's new understanding of language in the *Philosophical Investigations*. The later could be read as the result of the failure to think an ideal language. In the *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein proposes descriptions of the multifarious uses of a word in comparison to the uses that the philosopher is trying to invent for the word. Such a comparison will remove the motive for inventing the ideal/philosophical use of the term. Bouwsma, though never really tempted by the ideal of logic, was keenly aware too of the clash between the philosopher's use and the use of the same words in ordinary language. He, even more than Wittgenstein, regularly provided the ordinary uses of words for comparison to the philosopher's use. He masterfully reminded us of what made sense by displaying words in their ordinary settings.

In his remarks to Feigl and Maxwell, he reminds them that we in fact do understand each other in and by means of our ordinary language. In their pursuit of the scientific ideal, they had forgotten that everyone can understand "The Three Little Pigs."

Bouwsma, O.K. "The Blue Book." *Journal of Philosophy*. March, 1961: 58, 148-161.

Also in:
Bouwsma, O.K. *Philosophical Essays*. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1965.

Bouwsma crafted this essay over a long period of time. It is the centerpiece of his work on Wittgenstein. In it he captures the insights Wittgenstein brought to philosophical inquiry and his radical turn in undermining philosophical theory building. Throughout the essay, Bouwsma never tells us what Wittgenstein said. He does not present any claims nor restate any material from the "Blue Book" dictations. Rather, Bouwsma's presents his organization and interpretation of Wittgenstein's efforts to strike out on a new path in philosophy. *The Blue Book* is the turning point in Wittgenstein's philosophy. In it, he turns away from

presenting philosophical claims and theories and turns toward the development of techniques that uncover the roots of philosophical problems and that provide for seeing these problems as problems deeply embedded in our language. Wittgenstein moves from philosophical claims to philosophical methodology, and Bouwsma gets the point. He grasps the radical departure from the ordinary path of philosophy as making claims and refutations. And Bouwsma, having gotten the point, shows his understanding existentially by not restating the content of Wittgenstein's lectures. Rather he gleans the techniques of Wittgenstein's analysis.

The essay begins with a long quotation from Alice Ambrose's letter replying to Bouwsma's inquiry about the circumstances surrounding Wittgenstein's dictation of *The Blue Book*. According to Ambrose's letter, the dictations were done separately but paralleling lectures to students on the same material. They were later typed and mimeographed, with Wittgenstein overseeing the compilation into what is now called "*The Blue Book*." Wittgenstein was protective of this compiled set of writings of his thoughts, for various reasons, the best of which was that he feared they would be misunderstood. Around 1939, Alice with Wittgenstein's permission, showed *The Blue Book* notes to Bouwsma. He hand copied much of the notes and later came into possession of a typescript of them. This event – the reading and studying of *The Blue Book* over the next years – crystallized a philosophical development in Bouwsma's thinking that had been in solution for many years. It gave direction to his growth out of philosophical idealism to his sense that Moore's instincts were at the same time both right and wrong-headed, and his own poetic sensibility to language. "The Blue Book" became for Bouwsma an awakening to a new path on his own philosophical journey, a path that he was already on, but one on which he was not fully oriented.

Bouwsma characterizes what he is doing in relation to reviewing Wittgenstein's book as helping to understand it or helping not to misunderstand it. This implies that Wittgenstein himself failed to explain what he intended or at least failed to ward off certain misunderstandings. Bouwsma does not back off from allowing for such a failure on Wittgenstein's part nor does he offer accounts of it. He assumes the task of trying to make clear why the book's message is obscure and inaccessible. The inaccessibility is not mitigated by the fact that it has no beginning, no

conclusion, no chapters, and no prefatory guidelines. One is not even sure whether to call the book a "book," "notes," or what.

There are, to be sure, discussions of philosophical questions in the book. But the discussion of these questions does not proceed in any ordinary way. The opening question of the book is: What is the meaning of a word? While this itself is a philosophical question, it serves to present the general form of philosophical questions. What is the meaning of the words "time," I," "object," "knowledge"? So the form of the philosophical question itself is presented and discussed. It is discussed in connection with our craving for generality and with the way in which a word appears in many different uses or what Wittgenstein comes to call language-games. The relationship between mind and language necessarily comes into these discussions as mind appears as a sort of ghost and host of the meaning of a word. These questions, Bouwsma proposes, may not really be questions, though they have the look and sound of questions, and philosophers have certainly treated them as questions, struggling to answer them. Bouwsma points out that Wittgenstein puts forward no claims as answers, offers no proofs for claims, and proposes no refutations of other philosopher's answers to them.

Bouwsma offers perspective on what Wittgenstein is doing. He reminds us that what we have come to call "*The Blue Book*" were dictations and that there were additional lectures going on simultaneously. The lectures conducted with the small parallel group together with his dictations to Alice Ambrose compared to his attempt to teach what Bouwsma characterizes as "an art." Wittgenstein, Bouwsma says self-consciously teaches an art. His particular philosophizing, implicated this particular teaching. He did not propose a new doctrine about language but rather proposed a way of analyzing philosophical questions and problems that reflected an understanding of language. Bouwsma helps with understanding the book by putting it in perspective: read the book as Wittgenstein's teaching an art. Bouwsma's reading of Wittgenstein in this way is central to Bouwsma's understanding of his own work in philosophy – as teaching an art. There are now, throughout Bouwsma's own work, no doctrines nor theories, but teaching attentiveness to analogies embedded in language for particular philosophical purposes. One may wonder how much his perspective on Wittgenstein was really a projecting of

his own understanding of philosophy's tasks onto Wittgenstein.

The book's aim, then, is to teach the art of philosophizing. Bouwsma calls it an "art," which distinguishes it from a doctrine, a theory of language, and a science among other things that it might have been but is not. Teaching this art is difficult. For starters, the one who would learn the art does not come to the teacher already recognizing the art as established. It is not like, for example, the art of painting or of playing music where one sees or knows what it is and wants to learn how to do it for oneself. This art of philosophizing is a hard earned acquisition that Wittgenstein had particularized himself. It grew out of the failure to capture the crystalline pure logic of language in his effort to develop the Tractarian theory of meaning. So we have an art forged in the coals of a failed project. The picture theory failed. His new understanding comes through the realization that meaning is use: that the philosopher's search for the meaning of a word is a pursuit of an ill-formed question and that meaning is in front of one' in the actual particular and different uses of words. Language, consequently, becomes the focus of Wittgenstein's philosophizing, and his "art" of philosophizing is based upon his new found understanding of meaning as use.

Bouwsma characterizes the art that Wittgenstein taught with these descriptions: the art of attacking questions – of showing that questions are mis-asked; the art of disentangling meanings – of showing the entanglements of philosopher's words; the art of cure – of relieving the philosophers of intellectual cramps brought on by language; the art of finding one's way when lost – lost in a labyrinth of language; the art of removal, of riddance – of showing the temptations that entice us in one direction when philosophizing; the art of discussion – of becoming aware of differences through dialectics when the power of generalities overwhelms one; the art of exposure – of uncovering hidden analogies; the art of helpful reminders – of reminding how certain words are actually used; the art of working puzzles – of unjumbling arrangements of words and putting them back in the right order; the art of scrutinizing the grammar of a word – of pulling back into focus the standard features of the uses of a word; the art of freeing us from illusions – of recognition that we have been seeing an apparition created by shadows of a word not in use; the art of detective – of recreating the scenes of the linguistic missteps that led to the philosophical

crime; and the art of clarification and of relief from the
toils of confusion – of achieving a peace allowed by the
common bedding of grammars that previously did not want to
lie down together. Bouwsma could have provided more
descriptions of the art that Wittgenstein taught. He could
have provided less, as there is much that overlaps in these
descriptions. He could have described it without the
metaphors. But then he might have lost the perspective he
was trying to provide; namely, that Wittgenstein was
teaching an art, a skill, a method or methods forged in
years of his own struggles in philosophy. In a certain
sense, Bouwsma understood Wittgenstein in ways that
Wittgenstein did not understand himself. Or perhaps, it is
better described in this way: Bouwsma had a better
perspective on Wittgenstein's task than Wittgenstein
himself had.

There are caveats and difficulties attached to the
teaching of this art. Again, they reflect Bouwsma's
experience in trying to teach the art himself. First he
notices that the teaching is always done with and through
individuals. The various aspects of this art – those of
disentangling, cure, riddance, exposing hidden analogies –
are cultivated in an individual philosopher's struggle with
his questions and entanglements. As there is an analogy to
psychoanalysis in this art, though it breaks down in
important ways, the digging and uncovering that goes on in
language goes on in the language of an individual engaged
in philosophy. The practice of the art is personal in this
way.

The teacher must have certain aptitudes, as Bouwsma
well knew, to teach the art. To practice the various
aspects of the art, he must have a command of the language,
have a poet's ear for expressions, have a lively
imagination to invent cases, and be quick in the
remembering of what people as a matter of fact say.
Bouwsma provides one example of this from *The Blue Book*,
citing Wittgenstein's aptitude for inventing comparative
sentences to startle one to the queerness of a
philosophical question. Reflecting on the meaning of
sentences involving mental states that are not yet the case
– believing, expecting, hoping – Wittgenstein identifies
the philosopher's puzzlement in the question: "How can we
think (form a thought in a sentence) that is not the case?"
He then invents the comparative question: "How can we hang
a thief that doesn't exist?" The student is left with the
task of following out the comparison. Does it help with
the philosopher's knot? Maybe. It depends on the

student's aptitude and persistence in following the clue. But the teacher will have to be skilled and ready to provide such clues. There are other such skills and readiness that the teacher must have. The teacher's task is made even more difficult by the fact that simply pointing out relevant grammatical facts of language will be received as obvious and boring descriptions. Who will dispute that the expression "I believe," unlike the expression "I know," can be used in relation to what is not the case – a boring and obvious grammatical fact. The teacher must be able to show its relevance to the philosophical problem.

In the years between 1939, when Bouwsma first read *The Blue Book,* and the writing of this paper, he struggled with two particular difficulties that arise out of reading the book. He captures the difficulties in two sentences taken from the book. The first is: "But if we had to name anything which is the life of the sign, we should have to say that it was its use." Put succinctly, this comes to: "Meaning is use."   And the second sentence is: "But ordinary language is alright."   Both sentences are easily misunderstood.   The first, "Meaning is use" tied Bouwsma into knots that he spent in the next years untying.   The second presented a difficulty that came from reading Wittgenstein as giving some metaphysical privilege to ordinary language.

The sentence, "Meaning is use" can easily be mistaken as a definition of meaning. Elizabeth Anscombe actually translated *erklaren* in *Philosophical Investigations* #43 as "definition," rather than "explanation": "The definition of meaning is use." As a definition, Bouwsma writes, this is an indefensible one. Of course, it defeats its own intended purpose, namely that there is no definition of a something that is the meaning of a word. The sentence, rather, Bouwsma says should be thought of as an analogy – meaning is like use. That might be put better by saying that the sentence is like a tool for avoiding confusion in philosophy. Operate with the use of the word rather than the meaning of the word when engaged in philosophy. – Think of meaning as use so that you will not look for something hidden but see the meaning in the operations as the word is put into play.

The second sentence giving rise to a difficulty in understanding *The Blue Book* is the sentence that seems to give metaphysical privilege to ordinary language. This misunderstanding has surrounded the book since its appearance. It is a misunderstanding that comes about in

the following way: As the analysis of meaning involves showing the meaning behind the sentence written or spoken, it must be the case that that sentence can be made clear by reducing it to something that it, the sentence, refers to. But, Wittgenstein proposes, hidden referents are an illusion. The meaning is not hidden; it is in open view in the use. The open use in ordinary language is the meaning. Ordinary language is the meaning to which the sentence can be reduced. But ordinary language now seems to have a metaphysical status previously held by such other objects as universals and sense-data. Wittgenstein, according to the objectors, was unaware that he had given this special status to ordinary language. Doing so would entangle him in the same metaphysical commitments from which he tried to free others. Bouwsma warns against this misreading. "Ordinary language is alright," is not a privileging of ordinary language to a metaphysical status, but a corrective guide to one mired in philosophical confusions. "Don't look beyond ordinary language to meanings that language seemingly points to. Look rather to the everyday uses of words." Bouwsma gives us these two pieces of advice then, on how to avoid these common misunderstandings.

Having given us perspective on the book and given us warnings for reading the book, Bouwsma closes with the famous question that Socrates put to Hippocrates. Hippocrates, remember, wanted desperately to study with Protagoras, who promised to make his students better for studying with him. How now may a young Hippocrates become better for having read this set of dictations called "The Blue Book"? Bouwsma muses that one is likely to get nothing from the reading or get philosophical indigestion from it. But, he continues, he might, with the right attitude, struggle, and perhaps after ten years (surely an autobiographical remark) be "different" for having read it. Different how? Bouwsma does not say. Presumably the apprentice may become a craftsman – an artist. Moore reports that Wittgenstein spoke in lectures of acquiring "skills" and finding a "method" in opposition to achieving results. Likewise, Bouwsma's reading of *The Blue Book* focuses the reader's attention on acquiring "skills" and finding a "method," in opposition to achieving results.

Bouwsma, O.K. "Adventure in Verification." *Without Proof Or Evidenc*e. Ed. J.L. Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1984 [written 1963].

A sceptic, Xenophaneses, decides to verify certain theological propositions that he culls from Homer. He first, on hearing stories, climbs Olympus to find the gods. He cannot get through to see them. He gets a hatchet to cuts through the thicket on Olympus and tries to observe. When he gets through, he is not able to make the observations he wants. There are problems with measuring and counting, as gods and Olympian objects will not stay fixed in space and time. He does recognize Zeus.

Xenophaneses culls more sentences from Homer, trying to get a few that he thinks would be easier to verify. 1) Did Hera put a thought in someone's head? 2) Did Zeus make dreams? But these, he decides, may be too dangerous to verify. He would have to speak to these gods. Further, he does not know if they will be able to speak to him in a language that he understands.

He decides on another "fringe" proposition: "Zeus causes earthquakes by waving his ambrosial locks." That there are earthquakes, he can check through memories of older people. That Zeus caused them by waving his ambrosial locks or by stamping his foot, he would have to see for himself. But he misses the glimpse of Zeus at the precise moment before the earthquake, because he is looking at his own initials, which he carved earlier, in a tree – vanity/pride. The conceptual issue is: How can we verify that Zeus caused an earthquake at all? – by any method?

Xenophaneses settles on a much less ambitious verification project: Zeus was to have visited the Ethiopians and had a feast with them. Xenophaneses makes arrangements to visit the Ethiopians and observes the hall where Zeus is said to have feasted He sees the garbage heap (mounds) out back where they disposed of the leftovers from the feast. That there was a feast can be verified. That Zeus was present in Ethiopia at a certain time is a matter beyond verification.

Bouwsma, O.K. "Myth and the Language of Scripture." *Without Proof or Evidence*. Ed. J.L. Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1984 [written 1963].

"The dean of St. Paul's says that the account of the ascension is a myth." Bouwsma starts us with a puzzle as to whether this account in the New Testament is a myth. The puzzle, at first, is whether one should classify the account as a myth. It then leads to the further puzzles as to whether there are other accounts in the Scriptures that we should classify as myths and as to how those classifications should be done. Next, he presents the question: What is a myth?

It will not do to say that a myth states what is false or that a myth is a story that cannot be verified. Neither remark is helpful. Having considered such claims, we quickly realize that the need and function of myth in the life of the believer has been passed over. To the believer, hearing his beliefs classified as myths sounds like someone is saying that his beliefs are false. Perhaps too he senses that he is being told that he has no need for his beliefs – that he should have outgrown them.

Having made some preliminary remarks about what might be said about myths – that they are said by some to be false, that they are connected to but different from legends, that we may, afterall, need them – Bouwsma begins a general discussion of how to understand religious language. The implication here is that even if we are to take the dean's remark about the ascension as accurate, we must still understand it. How then do we understand such accounts from the Scriptures as the ascension, the resurrection, the creation? Bouwsma likens this to Kierkegaard's task, which might be characterized as teaching how to read the Scriptures. There is religious language. But there are many kinds of language in the Scriptures – history, poetry, and, let us say, myth. How then are we to read the accounts of what one might call myths? Should we call them "myths"?

The creation story might be classified as a myth by some. Bouwsma notes that it is not a theory or a hypothesis. It is not something that could be verified. "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the world?" But rather, the creation story provides one with a perspective – a framework – for his life. It is a picture, as it were, into which one can step. And he may find a way of seeing his life in the picture. God is the creator. I am a creature. The world was made and I was placed in it. And what am I to do? What attitude do I develop toward it? Can I live up to being a creature? And what if I do not?

What if I want to but am not able to? Etc. The creation story is a framework in which I find and understand myself.

Bouwsma, O.K. "The Biblical Picture of Human Life." *Without Proof or Evidence*. Ed. J.L. Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1984 [written 1966].

This paper is a note in response to someone who [not clear who] raised a question about a sentence that Bouwsma wrote or spoke. The sentence that gave rise to the difficulty is: "It may be understood as a picture, a representation of our lives, a way of coming not only to understand ourselves, but a representation of a world in which a man may make his home." The "It" at the beginning of the sentence is ambiguous. The "It" may refer to something from the Bible or the whole Bible itself or maybe some Christian idea or doctrine. The discussion that follows, in any case, can apply to any of these.

Bouwsma says that he might have said "story" as well as "picture." And if asked where the picture or story was, the answer would be that it was in the Bible. So the Bible presents pictures or a picture of life in which one may live.

Bouwsma senses that the one to whom he is addressing these remarks is put off by the word "picture." To call a religious belief a picture seems to diminish it. It is as if one were saying that it is merely or only a picture and that it is not true. There are some who would read the Bible as one might read Homer or accounts of ancient myths. One may delight in these stories. They are exercises for the imagination and one may, in addition to enjoying them, find truths in them to be extracted. Bouwsma does not have this in mind in calling such religious beliefs "pictures." Others, he observes, read the Bible as "the book of my people," and this would, in part, be looking at it as the history of "my people." A Jew may read it in this way, but of course, not only Jews. And the Bible does have historical accounts in it. It has, as well as history, folklore, drama, morals, argument, poetry, letters, sermons, and more. So the Bible may be read and be cherished as literature and history. But these readings do not yet capture what Bouwsma meant by the word "picture."

What Bouwsma is suggesting in following out the idea of "picture" is closer to what we ordinarily think of as a picture hanging on a wall – a picture in a frame. The Biblical picture or the picture in the Bible is one that frames the life of a person. And the person whose life is so framed is living inside of it. This idea is contrasted to standing in front of the picture, hanging on the wall, and observing what is framed. One may look at such a picture and describe it. And this could be the work of a theologian or scholar or simply an observer. But the Bible's picture was intended to be lived in. It is presented as a frame through which one would, not observe, but walk. So the Biblical picture is one about which one could say that it is a picture of my life or a picture of what my life should be. If we call this a story rather than a picture, then the story is about me. This now is a way of reading the Bible for a person of faith. In faith one is "afflicted" by the idea that one must enter the picture and live in it. The picture gives orientation and direction for one's life: "It is as though a man stepped into or was drawn into the picture or story, and now everything in the picture came alive for him and he began a new life in that picture.

Returning to the person who is troubled by calling religious belief a "picture," the suppressed worry may be that the picture is not true. It is only a picture and not a true account of how the world stands. To the question: Is the picture true? Bouwsma wants to say that it is neither true nor false. This is a rejection of the question as a misunderstanding. A "picture" in this way of using it, is a way of living. We are called into a way of living. There is no comparing the picture to the world and asking if it corresponds. This is what Kierkegaard aims at showing us with his distinction between subjective truth (a picture to be lived in) and objective truth (a picture observed and judged as true by comparison to states of affairs). In the case of religious belief, unlike beliefs in history and in science, there is no possibility of judging objective truth. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Did He?" This misses the concept of "picture."

How would one approach the picture from an objective point of view? – from the point of view of asking if the picture is true or false? What is there to verify? And where does the picture – the Biblical picture of human life – come from? It is a picture larger than any picture that we are able to draw for ourselves. A glance at our lives

and any part of our lives does not reveal the kind of picture that encompasses those pictures we are able to snap. The Biblical picture is snapped, as it were, from some point outside the picture – certainly from some vantage point that no human occupies. The picture can only have been taken on God's camera. Again, is it true? What could we be asking? Bouwsma notices this grammatical feature of "true" and "God": Is it true for God? And what would that be like? Does this mean that God discovered something about the world and then told us about it? Does God discover the truth? Remember, Bouwsma observes about the grammar of "God," that God does not make mistakes. With God, it is, rather, like: "Let there be light!" And let there be a picture for the children of light to walk in.

    At the end of this note, Bouwsma adds a trailer related to the exploration of this idea of a Biblical picture. We should not ask: What is Christianity?, as if there were one exact and well detailed picture of Christianity. Over time there came to be several readings of the book and the official readers – I assume Bouwsma means the teachers, priests, and reformers – came to have disagreements about how to read the Bible. So now we have Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Reformed, Episcopalians, etc. And so we have somewhat different pictures. It will be simpler, Bouwsma points out, to leave this as it is. There are different pictures or should we say differences among the Biblical pictures. Perhaps it would be better for Bouwsma to have said that within the Biblical picture there are some different pictures and these have been distinguished and preserved in these different traditions: Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian. So, for example, in the Roman Catholic tradition there is the picture of the Virgin Mother, and in that picture she may be petitioned to petition her son in behalf of the petitioner. But that picture is not operational in the Reformed Churches. Calvin too has a picture of predestination and Luther of justification by faith. And each of these pictures functions predominantly in one tradition and not so predominantly, if at all, in another. Again, it will not be profitable to ask: And which picture is true? Or which of these traditions has the true picture? There is, only, the taking of one of these pictures as the one I will step into or the one I find myself in.

Bouwsma, O.K.   "Poetry Becomes Truth." *Toward a New Sensibilty*. Ed. J.L. Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1982 [written 1966].

This paper, or perhaps note would be more apt, was written in response to a paper given at the University of Texas by Bouwsma's colleague, Douglas Morgan. While we do not know what Morgan said, it does not matter, because Bouwsma is responding to a general idea in aesthetics and criticism. The idea suggested in the title, "Poetry Becomes Truth," is that poetry, in some sense, aims at making true statements of some sort, and Bouwsma resists this idea. The title itself, which Bouwsma says could easily be reversed to "Truth Becomes Poetry," is like the rest of the note, a piece of poetry itself. It can be read in various ways, for example, as a "hat becomes a person," but in any reading, Bouwsma denies that he can make any sense of it.

What is it that can be said about a poem? Criticism is saying something about poems. It is not a part of the poem itself, anymore than paint on the wall on which a picture is hung is a part of the paint in the picture. The poem is not the sort of thing from which one can extract true statements. There is nothing for the critic to do. Neither is there anything for the aesthetician to do. Aesthetics, Bouwsma says, is a second order commentary on criticism – "an exposition of the grammar of criticism." So if there is no task for the critic, there is none for the aesthetician either.

Bouwsma plays, poetically, with the idea that there is nothing for the critic to say. He suggests that there be a commissar of permissible talk about a poem. The commissar, he says, might allow smiles and grunts. But even that may be too much. Perhaps he would allow such talk as noticing that the first letter of the first word in the poem was "M."   This would give the critic something to say and probably keep him out of trouble. By noticing such things as what might be done or said, that would avoid the off-target chatter that develops in connection with a poem, Bouwsma shows how trivial meaningful claims about the poem would be. What, by contrast, could be said about the truths contained in poem? Looking for the truth misses the concept of a poem. What is a poem? Carl Sandberg: "poetry is hyacinths and biscuits." What was Sandberg doing "more than stunning us into sensibility"? A poem is

to be listened to – heard. And by it we may be "charmed."
That is all. In the presence of the poem, we are to remain
silent.

Bouwsma, O.K. "Anselm Argument." *The Nature of Philosophical Inquiry*. Ed. Joseph Bobik. Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame Press, 1970 [written 1966/67].

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Bouwsma, O.K. *Without Proof Or Evidence*. Ed. J.L. Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1984.

Bouwsma proposes to unscramble the scramble of
Anselm's argument. He proceeds by identifying and
attempting to understand five sentences that are essential
to the argument.

Sentence one:
  "We believe that thou art a being than which none greater
can be conceived." What sort of sentence is this? – It is
not a statement of belief with hidden doubt in it. Neither
is it a statement of a confession made to the congregation
as the statement of a creed. When did Anselm get the
sentence with which he proposes to begin his argument?
What is its natural home? It is, as we know, a statement
of praise lifted from the psalms of David. It is
equivalent to other claims of praise – songs and shouts of
praise.
        Comparing Anselm's statement, "Thou art a being than
which none greater can be conceived," to other statements
of praise – "there is none higher, none more glorious,"
Bouwsma accentuates the feature of praise that his sentence
holds. It belongs, he reminds us, in the category of
praise sentences, and yet Anselm, in using the sentence as
the starting point of his argument has forgotten its proper
category. Anselm treats the sentence as one stating a
belief – a belief that X is the case – a descriptive
statement like X is larger than Y. Anselm has forgotten
the context, as have we who try to follow the argument. A
sentence has meaning in its context and a phrase has
meaning within in its context. The phrase on which the
argument is built, namely, "a being greater than which none

greater can be conceived," is lifted from the sentence: "We believe thou art …etc." And the complete sentence is taken from the Psalms (14/53). The Book of Psalms, which are songs of praise and of the heart's longing for God and justice. If Anselm would analyze the phrase for meaning, he must understand its meaning. But meaning is presented in the sentence and in the language-game in which it is spoken, or in this case sung. Anselm does not have the meaning. He treats the phrase as if it were intended as a description of two objects being compared. What are the two objects? It is not a piece of anthropology, where two gods from two different cultures are being compared: the God of Abraham is greater that Zeus. The grammar of praise, Bouwsma notes, has been confused with the grammar of the description of a belief. "None greater conceivable" is taken as a description of something – of a being. The troubles start here. Instead of thinking of the being as praise as in "You are the most wonderful!" the being is thought of as "the largest being," and the philosophical knot gets tied.

Sentence two:
    The second sentence of Anselm's that is essential to the argument is "the fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no God.'" How are we to understand "the fool"? Who is the fool? Again, if we return to the psalm from whence came the sentence that Anselm has commandeered, the fool is not one who is conceptually dull, but rather one who has not kept God's commandments. The fool is "corrupt," he has "done abominable works," "gone astray," is "filthy." The fool is someone who has not kept faith with the community of believers. Anselm has taken a sentence out of the context of the psalm, ignored its use, and taken the sentence to hold a conceptual puzzle relating to existence. This fool, Anselm's fool, is presented as making a claim that is false. The fool of the psalm has made a mess of his life. Anselm's conceptual analysis of "There is no God," will not undo the mess nor return the fool's faith.
    Bouwsma freshens the concept of the fool of the psalm by telling the story of a young man on the outside of the Jewish community who is connected to his people by memory, but has no connection to God and the tasks of faith. He turns away and cannot connect with his ancestors.

Sentences three and four:
    Two sentences are considered together next, forming the conjunction: The fool understands what he hears, but

does not understand God to exist. Bouwsma thinks there are more confusions involved in this sentence. What is it that the fool has in his understanding when he calls up the idea of God? The word "God" has extended usage in the Hebrew-Christian community. There has been a theology developed in connection with this usage. God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the prophets, etc. The fool of the psalms is familiar with this concept of God. He is surely not denying that this concept of God exists. And so, what is the fool denying exists? He must be denying existence to God as if the concept of God were like the concept of questionable beings like "the abominable snowman," "the Lockness Monster," and "the suspected murderer." But the concept of God who is present to the Jews and grasped in the mind or understanding of the fool, is not taught, learned, or grasped like one of these questionable beings whose existence must be investigated. We are not taught to search for God as a reported appearance of a monster or a suspect in a criminal investigation. The latter investigations presuppose a questionable claim and have developed techniques for proceeding. There will be hypotheses, empirical claims, and relevant observations in these investigations. But "God" is not presented in the religious community as a concept presupposing a questionable existence and corresponding investigative techniques. Anselm has shifted the understanding of a word from its original context to a place outside of all contexts, where he examines it abstractly (philosophically) – "on ice," as it were.

Sentence five:
    The fifth sentence essential to Anselm's argument is: "That than which nothing greater can be conceived cannot exist in the understanding alone." Bouwsma focuses on the phrase: "the being than which none greater can be conceived." Anselm takes this, not as an expression of praise, but as the description of a being – as if it were the name of an existing thing. And the thing or being in this case is a universal – an idea in the mind. Bouwsma reminds us of how philosophers have talked about universals. They can exist as objects in the mind and they can exist as objects outside the mind as well – instantiated as an object in the world. Bouwsma posits that Anselm is thinking of the idea of God in this way. "A being than which none greater can be conceived" is "God" and is such an idea as can exist, like a universal, both in the mind and outside the mind.

Bouwsma suggests that Anselm is thinking of the idea of God as the idea of an ordinary object like a cow or a horse. The idea of a horse is an image of a horse or a universal of a horse in the mind. It exists in the mind, Anselm thinks, as a thing and it could exist outside the mind as well. In the case of the idea of God, it is different in that it, the idea, upon examination reveals that it must exist outside the mind as well. Bouwsma sees confusion in this analogy. Is it like having a something – a pain – in one's knee that can be removed – existing either in or out of the knee?

It is a part of the grammar of many ordinary nouns to say that so and so exists or a so and so exists. "There is a cow in my meadow." Anselm's mistake is in treating the concept of God in the same way as a cow or a horse – as if the same grammar of "the so-and-so exists" functions with the concept of God as it does with a cow. He mistakes the grammar of "God" for the grammar of "object."

When Anselm says that the fool has the idea of "the greatest being in his understanding," he is thinking of this phrase, like the word "God," as the name of an object in the mind. The confusion here is the same deep-seated confusion pervading many philosophical problems; namely, that the meaning of a word is an object. Anselm has forgotten that "God" is a word in the community of David the psalmist and the fool. It is a word in the community of Israel and later Christians. It has a use. The word is attached to the accounts of that religious community. Anselm forgets the use in that community, including the use of praise and adoration of the god who is simultaneously transcendent and imminent in history. Forgetting these uses, he goes on to treat "God" as the name of an object. The object in this case is described as "the being than which nothing greater can be conceived." Then, the analysis of the described object yields its necessary existence outside of the understanding. But this conclusion began with mistaking the concept "God" for the concept "object."

Bouwsma, O.K. "I Think I Am." *The Nature of Philosophical Inquiry*. Ed. Joseph Bobik. Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame Press, 1970 {written ?}.

There are three tasks of the paper. The first is to cast suspicion on Descartes' *cogito* – on the language, "I think therefore, I am." The second task is to describe how Descartes comes to the claim "I think, therefore I am." And the third task is to figure out what Descartes could have meant by it.

<p style="text-align:center">I</p>

The first task – that of casting suspicion on the sentence "I think, therefore I am" – takes notice of the oddness of the I in the *cogito*. If "I" is in the mouth of the speaker of "I think," who is it and what is it that is proved. If Descartes says "I think therefore I am," does it prove Descartes exists? – or is it some other I? Does the "I" have any relatives – a brother? Does it have a mouth? – a voice? – a job? It doesn't seem to be that kind of an I. Is there another kind of "I"? Apparently, but of it we cannot ask: "Who is this I? It is as if one started talking out of his ear as well as his mouth. And from the ear came "I think," "I doubt," "I imagine," etc., but only such expressions. And this I, unlike the I of the mouth, has no personality. As to the very words proving the existence of the I, what are we to make out of, say, an actor playing Hamlet saying "I think." Does Hamlet exist? Yes. No. Well he is not a *res cogitans* as the actor is supposed to be. He does, however, have a personality and a character as does the actor. Why do the very words in themselves prove the I?

<p style="text-align:center">II</p>

How does Descartes come to his claim: "I think, therefore I am." It is, he claims, indubitable. How does he come to see it as indubitable? Again, remember that there is no context for Descartes' "I think." It comes, as it were, out of his ear (his head) as an abstraction and not out of his mouth as a piece of ordinary language. Bouwsma's thought is complicated here, and not immediately understandable.

As a part of his basis for systematic doubt, Descartes introduces doubt about ordinary propositions, by imagining that we dreamed them. So I may cast doubt on my belief that I am sitting by the fire in my pajamas writing, by introducing the idea that "I dreamed these things." Such sentences make sense. But I cannot cast doubt upon the sentence "I think" by placing it in a dream "I dreamt I

thought" as a doubt, is supposed to mean that I did not think because I was dreaming, but dreaming is a form of thinking. In this way, Descartes came to think that "I think" is indubitable.

<center>III</center>

So how, now, are we to understand what Descartes means by "I think." What does "I" mean in "I think"?

We may start to try to understand this, by taking an ordinary use of "I think." Bouwsma imagines someone asking Kant what he does for a living, to which Kant replies "I think." It does not matter for this case that it is Kant nor what Kant thinks. Suppose now that we separate all Descartes's dubitables from the indubitable "I think." Imagine then that we subtract the people around Kant, the circumstances of Konigsberg, his house, the person who asked the question, Kant's body. Shall we also subtract the sound of his voice saying "I think"? We are left with the thought "I think." This is Descartes' indubitable.

But how are we to think this indubitable. Descartes posited that the world of this "thinking thing" was or could be a dream or a mirror image. But if all is dream, then "dream" makes no sense. If everything is a mirror image, (a mirror image of what?) then the idea of an ordinary object as a mirror image makes no sense. The "thinking thing" – the I – cannot speak sensibly about the ordinary things he sees. There is no longer a distinction between a rabbit and what seems to be a rabbit. Not only does "the I" (Bouwsma calls it "I2") merely lose its ability to speak meaningfully, it thereby loses its ability to see, believe, doubt , imagine, etc. It may seem that I2 has a "suspended capacity" for these things, in Descartes' view. But what now does that mean? Descartes' project dissolves in meaningless babble. "I think," "I see," "I believe" disappear like the smile of the Cheshire Cat disappears after the capacity of the cat for smiling disappears with its whiskers.

Bouwsma, O.K. "Double Talk, Jackie Vernon, and X." *The Nature of Philosophical Inquiry*. Ed. Joseph Bobik. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1970 [written 1967].

Bouwsma proposes to examine "double talk" (the deliberate nonsense discourse of comedians) as an analogy to the discussion of philosophers. The underlying thesis is that philosopher's discourse is nonsense. Bouwsma hopes that in showing how the comedian's double-talk nonsense gives the illusion of sense, he may shed light on how the philosopher's unintentionally disguised nonsense gives the illusion of sense. His project is intended to serve in aid of Wittgenstein's project of understanding how the illusions of philosophy arise from linguistic expressions.

Jackie Vernon enjoyed a brief period of notoriety as a TV comedian in the 1960's. He was a plump, sad faced character who highlighted an inferiority complex. Lonely and timid, his persona sought friendship with a watermelon at a fruit stand. The Vernon character and the watermelon are suited to each other – shy, deferential, treasures within. The watermelon, of course, speaks and reciprocates the friendship. There are adventures. Can the watermelon live with him in the apartment? The landlady is worried. There are those who do not accept watermelons. Etc. Bouwsma asks how the nonsense works in such cases. There is, he notices, the overlay of the grammar of friendships, of property rentals, of race relations, etc. with that of watermelons. It is this overlay that makes the humor. Watermelons do not speak, are not shy, stand in no need of friendship, and do not travel on their own. This is the double talk. We might call it "double grammar" – the grammar of "friendship" laid over the grammar of "watermelons." The humor lies in the clash of concepts.

Is this, now, how the discourse of philosophy works? Yes and no. There is in philosophy a clash of concepts. But the clash is not apparent as it is with the comedian Jackie Vernon. Everyone sees the clash with the comedian, but not so with the philosopher. With the later, the illusion of sense remains. The philosopher is serious. He does not intend to make his concepts overlap and clash.

Bouwsma looks more closely at the comedian's nonsense. He invents his own nonsense and then describes what he has done. His nonsense looks more like James Joyce's than Jackie Vernon's. A sample: "On the spur of the left foot, the rooster ran headshort against the piano keys, turned, and the door sprang shut fourteen hands high. Each hand had a little miracle on one finger tip …" He describes the nonsense as changing the order and combinations of plain talk. Now it makes no sense. Yet the plain talk creates pictures and bits of thoughts that when combined clash.

The result may be funny or it may result in amusement or be entertaining. This is not exactly like Jackie Vernon's watermelon, but both share nonsense that creates the illusion of sense. And Bouwsma has made some effort in explaining how that illusion is created. This explanation is to have carry-over value to philosophy.

In philosophical nonsense there is the clash of concepts. There are pictures and bits of thought captured by plain talk that, when combined, create the illusion of sense, when in fact there is no sense. Bouwsma provides an example.

"What is consciousness?" is a question that has haunted philosophers and sent them spinning. Before we answer the question however, Bouwsma, recommends that we examine the question. There is an honored precedent for such a pre-study in philosophers such as Locke and Kant. But they have not got the pre-study right yet. Wittgenstein, though, Bouwsma believes does. The pre-study involves examining the question as a question based in plain language. The ordinary plain language question: "What is X?" presents the basis in language for the illusion of sense. "What is the meaning of a word?" This assumes that we do not recognize a word. But "consciousness" is not an unfamiliar word. We are not asking about it as if we were children or a foreigner. The question makes it look as if there is something behind the word that we do not yet know. No one asks: "What is a wall?" because we all know what a wall is. "What is behind consciousness" as a wall is behind "wall" as its meaning? We see walls; we do not see consciousness. There are, however, expressions involving consciousness and unconsciousness. We know how to use these expressions, but no one thing that we point to is consciousness. The question "What is consciousness?" is thus mixed in these expressions. It arises out of the uses of the words, on the model of requesting a definition of a word we do not know. The form of the question and the removal of the word from its contexts give rise to the illusions. We put together pictures and parts of thoughts. They clash. We have nonsense with the illusion of sense.

Bouwsma reminds us that he has offered this in the service of aiding Wittgenstein's project of exposing disguised nonsense. There are in Wittgenstein, he reminds us, two great sources creating the illusion of sense. One is that the meaning of a word is the object that it names. We go on to try to find something that is not there. The second is that every sentence is a report of something. We

go on to try to find the fact that the sentence reports on.
(And what is the fact of the sentence I now write.?) Such
a fact too does not have to exist and, if it did exist, is
not the meaning.

Bouwsma, O.K. "Faith Evidence and Poof." *Without Proof Or
Evidence*. Ed. J.L. Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln:
Nebraska Press, 1984 [written 1968].

Ivan, Fyodor, and Alyosha are discussing, over brandy, the
existence of God and immortality. Fyodor is drunk. He
presses: Is there a God? "Yes" – Alyosha. "No" – Ivan.
And so we have what seems to be a dispute over a factual
claim.
     But how could we settle such a claim? It would have
to be from outside the universe – outside of experience.
We would need to open a door outside the universe. There
is no such door. There is no such thing as evidence in
this case for whether God and immortality exist. Are the
claims of religion true? Is the Bible true?
     Bouwsma distinguishes between the human element in the
Biblical stories and the divine element in them. The human
element is that Moses saw a burning bush.   The divine
element is that God spoke to him from the burning bush.
There is evidence – we know what it means for there to be
evidence for a burning bush. But we do not know what it
means for there to be evidence for God speaking to Moses
from the bush. Is it true that God spoke to Moses?
     St. Paul on the road to Damascus: No evidence;
rather, a command. The vision that St. Paul has does not
involve evidence. It is not a discovery that St. Paul
makes. His response to the vision is not: "*What* are
you?", but "*Who* are you Lord?" Had it been "What?", it
would be asking for the explanation of the phenomenon – the
miracle. But St. Paul recognizes the vision as an
appearance of the Lord. This is not a discovery of
information. There is then, the command. Saul follows the
command. His life is changed. When Paul is asked to give
an account of his faith – a defense – he tells a story.
"This is what happened to me on the way to Damascus."
Bouwsma is taking note of the fact the Bible does use the
word "defense," but we should not be misled by it.   St.
Paul tells a story; that is his defense. There are stories

too in connection with Moses and Abraham. These stories do not present evidence. And faith is not knowledge. It is easy to confuse faith with knowledge, but there is a difference. Ignoring this difference is the basis for confusion.

"Belief" too is a source of confusion. "Belief" has uses in religion that are different from uses in other contexts. But ignoring these differences causes us to think that evidence plays a roll in faith as well as outside the contest of faith. Bouwsma, instead, points to the connection between "belief" and "obedience." The letter of James warns that faith without works is dead. Here works equals obedience. Bouwsma notices the difference between "belief in" and "belief that." This difference reflects the difference between belief in the context of religious faith and belief outside that context. "Belief that" requires evidence. "Belief" leads to confusion in religious faith that is also connected to the confusion that Christianity is a set of doctrines – a set of propositions. Faith then is taken to be the belief that these propositions are true – assent to propositions.

Bouwsma, O.K. "Miss Anscombe On Faith." *Without Proof Or Evidence*. Ed. J.L. Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1984 [written 1968].

In 1968, Elizabeth Anscombe wrote and presented a paper called "Faith" at a colloquium at the University of Oregon. Bouwsma was to respond to the paper, but as he often did, he responded largely by thinking through the issue of faith for himself. Still Anscombe was not pleased, objecting later in a letter that she was misunderstood. The issue between them, from her point of view, was that she read into Bouwsma's response that he did not believe that a person of faith and an unbeliever could understand each other. That, however, was not Bouwsma's view.

I
The investigation of the concept of faith is a difficult and peculiar one. Unlike some psychological concepts, such as "thinking" for example, one cannot turn an eye inward to observe what is going on. Do I think in a

language? But with faith I cannot look inside, as it were, to find an answer to the question: What is faith? I cannot easily look outside at another person either. Does he have faith? Can we trust someone who says that he has faith or is there something about the concept that calls forth suspicion for one who calls attention to himself? "Faith," Bouwsma says, is like a word in a foreign language.

There is language surrounding faith. And, to understand the concept, one will have to learn that language. Outside the community of faith, the word "faith" will appear as a word in a foreign language. Its religious use will not be seen, and consequently, not understood. So one must learn the language of the community of faith in order to understand it. Bouwsma: "It is part of the condition of entering the community, a community of language, that one submits to in learning the language to which the word 'faith' belongs."

The implication of this is not that one must have faith in order to understand faith, but rather that one must understand the language of the community of faith in order to understand the concept "faith." Notice the difference with fideism. The latter claims that one needs the experience of faith in order to understand it.

Bouwsma points out that the believer – the person of faith – talks with God. He uses the language of faith in prayer. Inside the community, as an item of faith, is the belief that God speaks to human creatures. This too is part of the language of faith. The God, in speaking through the Scriptures to humans, teaches the people of faith how to speak of God and faith. So, the language of faith contains the idea that God gives the language of faith to the learner – the disciple. Bouwsma consciously uses Kierkegaard's words here: The Unknown (God), the Teacher (Christ), the learner (the disciple).

II

Section II of the paper presupposes Anscombe's claims in her paper. What we know of those from the fragments in Bouwsma's response is that she was concerned with the question: What can be understood about faith by someone who does not have any? In this question is the issue again of whether the experience of faith is necessary for understanding the language of faith. The question – What can be understood of faith by one who has faith? – is the relevant balancing question to the first. If having faith still does not bring understanding to the language of

faith, then the experience of faith brings nothing to the table. Understanding the language of faith will present the same problem to the believer and non-believer alike.

Bouwsma does some detective work in Anscombe's paper, uncovering what he takes to be her basic claim. It is that someone who has not faith as Abraham, the exemplar of faith, might nevertheless understand the faith of Abraham. Central to the faith of Abraham is that "Abraham believed God." Bouwsma pulls from this and other textual evidence that Anscombe sees the central feature of faith as believing the impossible without proof. (She sited approvingly the quotes from Ambrose Bierce's *The Devils Dictionary*: "Faith is believing what you know ain't true.")

Bouwsma takes issue with this account of faith. He rehearses the story of Abraham – his faith. What does the story present in presenting Abraham as the exemplar of faith? It is not to believe the impossible without evidence. It is rather to give us hope for the possibility of new life in us. "It is to help to kindle us with hope and the promise of a new day, a new human being, a new forever." Bouwsma explores the issue of how to read Scripture. It should not be read as a philosopher looking for the logical basis or lack of basis for belief. Rather, it should be read personally, looking at the reading of Scripture as holding promise for a new life and giving basis for appropriating God's promises for a new life.

<div align="center">III</div>

Bouwsma believes that Anscombe has misattended to the concept of faith. She is not alone in this. Philosopher's generally, in Bouwsma's view, misattend to the concept in a similar way. Their focus is on the support of belief by reasons and evidence. In Anscombe's case, she takes notice of belief assented to without proof. Faith is, in her view, assent to God's word without proof. Faith is believing God. Abraham is the exemplar of faith, because he believed God when there was neither good reason nor evidence for doing so. Anscombe's view of this matter – that there is no proof – is not different from Bouwsma's. Bouwsma is not objecting to Anscombe, saying "Oh, yes there is proof, good reasons, and evidence." So, his finding difficulty with Anscombe may have seemed surprising. And in fact, Miss Anscombe was surprised and put off by his response.

So what is it then that Bouwsma objected to and where would he have Miss Anscombe and other philosophers refocus their attention? The key to understanding Bouwsma's

objection is in the last two sentences of the essay: "Abraham was not an epistemologist. Imagine: "Without proof I can do nothing.' The Scriptures say, "Without me ye can do nothing.'" The epistemologist's concern is with knowledge claims and how they are supported. This suggests a pathway to assent to faith that is all wrong. It makes faith out to be assent to propositions instead of a life changing relationship to God. Without faith, one is lost – in despair – according to the grammar of "faith" in the religious community. Abraham's story is gripping and fearful. He gives up all earthly possessions to follow his relationship to God. To identify faith with assent to propositions misses the central, existential feature of the concept of "faith." In Anscombe's case, it is not that Bouwsma thinks that she is making an epistemological mistake in her analysis, but that she has mistaken the task of the analysis of "faith" as an epistemological problem.

    Whether this is a fair criticism of Anscombe's paper would have to be judged with her paper set next to Bouwsma's reply. Bouwsma's response to Anscombe is similar to his responses to other Christian philosophers such as Plantinga and Anselm on the matter of faith.

Bouwsma, O.K. "An Introduction To Nietzsche's Letters." *Without Proof Or Evidence*. Ed. J.L. Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1984 [written 1968].

    In 1968 Bouwsma was asked by the editors of a series with the University of Chicago Press, John Silber and William Arrowsmith, to write an introduction to Christopher Middleton's translation of Nietzsche's letters. The introduction that he prepared was rejected by the publisher and led to controversy. Middleton's translation was published the next year without Bouwsma's introduction. It was never published until included in the collection of his papers *Without Proof Or Evidence*. The publisher, no doubt, rejected Bouwsma's introduction because it did not exhibit the standard look of a scholar's hand. It is, rather, imaginative, almost Joycean in style, associative, and proffering of interpretations of Nietzsche's tasks and motives filtered through Bouwsma's unique existential reading of literature in general.

Bouwsma poses as a doorman who would usher in the reader to Nietzsche's letters. There is no mention of Middleton for whom Bouwsma had regard as a writer and translator. The doorman, rather, offers the entering reader samples of Nietzsche's remarks in letters that might peak the interest of various readers. For those who have a taste for style, for provocative ideas, for those who have a taste for classicism generally and Plato particularly, for those taken by Christianity and the ideas of confession – honesty before God, and more, there are sample sentences, remarks, and passages Bouwsma has selected to entice such readers. Each selection reflects Nietzsche's boldness in putting forward shocking ideas and his fine style, which comes through marvelously even in translation. Nietzsche's presentation of himself as bold enough to characterize himself as the "Immoralist" is featured. In another selected passage, Nietzsche shows his fearlessness in attacking the honesty of one no less than St. Augustine. Of St. Augustine's confession of sins before God in his autobiography, Nietzsche writes: "What falseness, what rolling of the eyes! How I laughed."

The second part of the essay, though not neatly marked, presents Bouwsma's guidelines for reading Nietzsche's works, not merely these letters. In typical manner, Bouwsma keeps before himself the question: What is Nietzsche's task? What is Nietzsche doing? While there is no single thesis that Bouwsma puts forward and defends as the way to understand Nietzsche's task, he provides insightful interpretations of facets of Nietzsche's conception of his task. Bouwsma says that Nietzsche understood himself – that he understood what he was doing. But that self-understanding is not necessarily what Nietzsche said of himself nor the way Nietzsche would have described his task.

Is Nietzsche the great "Immoralist" that he claims? – Oh yes, but Bouwsma compares Nietzsche to Ivan Karamazov. Both agree: "the moral law of nature must immediately be changed into the exact contrary of the former religious law." Both agree that with God overturned, morality must be stood on its head to assert the authority of man's will-to-power. But the difference in reaction to this rebellious act tells of who Nietzsche is and his task. While Ivan sheds tears of loss, Nietzsche claims "tears of joy." Nietzsche claims celebration of man's release.

Bouwsma speaks of Nietzsche as a terrorist. He blows up what others innocently go about maintaining in their shallow formal upholdings of social morality. Does he care

about the destruction of those values? Does he replace them with some better ones? That is not Nietzsche's task. Bouwsma: "Think of Nietzsche as a storm, thunder and lightning and wind, a natural force, a tornado, ruthless, tearing away at the landscape, spreading ruin." Can this be done with a faint heart? No. But Nietzsche claims strength in his destructive might.

Bouwsma offers this: Could it be that Nietzsche, having held the views of the death of God and the destruction of His morality, observed the shock in the reaction to his expression of them? And, in so doing, might he have felt a rush of power in his ability to so shock? Why then not shock more?! – The will to power as the will to shock.

Or, could it be that Nietzsche had a secret understanding with God? Nietzsche, who wrote of Socrates that he "was a baffoon who made others take him seriously," perhaps was himself "fooling"" when he struck out to undermine the sleeping slave soul. "No god, no morality," now means that the man is awakened. Nietzsche now awakens the individual to self-examination – to the setting on fire and purifying one's moral sense to meet the evil one who lulls conscience to sleep. Is Nietzsche really God's fool serving in the ranks of angels?

Another metaphor that Bouwsma provides to present Nietzsche's task: The world is a hospital, filled with the sick. Nietzsche proposes a cure. First, however, one must understand the disease.   What is it? It is Christianity and its morality. This disease has crippled the will. The wills of men have been enervated. And the cure? – the restoration of health? – the restoration of the will to power.

Bouwsma does not neglect the puzzle of Nietzsche's self-referential destructiveness of his terrorist attack on morality: Nietzsche as suicide bomber. This is the puzzle of the contemporary continental philosophers who have come under Nietzsche's influence, for example Foucault, etc.

But Bouwsma does not come to the self-referential aspect of Nietzsche in any traditional way. He points out that Nietzsche, refuses to accept one's account of his own morality at face value. We are great liars and self-deceivers, in Nietzsche's account, on all matters of morality and personal ethics. Accordingly, we get Nietzsche's account of St. Augustine as false and dishonest. Augustine, the great saint, poses, presents himself as honest and confessing his sins before God. And we are not to trust him. We are not to trust anyone,

because all are self-deceivers. But what now of Nietzsche himself? Is he too a liar and self-deceiver? When he shocks, is he shocking because he wants to present himself as a shocker? When he claims that others are rhetoricians and self-deceivers, is he not shocking and debunking others and thereby creating false images of himself that are masks that please him to put on? Does the claim that all hide the terrible truth from themselves not apply to Nietzsche himself? Bouwsma leaves this as a question, which is to say, he leaves it as an observed paradox. "Doesn't Nietzsche call attention to his impudence, his arrogance, his giving offense, his bravado, at the same time he puts on an apologetic air for these things?" Could it be too that "a man becomes what he represents himself to be?"

Bouwsma's presentation of Nietzsche is a literary accomplishment of its own. He works with crafted language, comparing Nietzsche's ideas to the language and ideas of Eclesiastes, Orwell, Dostoievski, and T.S. Elliot. Are Nietzsche's ideas like the ideas of one of these? Bouwsma sees the comparative insights between them and Nietzsche's letters. The preface to "Introduction to Nietzsche's Letters" may well have been rejected by the publishers for good reasons, but it nevertheless stands on its own as a provocative engagement with Nietzsche's philosophy.

Bouwsma, O.K. "A New Sensibility." *Toward A New Sensibility*. Ed. J.L. Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1982 [written 19668].

In this brief note, Bouwsma asks: What is Wittgenstein doing in the *Philosophical Investigations*? He wants to give an account of what the book is about in general: What is going on here? The book is about language. Language is the source of our philosophical confusions – the source of our problems. So Wittgenstein might be read then as attempting to sensitize us to the language that is involved in our philosophizing. He notices both how it is used and how the philosopher uses it. In philosophy there has been a "derangement" of language. It must then be re-arranged. Wittgenstein teaches the art of treating a philosophical question. This is done by developing a new sensibility to language.

Bouwsma reminds us that Kierkegaard and Nietzsche too were not only fine writers but attentive to what they were doing with language in relation to their philosophical projects. They could also be thought of as cultivating a new sensibility to language. In this they could be compared to Wittgenstein. But, of course, their tasks were different.

This essay was originally part of the next paper, "Conceptual vs. Factual Investigations," which is a longer paper addressing the same general question about the aims of the *Philosophical Investigations*.

Bouwsma, O.K. "Conceptual vs. Factual Investigations." *Toward A New Sensibility*. Ed. J.L Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1982 [written 1968].

Wittgenstein's example of Augustine's puzzlement over "time" is an example of a conceptual confusion. And what kind of study is it then to study Augustine's question: What is time? Conceptual. A factual investigation would be: What is water? What is air? What is an insect? Does time leave its marks on the hands of a clock as the clock turns? – Is it like water in a watermill? – like wind in a windmill? These are analogies to time. They may confuse us. We do not see wind in the windmill. Is this like our not seeing time moving the hands of the clock? Bouwsma prompts us to consider the difference in the kinds of questions these are and to notice that in metaphysics we may fail to notice the difference. Failing to notice the difference leads to mistaking a conceptual question for a factual question, confusing one for the other as Augustine has done.

And how does one proceed with a conceptual question as opposed to a factual question? One proceeds by examining the grammar the words involved. How do we use the word "time"? How is time measured? – on watches, by the hairs on one's head, by the changes of the seasons and the moon, etc.

Bouwsma also notices that we can have a conceptual investigation of a factual question. Of course this would be a confusion too. We could, that is, ask how we use the word "water" and this would lead to very different places

than to H2O. It does, no doubt, frustrate the patience of the scientist.

Bouwsma asks if this also applies to what Anaximenes does? Does he confuse conceptual and factual questions in: What is air? – Air is the *phusis*. The Presocratics have not yet sorted out scientific from metaphysical questions. Who discovered air? Was it Anaximenes? The discovery of air would be a scientific discovery – a factual discovery. Compare what Torecelli did with air to what Anaximenes did with it.

Bouwsma, O.K. "The Invisible." Without Proof Or Evidence. Ed. J.L. Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln: Nebraska, 1984.

We do not know how to read the Scriptures. We do not understand the language of the Scriptures. – Who does not? Bouwsma writes for someone who does not. It is likely that he writes for one whose reading of the Scriptures has been corrupted by philosophy or by science. In any case, Bouwsma addresses the misunderstanding of the language of Scriptures.

Bouwsma asserts that God does not speak English. This reminder shows the complexity of the idea that we do not know how to understand the language of Scripture. The Scripture, as revelation, are God's speaking in one of the human languages – in Hebrew, Greek, English. If God would speak to those who do not know His language, he must speak in one of the languages that we understand. And what is the language that God speaks when not speaking a human language? What can be said in that language? "If a lion could talk no one could understand him."   If God could talk, who could understand Him? The remark – God does not speak English – gives us a glimpse of the philosophical difficulty we face in understanding the language of the Scriptures.

The misunderstanding with which Bouwsma is concerned is shown in the exchange between Grigory and Smerdyakov in *The Brothers Karamazov*. Grigory, the pious servant, is instructing the young Smerdyakov in reading the Scriptures. Smerdyakov, points out to Grigory, that God created light on the first day but did not create the sun until the fourth day. With a maddening smile Smerdyakov asks where

the light came from if there were no sun. Grigory slaps him angrily saying, "I'll show you where." So Smerdyakov has found a contradiction. The language of the Scriptures, Smeryakov believes, is presenting propositions of knowledge about the formation of the earth. And now there is a contradiction among the propositions. Read as propositions describing a physical event, the propositions of Genesis cannot all be true. The creation account in Genesis is not science, and if read as science will appear to be very bad science. It does not the fit the way we have come to understand light and the solar system.

Taking the language of Scriptures as the language of science – the language of propositions of knowledge – is the misunderstanding that Bouwsma is addressing. But how then are we to understand this language of the creation of the heavens and the earth?

There are heroes of faith – Abraham, Moses, Noah, and more. These heroes spoke with God. God spoke with them and they understood. What was that like? What are the indications that they understood? God gave them guidance. He gave them commands. These heroes of faith responded by obedience. Their faith consisted in their accepting the authority of a master of their lives. But faith and the language of faith cannot be understood merely in the terms of commands and obedience. Faith involves fulfilling the commands of one unseen – an Invisible One. Here Bouwsma explores the passage from *The Book of Hebrews*: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The hero of faith is one who is listening to and speaking with God the Invisible. The voice is not like the voice of one's neighbor. It is not a voice in English, though it does sound like English. The ordinary, the seen, and the heard are what we are familiar with. The voice of God comes in this ordinary form, and yet it is the voice of God. It is the opposite of the ordinary – as far from the ordinary as can be imagined. The hero of faith is "sustained by, is loved and inspired by," this Invisible. And the hero of faith responds to the commands of the Invisible One in obedience. So Abraham understands God by believing that he will have a son through whom the faith will be passed to future generations, and he obeys according to his belief Moses leads the Israelites out of slavery following the commands of the Invisible One. Abraham presents the wanders in the desert with the commandments of the Invisible One.: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" and "Do not kill nor steal nor commit adultery nor covet." These are understandable. There is

no puzzle of meaning here. No one objects: "But there is a contradiction with these commands. There is no contradiction in: "You will have son." "Keep your hands off your neighbors hard earned possessions and off of his wife." "Build an ark." These may be difficult, but the directions are understandable. The difficulty is in keeping the commandments and following the directions.

Bouwsma, O.K. "Notes on Kierkegaard's 'The Monstrous Illusion." *Without Proof Or Evidence*. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1984 [written 1970].

In his *The Point Of View For My Work As An Author*, Kierkegaard uses the phrase "the monstrous illusion. Here Kierkegaard claims that he has, in his writing, been engaged in a polemic against "the monstrous illusion" that all are Christians – that all have become Christians. Bouwsma proposes to wrestle with this phrase "the monstrous illusion." What is it? And, how does Kierkegaard understand his mission of dispelling the monstrous illusion that all have become Christians?

Bouwsma proposes that Kierkegaard's task involves awakening his reader. The reader has been asleep and without passion in an affair, faith, that is essential a passion. So there is a call to awaken and to self-examination in the attack on the monstrous illusion. One, asleep in Christiandom, is slumbering in the illusion that one is a Christian and must be awakened.

Bouwsma suggests that those living in the illusion that they are Christians are asleep in the language of Christianity. To them, those asleep, the language has become so familiar and they so accustomed to it that they are, in a sense, deaf to it. They can no longer hear its call to the Christian life. They no longer hear its requirements. They are insensitive to the presence of the God Incarnate.

Kierkegaard approaches this task of awakening one to Christianity in an indirect manner. In *Either/Or*, Kierkegaard begins by displaying the aesthetic life. One is to recognize oneself in the description of the aesthetic life. In the aesthetic life, we "hear the expression of desire." And in the contrast to the ethical life, we notice or it is called to our attention that the aesthetic

life is without the expressions of the imperative. It lacks "decisiveness." Then too, the religious stage, which is not presented for contrast in *Either/Or*, contains the expression of the love of God as well as one's neighbor (the ethical). The contrast to the aesthetic again is striking – wakeful. There is no decisiveness in the aesthetic, no love of the other, and no love of God. So the monstrous illusion is indirectly attacked through the presentation of the language of the aesthetic. Aesthetes are what we really are. The aesthetic sphere is where we really live. Awakening us to our true surroundings serves as a warning. "This is not Christianity!" We are struck by the difference between the aesthetic life on the one hand and the Christian life on the other. Awareness of the difference calls us away from the aesthetic.

   In order to understand what it means to be a Christian, one must understand the aesthetic stage. All are in the aesthetic stage by virtue of birth. Bouwsma regards Kierkegaard's laying out of the aesthetic stage as necessary understanding for grasping the nature of the change that is to come about in one's life in becoming a Christian. To live for another and to see God in one's neighbor are radically different changes in one's life from living for pleasure. This is essentially connected to "the monstrous illusion" – for one, under this illusion, is living in the aesthetic while under the illusion that he is living in the religious.

   The aesthetic, ethical, and religious – the identification of them and ordering of them – describe spiritual progress of an individual. In the description of becoming a Christian and with respect to the task of dispelling the monstrous illusion, one must think of the spiritual progression as moving away from the aesthetic by means of the decisiveness of the ethical. One must, in a logical progression become ethical in order to come to Christianity.

   Bouwsma wants to understand Kierkegaard's dispelling of the monstrous illusion by means of Kierkegaard's description of this spiritual progress through the aesthetic, ethical, and religious stages in terms of confusions in language-games. Bouwsma draws upon a comparison to Wittgenstein's aim of dispelling the illusions of philosophy by re-orienting one in ordinary language-games. But this is only an analogy. There are, Bouwsma observes, language-games played within religion that may turn out to hold illusions or hold one inside

illusions. He mentions two: 1) One is that there may be a kind of aesthetic illusion about religion. – That the language of the New Testament is beautiful and a joy to read, and that the story of Jesus' birth and the passion of Christ are moving, comforting, passionate – an aesthetic feast. One might be enthralled in this and not see or feel the ethical demands of Christianity – that one is required to live in a certain way in relation to one's neighbor and to God. 2) The second possible illusion is that the language of the New Testament is knowledge – metaphysics. Bouwsma believes that Kierkegaard is more concerned with this illusion. Kierkegaard was, of course, also concerned with the illusion that Christianity the Danish State Church were the same thing. This illusion is addressed more explicitly in the articles collected in *Attack Upon Christiandom*.

Bouwsma, O.K. "Are Poems Statements?" *Toward A New Sensibility*. Ed. J.L. Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1982 [written 1970].

	Bouwsma quotes a poet [W.H. Auden] saying that poems are statements. Then, he finds another poet who notices that there is a difference between poems and statements. So Bouwsma poses the question: Are poems statements? And he also wonders: How would we go about convincing someone that poems are not statements? There is a similar dispute over the claim that poems must not mean: Poems mean – but poems do not mean.
	Bouwsma professes to hold these confusions at some level himself. How to get clear of confusions? He says that he will assemble reminders showing that it is difficult to understand the sentences: "Poems are statements" and "Poems mean." Perhaps the reminders will show that one or both of the sentences are nonsense. In any case, it will help with these confusions to assemble reminders.

	Bouwsma plays with the idea that poems are statements. Jack and Jill went up the hill. Jack fell down. Mary had a little lamb. Mary brought the lamb to school one day. Etc. These are statements, are they not? Do children who can read these nursery rhymes, believe them? Are they

true?   Can they be clarified?   Doubted?   Contradicted? Simplified?

If poets make statements, does that mean that they believe what they have stated? Do poets have more beliefs than others because they make so many additional statements in their poems? Bouwsma contrasts poems with statements. Of a poem we do not ask what we ask of a statement: Why is it made? Why did one want to know what is stated? Is it a report? A poem rather is: "Cinderella at the ball."

If poems are statements, then there must be another way of reading a poem than reading it for enjoyment. The other way will be to discover the statement that it is making. In this way of reading, the poet too could be held responsible for his believing the statement that the poem made. Is it believable? Is he justified in believing it? Of course, Bouwsma's point is that this is all wrong.

Of poetry Bouwsma asks: "Isn't the language on a holiday?"

If poems are statements, then we might improve on the poem by turning the poem into the statement it makes.

Do poems mean? Should we then ask for their meanings? Are there special people who can tell you what the poems means?   Wittgenstein might help here. Meaning is use. Meaning is found in the language-game. But a poem is not a language-game.   The words in a poem do not have a use. They have uses outside the poem, and the words in the poem rely on our familiarity with those uses. The words of the poem are "soaked in the juices" of ordinary use. Point: A word has meaning in a language-game.   A poem is no language-game. The "grammar" of the word in a poem may be "highly irregular."

"The language of poetry is language on a holiday."

Bouwsma, O.K. "A Difference Between Ryle And Wittgenstein" *Toward A New Sensibility*. Ed. J.L. Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1982 [written 1972].

Descartes splits the world in two – minds and bodies. Ryle puts them back together in one. Descartes has a theory and Ryle has a counter theory. Ryle says that Descartes' theory is false (not nonsense) and that his (Ryle's) theory is true.

Ryle classifies words. He seems untroubled, not agitated. Wittgenstein attempts to impart a skill to the agitated reader – to help him out of the agitation. This takes an eye for – an understanding of – how and why the reader is agitated. Wittgenstein writes his internal dialogue making the reader think through the agitating confusion for himself. Ryle does not.

Bouwsma sees the difference between Ryle and Wittgenstein in this way: Ryle has analyzed Descartes, saying that "I" is a thing-word. And, further, Ryle argues that Descartes is wrong about this. Ryle certainly cannot read Descartes as classifying "I" as a do-word. (Is this the same as Ryle's know-how/knowing-that distinction?) In any case, Ryle is categorizing words and that is different from what Wittgenstein is doing. Bouwsma sees Ryle on this matter as being without the passion and puzzlement of the philosopher. Ryle is not agitated by the puzzlement himself. And he does not write for his reader as if he, the reader, is in the grip of philosophical puzzlement either.

Wittgenstein, by contrast, has an eye on the reader who is snarled in puzzlement. There is an analogy here to psycho-analysis. The philosopher is in the grasp of puzzlement – perhaps entrapped by hidden analogies. And Wittgenstein is, like the psychoanalyst, suggesting what the hidden analogy embedded in language is that might be the source of the problem. The patient then finds relief in acknowledging the source of the puzzlement. We are, Bouwsma has quipped, "analogy drawing animals." So Wittgenstein serves in aid of the relief of philosophical puzzlement. "You are thinking of "I" as the name of something – but it is not the name of something, even though in certain ways it may look to you as if it were." Now this, though it looks like what Ryle is saying, is quite different. Bouwsma presents the differences between Ryle and Wittgenstein. He shows how they pursue different projects.

Bouwsma, O.K. "Makes It True." *Toward A New Sensibility*. Ed. J.L. Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1982 [written 1975].

The stimulation for Bouwsma's paper was E.B. Allaire's essay "Truth," which was delivered at a colloquy at the University of Texas at Austin and later published in *Metaphilosophy*, July/October, 1975, pp. 261-76. Allaire, in his essay, is concerned with the Austin-Strawson debate on the nature of truth and he attends to the following sentence of Austin's: "When a statement is true, there is, of course, a state of affairs which makes it true ... ."

Bouwsma's respnse, typical of his work, also focuses on a single sentence, even, in this case, a part of Austin's sentence: "There is a state of affairs which makes it true." And the part isolated for special attention is: "makes it true." Bouwsma intends to show that the expression, whether Austin's or Allaire's, is unintelligible.

The grammar of "makes" includes the question "How does it make?" "X makes me sick." "X makes me angry." "X makes cake soft." "How does X make me sick?" "How does X make cake soft?" The grammatical exploration of "makes" will be linked to and shed light on the understanding of "X makes it true." How does X make a proposition true?

X, in this case, is a state of affairs. A state of affairs is supposedly what makes a proposition true. Bouwsma plays with the linkage from the other direction. How may we think of a state of affairs as making something happen? A state of affairs may be what makes the course of true love run smooth. How does that work? Well, two people may have similar interests, similar economic backgrounds, the same religions, and so this state of affairs may make their relation run smooth. Does this state of affairs make the proposition – "They are well suited" – true in the sense that it (the same state of affairs) makes the course of their true love run smooth? Of course not, but the contrast brings out the lack of an answer to the question, "How does a state of affairs make a proposition true?" Bouwsma: We do understand the reasons for true loves running more smoothly than it might, but we do not yet understand a state of affairs as a reason for a proposition's truth. How does it do that?

If a proposition is "made true" by a state of affairs, then it would seem, by the grammar of "made true" that it was not true before the state of affairs made it true. It sounds as if there is a time element involved in the process of making a proposition true. Further, "true" is a "quality" of a proposition. And qualities, like "blue" for example, unlike substances, can change. Something that was yellow could become blue; something green and long, such as

grass, could become brown and short. There can be explanations of how this happens: Another color was mixed with yellow; the grass was mowed; the grass was dried in the sun. So too then by grammatical analogy, we might observe a state of affairs changing a proposition's quality to "true." And likewise, we ought to be able to explain how this happened. But, of course, we draw a complete blank on these questions.

Next Bouwsma takes notice of how we go about finding out whether a proposition is true. He gives us cases. Is it true what they say about Dixie? Is it true that the wisteria covers trees and houses? And how did Dixie get its name? – from the Dixon of the pair who drew the Mason-Dixon Line? Do you suppose that Mr. Mason called Mr. Dixon "Dixie"? Is this true? Now his sort of investigation is not the philosopher's investigation into truth. With some particular proposition, we may ask and answer the question "Is it true?" The philosopher is not asking about some particular proposition; rather, he is asking about propositions in the abstract. "What, in general, makes a proposition true? is the philosopher's question. And to this question Bouwsma as yet sees no answers. His aim, of course, is to show that the expression "makes it true" is unintelligible.

What leads one to ask the philosophical question "What is truth?" is the picture of meaning that a word is the name of an object? What is the object that truth names? That question drives us. What is the object of the word "truth"? We may well be inclined to say that the object in this case is a relationship. But the relationship is the one referred to in the relationship between a proposition and the state of affairs that it names. In this way, then, the object named by "truth" is one step removed from the relationship between some particular proposition and a state of affairs. "What is truth?" is a question, as the philosopher raising it sees it, in a meta-language and not in the natural language itself. It is likely that this is how Allaire was looking at the question.

The question, whether in a metalanguage or not, is a philosopher's question and not the question of the everyday speaker of English. Austin, Strawson, and Allaire, like Socrates, speak a language in which they use the words "truth," "knowledge," and "virtue" in their everyday occurrences. These are fluent with their language. But then, like Socrates, they are, as it were, suddenly at a loss to give an account of the word. What they find difficult, of course, is to give a definition of the word.

And Allaire, in spite of his familiarity with Wittgenstein's admonition to look for the meaning in the use, falls prey to the temptation to find the meaning of truth in the object: a relationship between a proposition and a state of affairs. Is this because he sees a special language – a non-ordinary language – called a "metalanguage" in which the words "truth," "proposition," "relation," "name," etc. play a different role? Allaire too was "raised," as it were, on Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* where this idea of a metalanguage played an important role, though once played, the role was to be discarded – kicked over like a ladder used to climb to a height from which one could see our natural language clearly. Wittgenstein shared this misunderstanding with Allaire, and Wittgenstein's break with the *Tractatus* as expressed in the *Philosophical Investigations,* includes his dissolving of differences between natural language and metalanguage. The language used in both seem the same.

Bouwsma, in reflecting on what has transpired between Wittgenstein and Allaire, realizes how closely tied to the analogy of language as a map all of this is. The map analogy, the analogy appropriate to the *Tractatus*, includes not only propositions and states of affairs, but the mapping relationship as well. Describing this mapping relationship is describing the "metalanguage" (Allaire's word not Bouwsma's). The map analogy harbors the metalanguage. The correspondence theory of truth arises out of it. A state of affairs in the world corresponds to a true proposition, that is, "makes it true." The correspondence theory is part of a metalanguage. Later, Wittgenstein's introduction of "grammar," was meant to serve as a replacement idea for "metalanguage." We learn grammar as we learn to speak. There are grammarians and grammar teachers. They make comments and generalize about how we have come to use words. Grammar describes, using the language we speak, how we use the words of that language we speak. We do not step outside the language to speak about the words in the language. Further, the descriptions of the words in our language can be used to make clear their meanings when the philosophical excursions in the supposed metalanguage have made it seem as if we do not know their meanings – forgotten their definitions.

This paper develops Bouwsma's resistance to the philosopher's felt need for a special language (a metalanguage) in which to do his work. "Meaning is use" is not a definition of meaning in a metalanguage. Bouwsma persists in talking the ordinary talk, refusing the

distinction between ordinary and extraordinary language. Is it true what they say about Dixie? Much of it is. The wisteria is beautiful and plentiful. It is Bouwsma's insistence on talking about Dixie and Wisteria that frustrated, and at times infuriated, the philosophers around him. It explains why his later writing was never published in journals, but presented in small groups to students and friends like Ed Allaire.

Bouwsma, O.K. "Lengthier *Zettel*." *Without Proof Or Evidence*. Ed. J.L. Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1984 [written 1976].

These notes are *Zettel* – fragments of philosophy. They stem from Bouwsma's reading Kierkegaard, though the title is borrowed from Wittgenstein. The following are Zettel (fragments) summarizing of Bouwsma's *Zettel* on Kierkegaard:

One of Kierkegaard's sentences puts us on the track of something involved in becoming a subjective thinker. The sentence is: "The maximum one person can do for another is to inspire him with concern and unrest." The sentence suggests that a writer's task is to unsettle or awaken another, and that a reader must read, not with the intention to assent to truth, but with the awareness of his task of becoming a thinker. How do I appropriate what I read? What must I do with it?

"Is belief in God rational?" Bouwsma teases the question for sense. The question asks for "yes" or "no." We are expected to answer one way or the other. How do we use the expression: "X is rational or not rational"? These do not fit with God or belief with God or belief in God.

How would one be received if he offered a great treasure – money, for example – free, no questions or conditions? Would people believe him? Would people think him crazy? Compare this to Christ's offer of eternal life.

What is eternal life? A new beginning. A task. A venture. It has to do with how I live my life now.

Question: If Kierkegaard was engaged in a polemic against Hegel, and there are no more Hegelians, is there any reason to read Kierkegaard any more? Hint: There is always oneself with whom on may engage in a polemic.

Kierkegaard writes to remind us of something we have forgotten. What is that? – what it means to be an existing human being. This is a strange thing to forget. How did this situation come about? It came about through reading philosophy and searching for the meaning of existence amongst the abstract concepts. Specifically, this forgetting arises in connection with mistaking Christianity for a speculative philosophy of life.

Kierkegaard writes to remind us of a "hidden inwardness" – that in Christianity there is a task for the individual Christian. There has been a covenant made. There are promises to keep. One must fulfill a task and it is something to be worked out privately between God and that individual.

The paradox. Kierkegaard has expressions such as: "the essentially incomprehensible" and "believing against the understanding." The paradox of Christianity or the "Absolute Paradox" as Kierkegaard calls it in the *Philosophical Fragments*, is none other than Jesus Christ himself – God come as a man. This is what is essentially incomprehensible and what is believed against the understanding. "Paradox" means, literally, what is beyond belief. But, Bouwsma notices, the declaration of belief on the part of Christians is not affirmation of paradoxical information, as it were the statements of theological propositions. They are rather confessions, praises, affirmations of thankfulness. Those who would diagnose belief as wish fulfilment are closer to understanding them than those who dismiss such declarations as nonsense.

Socrates is a subjective thinker. He does not tell anyone anything. He does not convey a truth. It is as if he were waiting on a Messiah (one who can teach the truth), but is not the Messiah himself. Socrates is a goad to others, to their becoming thinkers for themselves. Socrates has work to do. His mission is from God.

Kierkegaard began his thinking with Hegel. Hegel offers metaphysical knowledge – knowledge about the

universe. It is as if Hegel starts with the confusion that Christianity is knowledge about the universe. Then he improves upon that knowledge. He offers a better view of the same knowledge – makes it more complete, explains it, and gives an indepth view of it. But the confusion of Christianity with knowledge is the beginning and ending point. Hegel never gets out of it. This is relevant to Kierkegaard's task: to show that Christianity is not knowledge.

What must one do to inherit eternal life? Think of this as a question that makes the transition from Kierkegaard's objectivity to subjectivity. One takes up the question as a subjective quest – a task. Seeking eternal life is a passionate quest. It requires keeping the covenant with God, keeping His commandments and precepts, putting all else aside – all worldliness, etc. Seeking eternal life is not assenting to certain propositions about an afterlife – "objectivity" – but seeing all goods as heavenly goods – "subjectivity."

Bouwsma sees Kierkegaard's language of objectivity and subjectivity as an example of Kierkegaard's attempt to freshen the abused and misunderstood language of Christianity. We have now had centuries of the disintegration of the power of that New Testament language. Bouwsma is not referring here to the sleepiness of the ordinary churchgoer. He believes philosophers and theologians have presided over this disintegration of the language. And now, Kierkegaard, in struggling against philosophical confusions in Christianity, must face this abuse of the language of Christianity. So he must fight these confusions with fresh and philosophically operative language: objectivity, subjectivity, knight of infinite resignation, teacher-learner, absolute paradox, etc.

Privacy. Are there things that only I can know about myself and only you can know about yourself? This question harbors a covey of philosophical complexities. One is the skepticism arising from the mind-body problem. But there is more. How can we know the secrets of another's heart? How does one bear witness to the secrets of his own heart without hypocrisy? Here again, Kierkegaard's distinction between objectivity and subjectivity is operative. The philosopher's problem of skepticism arising from mind-body dualism is a problem in the realm of objectivity. The problem of the hypocrite who prays in public and the humble saint who prays in the closet is not a philosophical

problem. It is an issue of sin and faith. It lies in the realm of subjective truth.

Bouwsma, O.K. "A Lengthy *Zettel*." *Without Proof Or Evidence*." Ed. J.L. Craft and Ronald E. Hustwit. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1984 [written 1978].

     "There is no God in general." There is Allah. There is Jehovah. There is Jesus Christ, a name above every other name. Each of these gods is understood in the language and community of those who are Muslim, Jew, Christian, etc. "God" is not simply the name of an object, but a word in the language spoken by a community of faith. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is a god understood in relation to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God spoke to Abraham, made the promise of Isaac to him, tested him by means of Isaac, etc. The word "God" we understand by reading accounts of Him in the Scriptures and from the mouths of those who have a covenant with Him. Kierkegaard: "God is not a name, but a concept."
     So, who is this "god in general" that does not exist? "Who" is not the right word. "Who?" asks for a person. The god in general has no personhood. It has no relationship with Abraham, Mohammed, St. Paul. It exhibits no love nor anger, issues no commands, gives no comfort, and, of course, never speaks. Aristotle called the god in general – "the Unmoved Mover." Plato called the god in general – "the Idea of the Good." St. Thomas called the god in general – the First Cause" and "the Necessary Being." But there is no god in general. You will never meet It in temple, mosque, nor church. You will never fall into It's angry hands – a terrible thing. Nor will you even be forgiven or comforted by it.
     The concept "god" – the word "God" – is understood in a context. That context is not the universal context of religion, of every religious tradition taken together. There may be similarities among different religious contexts. Bouwsma is not denying that. But the concept "God" is understood, in the context of a specific religious tradition – the collected language of a community of Muslim or Christian or Jewish believers. To understand the nuances of the concept, one may even have to look more specifically at subgroups within these larger communities

of faith – Sunni and Sheite Muslims, Orthodox and Reformed Jews, Calvinist, Lutheran, Roman Catholic Christians. There are specific theologies or sub-theologies that have developed with these subgroups: Calvin's *Institues*, Luther's *Here I Stand*, *The Lives of The Saints*.

Bouwsma's idea that "God" is understood in context is meant as a corrective to the philosopher's conception of his task of describing "the god in general." The philosopher's task has been conceived under the philosophical presupposition that the meaning of a word is its referent. What is "the god in general" that the word "god" in all the world's religions refer to? In this question, the word "god" looses all of its flavor. There is no personality. It has no relations to humans. It is abstract to point where it, like Aristotle's Unmoved Mover, merely exists. Does it? In any case, whether it exists or not, there is no "God" in general. There is no concept of god outside a community of faith.