Presidential Address

ON THE PHILOSOPHICAL GENESIS OF THE TERM "FORM OF LIFE"

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I

Recently there has been intense interest among philosophers and historians alike in establishing the historical setting for Ludwig Wittgenstein's philosophy. There is currently much preoccupation with the European origins of his thought.[1] Some of this interest has centered around the term *"Lebensform,"* "form of life," and rightfully so, since it is thought to be one of the distinguishing marks of his later philosophy. For instance, van Peursen mentions as possible candidates for the origin of the idea the literary works of Spranger and Scholz.[2] More recent research using new sources has confirmed van Peursen's conjecture, notably the scholarship of Morris Engel[3] and the joint effort of Janik and Toulmin.[4] Although it is not clear from whom Wittgenstein borrowed the term "form of life," it does come from German philosophical usage. That much is established. And as I shall show below, the term was in use long before Spranger and Scholz. Wittgenstein may have first encountered the idea from an earlier source than has been substantiated. But that is only conjecture on my part.

The term "form of life" first appears in German philosophy in Arthur Schopenhauer's work *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (1819). Although the exact phrasing by Schopenhauer and Wittgenstein is not shared, the wording is similar. In the *Philosophical Investigations* (hereafter *P.I.*), Wittgenstein always used *"Lebensform"* for form of life.[5] He did not use any literary variations as Schopenhauer did. For instance, Schopenhauer used both *"Formen"* and *"Gestalten"* for the plural when discussing "the forms of life."[6] However, when Schopenhauer spoke of the form of life he used only *"Form,"* as Wittgenstein did, except that Schopenhauer's literary construction of the term was *"die Form des Lebens."*[7]

Now this is all well and good, but did they *mean* the same thing or even similar things by these words? To begin answering this question, let us look at Schopenhauer's use of the term in its context, and then proceed to Wittgenstein's, since the latter's is most familiar.

II

Schopenhauer's conception of form of life is fairly straightforward and relatively easy to present, mainly because the term plays such a distinctive

role in his metaphysics. The most frequent occurrence of the term "form of life" is in reference to time, specifically the present. Schopenhauer advises us that "above all things, we must distinctly recognize that the form of the phenomenon of will, the form of life or reality, is really only the *present*, not the future nor the past."[8] And in the next few sentences he adds that "the present alone is the form of all life, and is its sure possession which can never be taken from it." Some other instances of the term which occur in his discussion of the assertion and denial of the will are the following: "the present, the single form of real life" (I,361; I,386); "the form of all life is the *present* . . ." (I,361; I,387); and "the form of life is an endless present" (I, 362; I,388).

Schopenhauer's reason for emphasizing the present can be seen when some of his key metaphysical ideas come into play with the term. For Schopenhauer, "the present is the form essential to the objectification of the will" (I,361; I,387). And toward the end of *The World as Will and Idea* (hereafter *W.W.I.*), he remarks

> Here we see, in passing, more distinctly that in general the form of life, or the manifestation of the will with consciousness, is primarily and immediately merely the present. Past and future are added only in the case of man, and indeed merely in conception, are known *in abstracto,* and perhaps illustrated by pictures of the imagination (III,381; II,732).

This statement admits that there are the other temporal dimensions or predicates, but for man they are not as important as the present because "life is inseparable from the will to live, and the only form of life is the present" (I,473; I,499). (An idea similar to the one Schopenhauer is dealing with here is Wittgenstein's remark in the *Tractatus*: "eternal life belongs to those who live in the present" [6.4311].[9] But there is *more* to it than this in Schopenhauer.) And to make this idea of the present clearer, one must turn to the conception of life and the world in Schopenhauer's thought, for they are central to his meaning of the term.

The two passages that emphasize the notion of form and which utilize many of the main ideas of Schopenhauer's philosophy are also ones that show that the term probably had its origin in Kant's doctrine of the forms of intuition—space and time. They read as follows:

> *Every individual,* every human being and his course of life, is but another short dream of the endless spirit of nature, of the persistent will to live; *is only another fleeting form,* which it carelessly sketches on its infinite page, space and time; allows to remain for a time so short that it vanishes into nothing in comparison with these, and then obliterates to make new room. And yet, and here lies the serious side of life, *every one of these fleeting forms, these empty fancies, must be paid for by the whole will to live, in all its activity,* with many and deep sufferings, and finally with a bitter death, long feared and coming at last (I,415; italics mine).

And a bit later, he adds,

> that constant strain and effort without end and without rest at all the grades of objectivity, in which and through which the world consists; the multifarious forms succeeding each other in graduation; the whole manifestation of the will; and, finally, also the universal forms of this manifestation, time and space, and also its last fundamental form, subject and object; all are abolished. No will; no idea, no world (I,530-31; I,557).

As these two passages suggest, there is a distinct metaphysical role of the notion, form of life, in Schopenhauer's thought. Nature is treated as an expression or manifestation of the will. The particular manner in which the diversity of the world is accounted for is by way of form. Form functions in a two-fold way and may be illustrated by the following explanation:

> That generation and death are to be regarded as something belonging to life, and essential to this phenomenon of the will, arises also from the fact that they both exhibit themselves merely as higher powers of the expression of that in which all the rest of life consists. This is through and through nothing else than the constant change of matter in the fixed permanence of form; and this is what constitutes the transitoriness of the individual and the permanence of the species (I,356-57).

It appears from the term's context that the principal meaning for Schopenhauer is a biological one. "Form of life" has a sense of a species and its characteristic behaviors. Moreover, the emphasis upon the present shows affinity with Kant's use of "*Form*" in his conception of time as a form of intuition. Schopenhauer accepts Kant's idea that time is not an abstract idea, but an *a priori* form of perception or of the sensible manifold. For Kant, sense experience merely presents itself, and time is characteristic of our perception of the flow of consciousness. So the present is the most immediate way that sense experience is given to us.[10]

If one reviews the beginning of Schopenhauer's "Criticism of the Kantian Philosophy" in *W.W.I.* (II,23ff), one quickly finds that he thought time and space are expressions of a deeper condition or underlying reason for all experience, which is causality. Our experience of phenomena within time has causality as a presupposition; for instance, material objects are expres-

sions of causal forms or structures. That is to say, phenomena as we experience them are interrelated and connected. They are a coherent stream presented to our consciousness.

The form of life as the present has the experience of material objects interpreted in the above way. But the form of life is also the manifestation of the will with consciousness (III,381) which is described as a directly felt relation in which an individual becomes aware of the inner nature of a phenomenon. This subjective feeling is what Schopenhauer labels will. So these two items, the inner and outer nature of phenomena, are what the present consists of, and define what the content of "form of life" is for Schopenhauer. Within a particular form of life, one's perceptions become objectifications or manifestations of one's will, the will to live or to be, and that person's existence has an analysis similar to the one given of perception. The familiar descriptive terms of Schopenhauer's theory of will are used in supplying content to the idea of what a form of life is: the will irrationally drives us; we blindly suffer from our needs and cravings, which are never satisfied. Each will acts to preserve itself from others who oppose it. And so on. This is the tragic picture Schopenhauer gives us of life and the world, and it is not too surprising to find it behind Schopenhauer's understanding of "*die Form des Lebens.*"

Perhaps one of the best illustrations of the idea that the present is the form of life, with its Eastern overtones which would be shared with Schopenhauer's use, is seen in the following, moving dialogue from Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha* (1922):

> He once asked him, "Have you also learned that secret from the river: that there is no such thing as time"?
>
> A bright smile spread over Vasudeva's face. "Yes, Siddhartha," he said. "Is this what you mean? That the river is everywhere at the same time, at the source and at the mouth, at the waterfall, at the ferry, at the current, in the ocean and in the mountains, everywhere, and that the present only exists for it, not the shadow of the past, nor the shadow of the future"?
>
> "That is it," said Siddhartha, "and when I learned that, I reviewed my life and it was also a river, and Siddhartha the boy, Siddhartha the mature man and Siddhartha the old man, were only separated by shadows, not through reality. Siddhartha's previous lives were also not in the past, and his death and his return to Brahma are not in the future. Nothing was, nothing will be, everything has reality and presence."[11]

III

Is it possible that Schopenhauer influenced Wittgenstein's phraseology? At first sight, it might seem that there is not much correlation between

Schopenhauer's and Wittgenstein's uses of the term. After all, what could Wittgenstein's dictum, "to imagine a language means to imagine a form of life" (*P.I.*, Pt. 1, sec. 19), have to do with Schopenhauer's metaphysic-laden use? To answer this question in the negative and for that to be the end of the matter is to oversimplify and to fail to appreciate what is presented here. First of all, there is the problem of understanding just what Wittgenstein meant by the term. He never explains it, and from his occasional use in varying contexts, it is still debatable as to what conception underlies Wittgenstein's use (see fn. 5). However, if one begins to examine Wittgenstein's notion carefully, there are *some rough* similarities to Schopenhauer—enough to make the parallel appear puzzling to the historian of philosophy.

The first similarity is in Hunter's interpretation of "form of life" in Wittgenstein's *P.I.*[12] His reading of the *Lebensform* passages he dubs as "the organic account." Let me briefly review its basic tenets. "Form of life" refers to the biological or organic phenomena which occur in, and which are typical of, the activities of living beings. This would include the complicated ways in which animals react to their environment. So to say that to imagine a language is to imagine a form of life is to say that speaking or language-using is as much a biological, natural process as walking or digesting food. Under this interpretation, what is emphasized about language *are the activities one undergoes when one speaks.* The gestures, facial expressions, bodily movements (including autonomic responses)—all those things which humans naturally carry out or perform in their environment when talking—are the items which Wittgenstein wished to emphasize when he talked about constructing elementary (primitive) language-games. As he reports in *P.I.*, "the term 'language-game' is meant to bring into prominence the fact that the *speaking* of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life" (Pt. I, sec. 23). Notice he says a *part* of an activity or of a form of life—not that language is identical with it.

We find this idea as early as the *Tractatus period:* "Everyday language is a part of the human organism and is no less complicated than it" (4.002).[13] Wittgenstein's line of reasoning here casts doubt on Patrick Sherry's argument (fn. 12) about forms of life as religion. Only when religious activities are *spoken* do we have this associative function between these two concepts. So the converse of Hunter's "organic account" is also true and not something which should be forgotten in a discussion of this sort. Speaking and language-activities condition forms of life just as much as the other way around when we are discussing human activities. Under the organic account, appropriate language-use comes as an immediate response of a person in a situation where one *learns* to understand what to say or what is said simply by the words themselves and not by guessing, or interpreting, or applying rules. There is a good example in the *Zettel*[14] of what Hunter is getting at:

The concept of pain is characterized by its particular function in our life./Pain has *this* position in our life; has *these* connexions; (that is to say: we only call "pain" what has *this* position, *these* connexions)./Only surrounded by certain normal manifestation of life, is there such a thing as an expression of pain. Only surrounded by an even more far-reaching particular manifestation of life, [is there] such a thing as the expression [*Ausdruck*] of sorrow or affection. And so on (532-34).

This train of thought and its emphasis upon the actual expression of whatever is referred to, i.e., the activities normally accompanying it (e.g., pain) *and* upon whatever can be or could be said about it, is at the center of Wittgenstein's understanding of *meaning*. This conjunction has not always been appreciated. (See the *Philosophical Grammar* discussion included in fn. 5 for a similar idea to this one from the *Zettel*.)

There is an aphorism which Wittgenstein once expressed to Malcolm that is more compatible with what I have said and with Hunter's account than with other interpretations of *Lebensform*. It is "(An expression has meaning only in the stream of life.)"[15] The word "stream" gives us a better clue to the idea of activity than "form" does. Also, the word "stream" suggests continuity, yet change and fluidity. This remark is reminiscent of van Peursen's point about Wittgenstein and Heraclitis, "who similarly tried by way of aphorism to unearth the confusion of the multifarious uses of language from the far from obvious, often concealed expressiveness of the *logos*: meaning, word, speech" (13). And the phrase "stream of life" is suggestive of the presentness of one's life—of living through one's life where experience and its items are seen as causally interconnected, which Schopenhauer stressed in opposition to Kant; it is also reminiscent of Hesse's memorable dialogue.[16] In the *Zettel,* Wittgenstein uses the metaphor "run on" with life; this is probably the closest to what he meant by "stream of life":

> I want to say: an education quite different from ours might also be the foundation for quite different concepts (387).
>
> For here life would run on differently.—What interests us would not interest *them*. Here different concepts would no longer be unimaginable. In fact, this is the only way in which *essentially* different concepts are imaginable (388).

There is also a parallel between Hunter's organic account of "*Lebensform*" and Schopenhauer's meaning of "*die Form des Lebens*." Both use it in the sense of species' and individuals' expression or activity. (See *W.W.I.*, e.g., I,415, 345-7, and III,381 cited earlier.) Hunter supplements his interpretation with the following comment:

> Saying that this use of language ["hope"] is a form of life is saying that it is not derivative, that it is not done on the basis of evidence, that saying the words is itself part of the stock of human responses and is as natural and primordial as an affectionate gesture . . . it is the complicated organic adaptation which enables us to use a word such as "hope" which is the form of life (241).

Hunter's point can be illustrated again from the *Zettel*. In his discussion of "pain," pain-behavior, and of attempts to establish connections between them (540), Wittgenstein says that it is helpful to remember the *primitive reactions* one has when oneself or someone else is in pain. He adds,

> But what is the word "primitive" meant to say here? Presumably that this sort of behavior is *pre-linguistic*: that a language is based *on it*, that it is the prototype of a way of thinking and not the result of thought (541).

This prototype is at the core of Wittgenstein's use of *Lebensform*. And another *Zettel* remark in the same vein, but much bolder than the others is

> Being sure that someone is in pain, doubting whether he is, and so on, are so many natural, instinctive, kinds of behavior towards other human beings, and our language is merely an auxiliary to, and further extension of, this relation. Our language-game is an extension of primitive behaviors. (For our *language-game* is behavior.) (Instinct) (545).

There may be more anthropological overtones to Wittgenstein's use than Schopenhauer's, but there is still some resemblance between the two in that both were interested in using the organic activities of individuals to characterize man's plight or daily existence. Both men agree that the form of life is not one which consists of rational choices—ones that are consciously deliberated, or "the result of thought" as Wittgenstein put it—but rather it consists of activities which we might call the "pre-rational." The role of reason in both of these philosophers is subordinate to other human activities; therein lies their resemblance. The difference mainly lies in their descriptions of "pre-rational behavior." Schopenhauer saw all such behavior as an expression of the will to live which is the constant source of suffering; all volition arises from want (I,468). Such striving is characteristic of the form of life. Wittgenstein, on the other hand, saw instinct, gestures, etc., as the mark of *Lebensform*; but on the matter of what instinct, gestures, etc. *are*, he is silent. Schopenhauer uses his metaphysic of the will to inform us of what they are. And of course, Wittgenstein deliberately avoids such theorizing. However, the similarity is closer than this instance of their uses

indicates.

What is it that someone is *doing* when s/he calls something a form of life? If someone labels art or religion a form of life, then one is drawing to our attention the fact that art or religion fits into the (our?) general picture of the world—of "life" as we know it today. In other words, there are connections which exist between the world and whatever is referred to as a form of life, like art or religion. And one who *claims* that something is a form of life is prepared or should be prepared to make those connections. The resulting discourse could be anthropological if it is about specific connections. But if those connections are of a very general sort—ones which form the substructure of our conceptual scheme, then they are metaphysical in nature even though they are descriptive. (See Sherry's discussion mentioned in note 12.) The difference, of course, between Wittgenstein and Schopenhauer is that the latter's metaphysics is interpretative rather than descriptive.

The second similarity is not seen explicitly in Wittgenstein's writings, but it can be appreciated in an account in Malcolm's *Memoir.* The incident I have in mind comes from Malcolm's discussion of whether or not Wittgenstein was a religious person. In detail,

> I do not wish to give the impression that Wittgenstein accepted any religious faith—he certainly did not—or that there was in him, in some sense, the *possibility* of religion. I believe that he looked on religion as a 'form of life' (to use an expression from the *Philosophical Investigations*) in which he did not participate, but with which he was sympathetic and which greatly interested him. Those who did participate he respected —although here as elsewhere he had contempt for insincerity. I suspect that he regarded religious belief as based on qualities of character and will that he himself did not possess (72).

This personal account reminds one of the *Zettel* remark about different concepts, just mentioned in connection with the stream of life idea. The similarity which can be seen between Schopenhauer and Wittgenstein here is the emphasis upon forms of life as qualities of human capabilities like those of character and will. (See also the *Philosophical Grammar,* sec. 29, where Wittgenstein speaks of meaning as using words with conviction; and of understanding as "the feeling 'in one's own breast,' the living experience of the expressions—meshing with my own life," fn. 5.)

The analogue between Schopenhauer and Wittgenstein's idea is obviously in the volition of individuals or "the [individual] manifestation of the will with consciousness" (III,381; see also I,415), and not in the metaphysical unity—The Will. The key to the Absolute, to Reality, for Schopenhauer, is the inner nature of phenomena, and in recognizing that this inner nature

is the same or true of all living things. This is something that is felt more than reasoned out; man experiences (i.e., feels) the will to live.

The sorts of descriptions Schopenhauer gives of the will to live, the suffering, the wanting, etc., are precisely those physical activities which Wittgenstein wanted to emphasize *when they ordinarily accompany our speech.* For example, the above description corresponds to Wittgenstein's idea of understanding in the *Philosophical Grammar* (sec. 29). The physical activities which accompany speech or understanding must be included if one is to understand the meaning of any given expression, if they "surround" that expression or provide its context. What Wittgenstein searched for was basic, fundamental attitudes, like a religious attitude, that characterize and underlie life. His own pessimism would be an example (see Malcolm's *Memoir,* 72). Wittgenstein's introduction of the notion of *Lebensform* by the time of *P.I.* was to explain the connections among various parts of speech and language-games. Previously, Wittgenstein had viewed language-games as isolated phenomena. So his realization of their inner-relationships led to remarks in *P.I.* like that which notes that agreement in the language people use is not agreement in opinions but in form of life (p. 241; see also *Zettel,* 387-88). And such agreement is a given: "What has to be accepted, the given is—so one could say—*forms of life*" (*P.I.,* p. 226). This last statement reflects Wittgenstein's ontology, and if it were compared to Schopenhauer's, there is no doubt that they would be miles apart.

IV

The following questions suggest themselves: Does the term "form of life" appear earlier than Schopenhauer? Does the term occur in anyone else's writings besides those already mentioned? For the first question, as far as I can tell, the answer is in the negative. The word "*Form*" is used numerous times by Herder in his *Ideen* (1784) and carries anthropological and social overtones in addition to the biological sense of species.[17] The most interesting example from Herder is

> For every nation is one people, having its own national form [*National-Bildung*], as well as its own language: the climate, it is true, stamps on each its mark, or spreads over it a slight veil, but not sufficient to destroy the original national character. This originality of character extends even to families, and its transitions are as variable as imperceptible. In short, there are neither four or five races, nor exclusive varieties, on this Earth. Complexions run into each other: forms [*die Bildungen*] follow the genetic character: and upon the whole, all are at last but shades of the same great picture, extending through all ages, and over all parts of the Earth. They belong not, therefore, so properly to systematic natural

history, as to the physicogeographical history of man (166).

Herder's use of "form" is similar to Schopenhauer's, although they do vary in its employment and its wording; Schopenhauer doesn't speak of "national form" but he does talk about "form" in conjunction with phenomena (I,207, 481), knowledge (I,459, 513), will (I,422), world as idea (I,441), and myth (I,459). An example from Schopenhauer which shares some affinity (minus the metaphysics) with Herder's example (166) is

> the outward form of the manifestation of the empirical character [of an individual], that is, *the definite actual or historical form of the course of life,* will have to accommodate itself to their [i.e., a special Idea and the objectification of will] influence.[18]

Also, this remark from Herder sounds like his first use of "Form" [*Gestalt*] (67): "The world, in all the multiplicity of its parts and forms, is the manifestation, the objectivity, of the one will to live" (*W.W.I.*, I, 453).

One finds that Herder's meaning is roughly approximate to Schopenhauer's but that Herder lacks the wording, "form of life." As I have already mentioned, Kant used the term "*Form*" in reference to the forms of intuition (space and time), but it does not have the additional anthropological and social meanings we find in Herder and to a lesser extent in Schopenhauer.

As for the second question, the term "form of life" could probably be found in almost any German philosopher after Schopenhauer.[19] However, there are some interesting uses of the term, which are worth noting, at the time of Spranger. The term, with the same literary construction as Wittgenstein's use, appears in Croce's writings. In his famous discussion "History and Chronicle," Croce uses the term in drawing an analogy between the life of narratives and dead documents and that of biological life and death (decomposition):

> dead documents exist to the extent that they are the manifestations of a new life, as the lifeless corpse is really itself also a process of vital creation, although it appears to be one of decomposition and something dead in respect of a particular form of life [*Lebensform*]. But in the same way as those empty sounds, which once contained the thought of a history, are eventually called *narratives*, in memory of the thought they contained, thus do those manifestations of a new life continue to be looked upon as remnants of the life that preceded them and is indeed extinguished.[20]

So the term was still used here in the sense of a biological species and of the activities which characterize its individuals. However, Croce's employment

of the term is less interesting than Schopenhauer's, since the latter used it frequently and in different contexts. It is more than just coincidence with Schopenhauer, whereas it might have been only that with Croce.

However, in the context of historical narration, A. R. Louch has seen a possible parallel between Croce and Wittgenstein: "The critical as well as the evocative aspect of the historian's trade can only be carried out within the texture of a common experience. Perhaps in this sense Croce's dictum [that all history is contemporary history] is only a special case of Wittgenstein's that language is a form of life."[21] Here, Professor Louch has made a mistake in identifying language with *Lebensform*. It is particular associated uses of language, like art and religion, which constitute a form of life or a part of a form of life, and not language in general (whatever that might be for Louch). Nonetheless, Croce is not the only other philosopher in this tradition who did use the term, prior to Wittgenstein.

Señor Ortega y Gasset is another philosopher who talks about form of life in the context of history. His use clearly represents form of life as a cultural manifestation and thus an invention of man. As he describes it: "Man invents for himself a program of life, a static form of being, that gives a satisfactory answer to the difficulties posed for him by circumstance. He essays this form of life, attempts to realize this imaginary character he has resolved to be."[22] Even though Ortega's use of the term appears in Spanish, his thought lies clearly within the German philosophical tradition, as does Croce's, for their training and study was in German philosophy. Ortega cites Dilthey as the thinker who directed the attention of philosophers to study or to describe the structures of life instead of thought as the foundation of knowledge. (Like Dilthey, Wittgenstein has asked us to do that, too.)

In 1929, Edmund Husserl, in the fifth meditation, alludes to the notion of the style of life and its respective forms: "Higher psychic occurrences, diverse as they are and familiar as they have become, have furthermore their style of synthetic interconnections and take their course in forms of their own, which I can understand associatively on the basis of my empirical familiarity with the style of my own life, as exemplifying roughly differentiated typical forms."[23] This idea is close to the conception which lies behind the term, although the latter is not used here.

The idea and the term were used by Ramond Aron, in *Introduction a la philosophie de l'histoire* (1938), in a sociological context—speaking about Durkheim's notion of the family representing one of the intermediate forms which make up a complex society, and specifically referring to the idea of "*the elementary forms of religious life. . . .*"[24] The famous Dutch intellectual historian, Johan Huizinga, also alluded to the notion of the fundamental forms of social life in his classic study of play: "It has not been difficult to show that a certain play-factor was extremely active all through the cultural process and that it produces many of *the fundamental forms of*

social life. The spirit of playful competition is, as a social impulse, older than culture itself and pervades all life like a veritable ferment."[25] It is interesting to note that Huizinga developed this basic idea in the thirties for lectures given in Zurich, Vienna, and London under the title, "The Play Element of Culture", in the intellectual climate of which Wittgenstein was a part. (See Janik and Toulmin, *Wittgenstein's Vienna,* for a discussion of this climate.)

Another German philosopher who used the idea of a form of life with all of its technical overtones, about the same time Wittgenstein did, was Eugen Herrigel.[26] In *Zen in the Art of Archery,* Herrigel gives an inspiring description of the inward work required of the pupil to fulfill his vocation:

> The inward work, however, consists in his turning the man he is, and the self he feels himself and perpetually finds himself to be, into the raw material of a training and shaping whose end is mastery. In it, the artist [pupil] and the human being meet in something higher. For mastery proves its validity as a form of life [*Lebensform*] only when it dwells in the boundless Truth and, sustained by it, becomes the art of the origin (51).

And like Schopenhauer, Herrigel had different literary constructions for the concept. A few pages earlier he uses "*Form des Lebens*" for form of life: the Master warns of the danger "of [a pupil] behaving as if the artistic existence were a form of life that bore witness to its own validity" (49). This sounds very anti-Wittgensteinian in tone, in that a realm like art is not independent of other realms.

I am sure that this list could be further extended.

What does all this show? What I have demonstrated here is that the idea is not unique with Wittgenstein, that it had a more common use in German philosophical usage than has been expected, and that he *might* have picked it up from that tradition through one of these people. Also, these uses of the term exhibit its historical evolution and the way it changed from a strictly biological sense to a more anthropological, cultural, and sociological meaning in writers after Schopenhauer.

V

Professor G. H. von Wright, in his Biographical Sketch (in Malcolm's *Memoir*), makes this observation: "It may appear strange that Schopenhauer, one of the masters of philosophic prose, did not influence Wittgenstein's style" (21-22). Although this may be true of his style (which I think not), it may not be true of his terminology. There are only a few people Wittgenstein read carefully; among them was Schopenhauer. (Again,

see von Wright's Biographical Sketch in Malcolm's *Memoir,* 5, 9, 20-21.) So it seems to me to be rather astonishing to find the same idea in their writings even though it is employed in varying manners by the two and consists of different literary constructions. If Hunter's "organic account" of *Lebensform* is preferable over the other interpretations, then the term is definitely closer to Schopenhauer's use. And then if Malcolm's brief account of religion as a "form of life" holds for the *P.I.* instances, there is even further similarity.

Hence, there seems to be some parallel; of course, whether or not there was a historical influence with this particular idea will probably remain a mystery to historians of philosophy. (We just don't have that kind of external evidence available.) But if what I have shown in this essay (via internal evidence) is correct, it will surely make them wonder.[27]

NOTES

1. In 1974 it was revealed for the first time that a reference to Heidegger was intentionally omitted from the printed edition of "Notes on Talks with Wittgenstein," dated 30 December 1929, as a sequel to his "Lecture on Ethics"; see Michael Murray, "A Note on Wittgenstein and Heidegger," *Philosophical Review, 83* (1974), 501-503. This historical discovery helps to substantiate how important the scholarship is into the European origins of Wittgenstein's thought. A recent lengthy study, which is complementary to my discussion here, is Nicholas F. Gier, "Wittgenstein and Forms of Life," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences, 10* (September 1980), 241-58.

2. C. A. van Peursen, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: An Introduction to His Philosophy,* Rex Ambler, trans. (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1969), pp. 108-109. This book was first published in 1965 in Dutch. Further references to this work, and the others cited below, are indicated parenthetically by page number after quotation within the body of the paper.

3. S. Morris Engel, *Wittgenstein's Doctrine of the Tyranny of Language: An Historical and Critical Examination of His Blue Book,* with an Introduction by Stephen Toulmin (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), *inter alia.*

4. Allan Janik and Stephen Toulmin, *Wittgenstein's Vienna* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973), pp. 230-31.

5. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations,* G. E. M. Anscombe, trans. (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1953), Part I, secs. 19, 23, 241; Part II, pp. 174, 226. A use of the concept of "form of life" by Wittgenstein without the term appearing in his discussion in his analysis of counting and calculating; see *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics,* G. E. M. Anscombe, trans. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, Ltd., 1964), pp. 3-4; see also his comment on "all," pp. 7-8. Also, in the *Remarks on Colour* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), Wittgenstein speaks of *verschiedenen Stellen im Leben* ("various points in life"): "What I actually want to say is that here too it is not a matter of the *words* one uses or of what one is thinking when using them, but rather of the difference they make at various points in life. How do I know that two people mean the same when both say they believe in God? And one can say just the same thing about the Trinity. Theology which insists on the use of *certain* words and phrases and bans others, makes nothing clearer (Karl Barth). It, so to speak, fumbles around with words, because it wants to say something and doesn't know how to express it. *Practices* give words their

meaning" (Part III, sec. 317). The same thoughts written in 1950, with some variation in wording, occur in Wittgenstein's *Culture and Value,* Peter Winch, trans. (Chicago: The University Press, 1980), p. 85.

Last, but not least, is a curious instance of "*Lebensform*" in *On Certainty,* Denis Paul and G. E. M. Anscombe, trans. (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), which was written late in Wittgenstein's life (1951): "Now I would like to regard this certainty ['I know'], not as something akin to hastiness or superficiality, but as a form of life. (That is very badly expressed and probably badly thought as well)" (p. 46). Yes, I would agree with Wittgenstein's parenthetical remark; section 358 is probably not well thought out, because there is not enough context (see sec. 350), language-game features, and definiteness of expression to be a form of life. Only in extraordinary situations would "I know" be expressing "comfortable certainty" (357) *be* a form of life or, better yet, a part of a form of life.

And in *P.I.,* Part II, sec. i, he uses the metaphor "weave" for "form": "'Grief' describes a pattern which recurs, with different variations, in the weave of our life" (p. 174). The metaphor "mesh" is used in the *Philosophical Grammar,* Anthony Kenny, trans. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974): "But it might be asked: Do I *understand* the word just by describing its application? Do I understand its point? Haven't I deluded myself about something important?/At present, say, I know only how men use this word. But it might be a game, or a form of etiquette. I do not know why they behave in this way, how *language* meshes with their life./Is meaning then really only the use of a word? Isn't it the way this use meshes with our life?/But isn't its use a part of our life?/Do I understand the word "fine" when I know how and on what occasions people use it? Is that enough to enable me to use it myself? I mean, so to say, use it with conviction./Wouldn't it be possible for me to know the use of the word and yet follow it without understanding? (As, in a sense, we follow the singing of birds.) So isn't it something else that constitutes understanding—the feeling 'in one's own breast,' the living experience of the expressions?—they must mesh with *my own* life./Well, language does connect up with my own life. And what is called 'language' is something made up of heterogeneous elements and the way it meshes with life is infinitely various" (sec. 29, pp. 65-66).

In the *Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief* (Cyril Barrett, ed.; Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), Wittgenstein uses the notion in this way: "In order to get clear about aesthetic words you have to describe ways of living" (11) and "Why shouldn't one form of life culminate in an utterance of belief in a Last Judgment?" (58). I shall return to these uses of the notion of form of life later in the paper.

6. Arthur Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* in *Sämtliche Werke,* Wolfgang F. von Lohneysen, ed. (5 vols.; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1968); see, for example, II,453, 456; I,557, 531.

7. See, for instance, *Werke,* I,384, 386-88, 499; II,732.

8. Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Idea,* R. B. Haldane and J. Kemp, trans. (3 vols.; London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1883), I,358. *Werke,* I,384. Further references to the English and German editions will be made parenthetically within the paper where both seem necessary; otherwise, English edition cited only.

9. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus,* D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinness, trans. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961), p. 147.

10. For a detailed discussion of the term and its place in Kant's *Critique* (1781), see Peter Krausser, "'Form of Intuition' and 'Formal Intuition' in Kant's Theory of Experience and Science," *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science 4* (November 1973), 279-87. In the end, Krausser thinks that "form of intuition" = "pure (formal) intuition" = "rule of governing the intuiting operation of the human mind."

11. Hermann Hesse, *Siddhartha,* Hilda Rosner, trans. (New York: New Directions Publishing Corp., 1951), p. 87.

12. J. F. M. Hunter, "'Forms of Life' in Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations,*" *American Philosophical Quarterly 5* (October 1968), 233-43. There are other people who have written recently on the concept of form of life, e.g., van Peursen (ch. 5); Patrick Sherry, "Is Religion a 'Form of Life'?" *American Philosophical Quarterly 9* (April 1972), 159-67; Hanna Fenichel Pitkin, *Wittgenstein and Justice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), ch. VI, pp. 132-39; Roger Trigg, *Reason and Commitment* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1973), ch. 4; and Stewart R. Sutherland, "On the Idea of a Form of Life," *Religious Studies 11* (September 1975), 293-306. In the Spring 1979 there was a conference on "Religion and *Lebensform*" at the University of Notre Dame, where several papers of note were given.

13. The same thought appears in the *Notebooks 1914-1916,* G. E. M. Anscombe, trans. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1961), p. 48. See the concluding paragraph of this section (III) for further comment on this idea.

14. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Zettel,* G. E. M. Anscombe, trans. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967). References are to sections.

15. Norman Malcolm, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 93. Malcolm's prior comment to this statement is: "One remark of his [Wittgenstein's] struck me then [1949], as it does now, as being especially noteworthy and as summing up a good deal of his philosophy. It is 'Ein Ausdruck hat nur im Strome des Lebens Bedeutung'."

16. For a recent discussion of the river image in Wittgenstein and Heraclitus, see Robert A. Shiner's study in *Philosophy, 49* (April 1974), 191-97.

17. Johann G. Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit,* in *Sämtliche Werke,* Bernhard Suphan, ed., (33 vols.; Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1967), vol. 13 and 14; first translated by T. Churchill in London, 1800, as *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man* (Reprint; New York: Bergman Publishers, 1966). An example, which sounds much like Aristotle's use of "form," is "The form of man [*die Gestalt*] upright: . . . no beast has the form [*die Bildung*], clothing, habitation, arts, unfettered mode of life [*Lebensart*] unrestrained propensities, and fluctuating opinions, which distinguish almost every individual of mankind" (67). Notice that he distinguishes between form and mode of life. Other examples of Herder's use are "Man is formed [*gebildet*] for Humanity and Religion" (98) and "Nature has formed [*geschaffeu*] man most of all living creatures for participating in the fate of others . . ." (99). Here, "form" is used in the sense of something being *made,* like nature as the creator of an artifact.

18. *W.W.I.,* I,207; italics mine. Also, one can observe here another parallel with Wittgenstein: natural history is one of the things he wishes to bring to the philosopher's attention with his use of the term "*Lebensform.*" The idea of natural history can be seen, for instance, in the *Zettel,* sec. 469: "Imagine someone saying, 'Man hopes.' How should this general phenomenon of natural history be described?" Also, *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics,* Part I, sec. 83: "I have read a proof—and now I am convinced.—What if I straightway forgot this conviction?/For it is a peculiar procedure: I *go through* the proof and then accept its result.—I mean: this is simply what we do. This is use and custom among us, or a fact of our natural history" (p. 20). On the other hand, Herder did not think that form belonged to natural history (v 166).

19. Someone completely outside of the tradition I am talking about here who used the term was Herbert Spencer; see his *Synthetic Philosophy,* especially the *Principles of Ethics* (2 vols.; New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1902), I, e.g., 69 and 282; he also uses "mode of life" (85) and "the tide of life" (87).

20. Benedetto Croce, *Zur Theorie und Geschichte der Historiographie,* translated from the Italian by Enrico Pizzo (Tubingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1915), p. 11. Authorized English translation by Douglas Ainslie under the title *History: Its Theory and Practice* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1920), p. 21. Croce's use conforms to the general usage of the idea at that time (and earlier), where there was much preoccupation among scientists, with the idea of biological species as characterized by forms of life. This is especially true of Herbert Spencer's use; see fn. 19. Also, someone bordering the German tradition and the English at the same time is R. G. Collingwood, who, in *The Idea of History,* made the following observation in discussing positivism—using both the concept and the term in this general, biological sense: "This *rapprochement* [viz., with Darwin evolution could be used as a generic term covering both historical progress and natural progress] had its dangers. It tended to injure natural science by leading to the assumption that natural evolution was automatically progressive, creative by its own law of better and better forms of life; and it might have injured history through the assumption that historical progress depended on the same so-called law of nature and that the methods of natural science, in its new evolutionary form, were adequate to the study of historical processes" (London: Oxford University Press, 1946), p. 129.

21. A. R. Louch, "History as Narrative," *History and Theory 8* (1969), 64.

22. Jose Ortega y Gasset, *History as a System and Other Essays Toward a Philosophy of History,* Helene Weyl, trans. (New York: W. W. Norton and Co. [1941], 1961), p. 215. The Spanish reads as "El hombre se inventa una programa de vida, una figura estática de ser, que responde satisfacforiamente a las dificultades que la circumstáncia le plantea. Ensaya esa figura de vida, intenta realizar ese personaje imaginario que ha resuilto ser." *Historia como sistema* (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1941), p. 49. A year later, 1942, Ortega uses the term numerous times in his *Meditations on Hunting,* Howard B. Wescott, trans. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972); see esp., pp. 118 and 131 for uses close to the one above.

23. Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations,* Dorion Cairons, trans. (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960), p. 120. Dorion Cairons, in his *Guide To Translating Husserl* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), p. 79, has listed the term "*Lebens-form*" as one of those which occurs in Husserl's writings, but I have been unable to find it.

24. Raymond Aron, *Introduction to the Philosophy of History: An Essay on the Limits of Historical Objectivity,* George J. Irwin, trans. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), p. 139.

25. Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture* (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1955), p. 173; my italics. This work was first published in German in 1944 and then in English in 1950.

26. Eugen Herrigel, *Zen in der Kunst des Bogenschiessens* (Muenchen-Planegg: Otto Wilhelm Barth-Verlag, 1950), pp. 58/56. English edition was translated by R. F. C. Hull with an introduction by D. T. Suzuki (New York: Random House, 1953), pp. 51/49.

27. For further discussion of Schopenhauer's influence on Wittgenstein, see my papers "On Placing Wittgenstein in History," *Southern Journal of Philosophy 11* (Winter 1973), 337-50; and "Notes on Wittgenstein and His Milieu," *Proceedings of the New Mexico-West Texas Philosophical Society,* Ivan L. Little, ed. (Lubbock: Texas Technological University Press, 1975), vol. 10, pp. 28-32; also, consult Hermann J. Cloeven, "The Neglected Analytical Heritage," *Journal of the History of Ideas,* 36 (1975), 513-29, for further discussion of the European origins of Wittgenstein's thought.