

## ETHICS AND THE THRESHOLD OF LANGUAGE: EARLY WITTGENSTEIN AND RABINDRANATH TAGORE

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Wittgenstein's characterisation of his own *Treatise on the philosophy of Logic* (*Tractatus-Logico-philosophicus*<sup>1</sup>) as a book on Ethics<sup>2</sup> have baffled interpreters, right from the publication of his letter to Ludwig Von ficker (1967), his closest confidante during the early period of his life. Even before that, Wittgenstein's dense and cryptic remarks on ethics in the last few pages of the *Tractatus* have made it's commentators puzzled and intrigued. The puzzle is: how could a treatise on the philosophy of logic talk about 'the mysticals' which include remarks on ethics, aesthetics and other such disciplines? Not only that, the remarks characterise ethics i) as *transcendental* hence *beyond significant language* ii) as *mystical* and *non-sensical* and iii) as being *one and the same with aesthetics*. Early commentators were eager to brush aside these remarks as unimportant to the main thesis about language and meaning of the *Tractatus*.<sup>3</sup> Now, with the publication of Wittgenstein's diaries, notebooks, letters and other manuscripts, it has become evident that these remarks of last few pages were as much important as those of earlier pages; and to ignore all these deliberately is to ignore the historical scholarship which results in a complete misunderstanding of the work.

In this paper, there will be an attempt to interpret these remarks on ethics in the light of the poems of Rabindranath Tagore, one of Wittgenstein's favourites. As we already know Wittgenstein preferred reading poems from Tagore's *Gitanjali* to answering members of Vienna Circle as far as clarification of the remarks of *Tractatus* is concerned. However, my bringing in Tagore is not intended to imply that Wittgenstein's view in this regard is a direct consequence of, or an influence from writings of Tagore. Rather, I intend to point out that there are striking similarities in the structure of their thinking about ethics and its 'being one' with aesthetics. Hence, there will be an attempt in this paper to bring out the parallels of Wittgenstein's thoughts on ethics with those of Tagore. The paper

will be divided into three main sections in accordance with the characterisation of Ethics in the *Tractatus*, where views of both the thinkers will be juxtaposed. The first section will be about the inexpressibility/transcendentality of Ethics, the second will take care of the mysticity and non sensuality of ethics, and the final section will be on the sameness of Ethics and Aesthetics.

Before one moves on with the project of finding parallels of Wittgenstein's thinking with that of Tagore, one should explore the relationship of Tagore to people of Germany in 1920s. In 1913, Rabindranath was awarded Nobel Prize and by 1920 Rabindranath's writings were available in German translation. Rabindranath had visited Germany for quite a few times, but his visits in 1921, 1922, 1926 and 1930 are specially significant, because during this period he was literally swayed by 'frenzied ovations' of the people of Germany. Astounding intellectuals like Rainer Maria Rilke, Albert Schweitzer, Thomas Mann, Stefan Zweigg, Hozman Hesse, and many others had dialogues with Rabindranath Tagore and they were moved by his intellectual quality along with the innermost spirituality of his thinking. All these poets, thinkers and writers were in their prime as creative writers and it is important to mention that some of them were also Wittgenstein's favourites. Not only intellectuals, but common masses of Germany were also overpowered by him. To quote from Martin Kampchen:

The immense popular enthusiasm, the frenzied ovations, which built up to a Tagore mania in 1921 resulting in the sale of one million copies of Tagore books by the end of 1923 are seen as a proof of the poet's tremendous appeal to the masses and the success of his mission of peace and understanding between the people of east and west.<sup>4</sup>

In Germany, Tagore's 61<sup>st</sup> birthday was celebrated in 1922 with much enthusiasm and ovation. Engelhard presented a 450-page biography of the poet with unadulterated admiration and devotion. The publication of his collected works (8 volumes) in 1922 by Kurt Wolff Verlag and its success are evidences of 'Tagore-mania' in Germany. We have no difficulty in imagining that at that time billions of people in Germany had enjoyed his poems, plays and other writings. Tagore had, thus, become 'a myth' in Germany' during the early 1920s.

From the background, we can well imagine why Wittgenstein had admired the poems of Rabindranath and we can take the liberty to assume that he had also read other books apart from Gitanjali. And when he reacted to the members of Vienna circle—it is possible to imagine that he was immersed in Rabindranath at that time.

And the reason behind his choosing these poems for the so-called modern scientifically minded members of Vienna circle was not at all casual or non-deliberate. Rather, I think Ray Monk seems to be right, when he points out:

In Particular—as if to emphasize to them (Members of the Vienna circle), as he (Wittgenstein) earlier explained to Von Ficker, that what he had not said in the *Tractatus* was more important than what he had—he read them the poems of Rabindranath Tagore.<sup>5</sup>

Wittgenstein perhaps thought that reading these poems could be an effective form of teaching them ‘what we cannot speak of, we must pass over in silence’.

## I

### *Inexpressibility/Transcendentality of Ethics and Aesthetics*

In this section, I’ll deal with the remarks on ethics in *Tractatus*, *Notebooks* (1914-1916) and ‘*A Lecture on Ethics*,’ (1929) the totality of which will represent the thoughts of Early Wittgenstein. We can begin with relevant quotes from the *Tractatus*:

T6.421: It is clear that ethics cannot be put into words. Ethics is transcendental (ethics and aesthetics are one and the same).

T6.42: So too it is impossible for there to be propositions of Ethics. Propositions can express nothing that is higher.

But why can ethics not be put into words? According to the *Tractatus* what can be put into words are only the propositions of natural science. This is a direct consequence of the theory of language and meaning worked out in the *Tractatus*, that describes language as a picture of reality. Now the statement that ‘there can be no propositions of ethics’ is intended to mean that they are not factual statements by any means. They are concerned with values. Thus, a proposition is sensible if it can picture a fact of the world. If it pictures accurately, it is a true proposition, if not, it is false. As language consists of the combinations of complex sentences, so the world consists of a combination of highly complex facts. Here Wittgenstein thinks that a complex proposition is the truth function of elementary propositions and an elementary proposition pictures an atomic fact. To elucidate the notions of ‘elementary proposition’ and ‘atomic fact’, we can state that if we analyse a complex proposition we get less complex propositions, if we analyse a less complex proposition, we get simple propositions. Now, we can go on analysing the simple

propositions, and thus ultimately we reach a proposition which is not further analysable. Such propositions, Wittgenstein claims, are called elementary propositions.

Similarly the world, for Wittgenstein, is the totality of facts, which are very complex. When we analyse a complex fact we get less complex facts, simple facts and, thus, ultimately such facts which are not further analysable into any other facts. Such facts are designated by Wittgenstein as atomic facts. Elementary propositions, for early Wittgenstein, picture these atomic facts.

However, an elementary proposition, though not analysable into any further proposition, is analysable into names, the ultimate logical atoms of language. 'Names' have been used technically in the *Tractatus* denoting indefinable, unanalysable logical atoms of language. Had they not been so, these names could have been analysed, defined in terms of other propositions and they would not fit the criteria of being unanalysable. Similarly, atomic facts are not composed of other facts, but they consist of objects. These objects are not our ordinary objects. 'Objects' also have been used in a special, technical sense. They are also indefinable, unanalysable atoms of the world. Moreover, we do not have any example of a 'name' or an object in the *Tractatus*. Once asked about the reasons for their non existence Wittgenstein said that he had arrived at these logical atoms by adopting an apriori method and he is a logician and not supposed to give a concrete example of what he deduced as the conclusion of a deductive argument.

Hence, according to the *Tractatus*, if someone uses a sentence meaningfully he uses it to picture an atomic fact and this meant that there was a special kind of correlation between psychic elements in his mind, elements of the sentence in a language and elements of the state of affairs of the world. A sentence which in this way pictures an atomic fact would be true or false depending upon whether the atomic fact obtained or not (depending upon whether or not the sentence pictures a fact).

This idea of what had to be the case for a sentence to make sense also led to the view that many collections of words which might seem in one way or another to be sensible sentences were not so. This was because they were not representations of any state of affair. First of all we have the notion of logical form and pictorial form. A logical/pictorial form is the form, which a proposition must have in common with reality in order to be able to represent it. This form cannot be pictured; as picturing itself is a two-termed relation. It holds between two complexes when they are related in a certain

way, i.e., when one is projected onto, or used as a projection of the other. But this does not allow a rule of projection to be pictured. For it is neither a complex nor a state of affairs. So it cannot be related to a complex by another law of projection. So no complex can be a law of projection or of the relation two complexes must have if one is to picture the other. Thus, these pictorial/logical/representational forms are, indeed, things that cannot be put into words. They make themselves manifest in a picture.

Similarly, propositions of Ethics, Aesthetics, Metaphysics, Religion, Art, etc., are also not pictures of worldly state of affairs. The criterion of meaning of the *Tractatus* makes all these propositions at the same time non-sensical; although they manifest the meaning of life and the world. He believed that it is the tendency of human beings to try to go beyond the boundaries of language and say something which is unsayable (about the totality, meaning of life and the world) thus amounting to 'being non-sensical' from the point of view of the *Tractatus*.

But at this point one feels like asking: If it is really impossible for there to be propositions of Ethics, then what about the status of the literature entitled as 'ethics' right from the days of sophists to the present day? How do we regard them as inexpressible? What does 'higher' signify in this context? Why should we treat value as transcendental and higher?

If we remain confined only to the remarks of the *Tractatus*, we'll find no clue how to answer these questions or how to explain the cryptic passages of the *Tractatus*. But in 'A Lecture on Ethics', we find Wittgenstein elucidating the reasons why he thought that ethics cannot be put into words and why ethics is transcendental<sup>6</sup>. While discussing ethical matters in this lecture, Wittgenstein distinguishes between relative value judgments and absolute value judgments. Relative value judgments are those for which we have factual criteria, which mean that in each case in which the statement of relative value is true, there is a factual criteria in virtue of which it is true. To put it simply, the relative value judgments could be reduced to mere statements of facts. For example, we can consider these:

He is a good orator.

This is the right way to go to Alipore Campus, University of Calcutta.

Corresponding to the first relative value judgment, the factual criteria are: he has got a command of the language, and the topic he is giving a speech on. He can express his points clearly within a

short period of time. His voice is appealing to the masses. But these are all contingent matters of fact which may vary from one situation to another.

So is our second example. One could equally well describe it by “this is the right way, that is, shortest route, without traffic signals, and the condition of the road is smooth enough for a ride etc., you have to go if you want to get to Alipore Campus, University of Calcutta, in the least time.

In contrast with this, ‘there are absolute judgments of value for which there are no factual criteria’. There will be no factual statements corresponding to these statements, which will serve as the criterion for making such judgments, e.g. you ought not to tell lies; you ought to love your parents.

According to Wittgenstein, these absolute statements go beyond any facts. What would have to correspond to them if they were to be true, would be something like a necessary truth about the world. As he says:

If one could talk about the absolutely right road, it would be the road which, everybody, on seeing it would, with logical necessity, have to go, or be ashamed for not going. And similarly, the absolute good, if it is a describable state of affairs, would be one, which, everybody, would necessarily bring about or feel guilty for not bringing it about. And I want to say that such a state of affair is a chimera.<sup>7</sup>

Regarding these absolute value judgments, Wittgenstein wants to make two important points:

First of all, these judgments cannot be put into words. He elucidates:

Suppose one of you were an omniscient person, and suppose this man wrote all he knew in a big book, then this book would contain the whole description of the world; and what I want to say is that this book would contain nothing that we would call an ethical judgment or anything that would logically imply such a judgment. It would of course contain all relative judgments of value and all true scientific propositions and in fact all true propositions that can be made. But all the facts described would, as it were, stand on the same level.<sup>8</sup>

From this quotation, it follows that we cannot write a book on Ethics as consisting of absolute judgments of value because that would contain facts, facts and facts, and facts cannot express something which is higher.

In *A Lecture on Ethics*, he is quite explicit about what he means by ‘higher’. He says:

There are no propositions which, in any absolute sense, are sublime, important and trivial.<sup>9</sup>

So it seems by 'higher' he wanted to mean something absolute and sublime, which he attached to his notion of Ethics.

Ethics, if it is anything, is supernatural and our words only express facts... so far as facts and propositions are concerned, there is only relative value and relative good, right, etc.<sup>10</sup>

Now the second point which he wants to emphasize is that our words, as we use them in sciences are capable of conveying only facts but they cannot express anything other than that. That is beyond their capacity, as a tea-cup is incapable of containing a gallon of water; similarly a word is incapable of expressing anything other than facts. To quote from Wittgenstein:

...our words will only express facts; as a teacup will only hold a teacup full of water even if I were to pour out a gallon over it.<sup>11</sup>

This reminds us of similar remarks made by Rabindranath in *Personality* (Lectures delivered in America) translated in German as *Personlichkeit* by Helene Meyer Franck, Munchen, Kurt Wolff, in 1921. Both Tagore and Wittgenstein agree that words in our everyday language is incapable of expressing the higher truth. Hence, in spite of their different intellectual make-ups and them belonging to two different modernities, their visions overlap in this significant respect. Rabindranath wanted to stress that facts are inadequate tools for the expression of Truth.

They (Facts) are 'like wine cups that carry it (Truth), they are hidden by it, it overflows them. It is infinite in its suggestions; it is extravagant in its words. It is personal, therefore beyond science'.<sup>12</sup>

Rabindranath did not approach the theme through linguistic analysis, still striking similarities abound in Rabindranath's distinction between fact and truth *and* the distinction between expressible and the inexpressible in Wittgenstein. Distinction between fact and truth is fundamental to the philosophy of Tagore, an introduction of which is necessary at this point. Rabindranath defines fact as '(t)he characterisation of whatever exists in whichever manner is a fact'<sup>13</sup> (Translation by author).

To state it clearly in Wittgensteinian terminology, a fact is the existence of state of affairs (T1.13). If the state of affair is of the form 'S is P' [i.e. S has the characteristic of P], the fact will be S is P and that S exists. From this definition it follows that a fact is something

which is objective and impersonal. When we are saying about the fact that S is P, we are not talking about one's thinking or feelings for 'S' or 'P'. Thus, a fact is something with which science is concerned.

Now, it is very easy to verify or examine a picture or an object of art by reference to facts. What we have to do is just to find out whether it agrees with the state of affairs or not. If it does, it is true, if not then it is false. Rabindranath explains it with the example of a horse. It is not difficult to prove whether the picture of a horse is exact or not. As far as facts are concerned, there are very many points which one can compare with the picture and find out if it satisfies all the criteria or not. This again goes well with the view of the *Tractatus*. I quote:

T2.201; A picture depicts reality by representing a possibility of existence and non-existence of states of affairs.

T2.21 A picture agrees with reality or fails to agree; it is correct or incorrect, true or false.

So far the above discussion shows that there are close affinities in the views of the early Wittgenstein and Rabindranath Tagore as far as facts are concerned. Here one might object by saying that 'the suggested affinity between Tagore and Wittgenstein on the notion of facts can set off with the required significance in the background that both of them are realists, both of them seem to endorse a correspondence between pictures, propositions and reality as scientifically determinable. This common admission will be significantly opposed to philosophers of the Idealist genre. While some idealists would refute mind-independent fact, others (Hegel) would also emphasize that any such purported fact is already invaded by the whole. Such theories will make the logical atoms, their recursion in various combinations to forge atomic facts, notionally impossible, thus leading on to a falsification of analysis. As we know, this trend was taken up in different ways by Quine and later Wittgenstein himself. Now while one can safely categorize early Wittgenstein as a Realist, and Atomist, it is difficult to put Tagore under the standard philosophical brands of Realist or Idealist, Atomist or Holist'.

In order to answer this objection, I feel one should have to be more careful about labelling these two thinkers either as a realist or an idealist in a straight forward manner. It is customary to regard Tagore as an idealist and Wittgenstein as a realist though we'll see



in a moment that none of them could be titled as such. Rabindranath clearly states it in an article. I quote:

Realism and idealism in the east do not have the same import as they have in the west. Realism in India is not absolute but comparative, as if it were a 'realism of idealism'.<sup>14</sup>

Rabindranath does not think that realism and idealism are mutually exclusive. And his 'Realism of idealism' ceases to appear paradoxical when we see it from two different perspectives. His view is idealistic in the sense that he does not limit aesthetic experience to the realm of objectively verifiable reality. It is realistic to the extent that he regards art as something which brings us very close to reality. Coming to Wittgenstein, we can ask: in what sense and to what extent is Wittgenstein a realist? I would like to suggest that Wittgenstein's early works are uniquely characterized by a commitment to what is essentially human in the subjects they address. According to the prevailing opinion, the *Tractatus* can be regarded as a prototypical realist theory.<sup>15</sup> But a careful analysis will show that Tractarian ontology is intended as a description of the structure of reality that is presupposed by language and thought. As a scholar on Wittgenstein argues:

Starting from an a priori fixed set of logical principles Wittgenstein undertakes a search for the conditions of any meaningful language to be possible. His aim was to provide us with a completely general characterization of its possibility. The picture theory of meaning is his answer and this theory contains as one of its essential elements a theory about the logical structure of reality, the totality of objects is the limit of the logical analysis of sentences, that is, a logical construction that shows how meaning is possible. So in whatever sense objects can be said to exist, it is in a different way than ordinary things and ordinary situations. That is why we neither have knowledge of objects, nor are able to state their identity criteria. As the ontology is tied to language, the question of realism as such need not arise. The world and the way it is built up, as it is described in 1-2.063, is the world as language and thought present it. It is the world in so far as we can know it and talk about it scientifically.<sup>16</sup>

The similarity with Tagore lies exactly here as the term *tathyo*, as he uses it in Bangla, denotes facts, rather scientific facts of the world *in so far as we can know it*. But the notion of truth as Tagore explains in his writings apparently seems to be far away from the views of Ludwig Wittgenstein. To Rabindranath, Truth goes beyond the domain of facts in the sense that it is personal and subjective. Rabindranath treated the Truth as 'the Truth of relationship, the Truth of

harmony in the Universe, the fundamental principle of creation'. He identifies this Truth with some inner value which is not 'extension in space and duration in time', and this eludes factual representation. We have mentioned earlier that facts are impersonal. Facts must be devoid of personal attachments, otherwise they cannot achieve objectivity in knowledge, but that also makes a fact an abstraction, makes it separate from the whole, the reality. Regarding Truth, Tagore thinks that it can be grasped only if we leave the domain of facts which is limited within the bounds of space-time and objectivity. Truth transcends those limits. He re-iterates:

In the region of Nature by unlocking the secret doors of workshop department, one may come to that dark hall where dwells the mechanics and help to attain usefulness, but through it one can never attain finality. Here is the storehouse of innumerable facts and however necessary they may be, they have not the treasure of fulfilment in them. But the hall of union is there, where dwells the lover in the heart of existence. When a man reaches it, he at once realizes that he has come to truth, to immortality, and he is glad with a gladness which is an end and yet which has no end.<sup>17</sup>

Facts are necessary, facts are useful for our everyday life, but they cannot reach The Truth, The Eternal, which is also The Personal. Rabindranath, while distinguishing between fact and truth, has referred to Keats's famous poem 'Ode on a Grecian Urn' and quotes:

Thou silent form, dost tease us

Out of thought, as doth eternity<sup>18</sup>

Here the poem conveys the 'speechlessness of the true language of Art' [Klaus, 251] Rabindranath explains:

When Keats said [this] in his Ode to a Grecian Urn...he felt the ineffable which is in all forms of perfection, the mystery of the One, which takes us beyond all thought into the immediate touch of the Infinite. This is the mystery which is for a poet to realize and to reveal.<sup>19</sup>

Thus, for Rabindranath, it is the ideal of perfect harmony pervading the outer as well as our inner world that a poet wants to realize and to reveal. He believes that the Supreme One resides in our own inner selves. When He wants to create, he wants to manifest his oneness in the outside world. Through literature, paintings, drawings, songs, sculptures, this One gets manifested, and then there is the union of our own inner world with the outside world.

To elucidate the ideal of harmony we can take an example of a

rose. We feel happy when we see a rose, we see the beauty of harmony in colour, smell, contour i.e. in the form of a flower. Our inner self, which we term as One, treats the rose as His own relative and thus the rose becomes valuable. It does not require any other value. The unity which we find residing in colour, smell, petals of a rose is the same unity that resides in inner core of the world. The music of the world finds affinity with the tune of the rose. Thus the inner One realizes Oneself in the unity of the outside world. Here one might ask: why did Rabindranath call the harmony of the inner and the outer world joy in itself? And the answer might come from the teachings of *Upanishad* which Rabindranath used to refer to:

In our country the supreme being has been defined as *saccidananda* (one who combines in his self being, consciousness and joy) *ananda* or joy is the last of the three terms, and there is no utterance beyond it.<sup>20</sup>

When the rose expresses truth, it expresses the infinite in finite and since the truth about expression inheres in joy, it becomes joy in itself, becomes beautiful, valuable and at the same time source of special delight.

Now this Truth, which is beautiful, valuable, and a joy in itself, has to be freed from the shackles of facts. When an artist draws pictures, he does not want to give us information. He takes as much or as little information as needed in creating the pure harmony of an Art object. That is, if that object, say for example, the sculpture of a horse possesses the beauty of the harmony of colour, painting, drawing, and music, then our heart recognizes it as real or true. If this sculpture does not agree with facts, it does not matter. But if it does not have this harmony, then however accurately it gives information or however accurately facts are represented, it will be rejected by an artist as it fails to capture the Truth.

Another important distinction between fact and truth lies in that Truth belongs to the domain of surplus whereas facts belong to the domain of necessity. We'll elaborate on this notion of surplus in a moment. However, to Rabindranath, in spite of their differences, facts and Truth are related to each other. He believes that we can get an inkling of what Truth is, only indirectly via suggestiveness (*Vyanjana*) of language. It is clear that the Truth is indescribable as far as our factual, scientific language is concerned. The Truth lies beyond that language. But it gets manifested in Art, Literature, Music and Dance. However, in whatever form, Truth shows itself, it is indescribable i.e. indescribable in ordinary scientific language which depicts facts.

It seems that for both the thinkers ordinary words are incapable of expressing Truth; hence they cannot be put into words. In his letter to Ludwig von Ficker, which I have referred to earlier, he states clearly that 'Ethics...does not add to our knowledge in any sense'. Obviously, he means that it does not add to our factual scientific knowledge.

At a meeting in Schlick's house on 17 December 1930, Wittgenstein said:

At the end of my lecture on ethics, I spoke in the first person. I think that this is something very essential. Here there is nothing to be stated anymore; all I can do is to step forth as an individual and speak in the first person....Running against the limits of language? Language is after all not a cage.

All I can say is this: I do not scoff at this tendency in man; I hold it in reverence. And here it is essential that this is not a description of sociology but that I am speaking about myself<sup>21</sup>

The above quotation clearly states that Wittgenstein feels within himself this tendency to run against the boundaries of language, since he personally feels that this is the only way one can understand or talk about Ethics, Aesthetics, Religion, Art, Literature, etc. Hence, one cannot give a sociological description of ethics as these are not, however, statements of facts or events. Ethics, as depicted by Wittgenstein, lies beyond sociological description. There is another puzzling point in the quotation. Here we see Wittgenstein saying both that language is a cage and not a cage. He took language as a cage when he stated that 'this running against the walls of our cage is perfectly, absolutely hopeless'; and not a cage when he stated 'language is after all, not a cage'. To solve this puzzle one can refer to Cyril Barrett who solves it in the following way:

Language is in one sense a cage and in another sense not a cage. As a cage it sets limits and establishes boundaries to what can be said. We run up against these boundaries when we try to say what cannot be said in the manner in which we try to say it. But in another sense it is not a cage; by using it obliquely or by just running up against it, we can transcend it and make ourselves understood. We are still not saying anything but we are communicating with one another and can therefore be understood.<sup>22</sup>

This interpretation comes very close to the philosophy of Tagore to whom ethics belongs to the domain of Truth, which comes from 'surplus'. The notion of surplus is the central notion in the philosophy of Tagore. To elucidate, human beings like animals, have hunger,

thrust and bodily cravings, but what makes men different from animals is that apart from these bodily cravings, human beings crave for completely different things. He compares animals to retail shopkeepers who earn his bread but cannot make profit; hence, he is bound by necessities whereas a human being is a big merchant. He fulfils his necessities but can also be extravagant and can have useless expenditure.

Animals possess knowledge but that knowledge is employed for useful purposes like how to build nests, how to jump on preys, how to avoid danger, etc. Human beings also have knowledge which he often employs for immediate necessities in life, but he can go far beyond and declare that I am acquiring knowledge just for the sake of knowledge and not for anything else. There he differs fundamentally from animals. Animals possess certain altruistic tendencies like parenting, taking interest in herd and hive, man also knows that he has to be good because his goodness is necessary for his race, yet he goes far beyond that; he can afford to say that goodness is for the sake of goodness. Animals also have emotions which they use for self preservation. Man has a fund of excess emotional energy which does not get satisfied with simple preservation. It seeks outlet in creation of Art, Literature, Music and Dance. For man's civilization is built upon his surplus. This surplus is something that distinguishes men from all other creatures.<sup>23</sup> It is expressed in his poem.

The bird or animal cannot go beyond nature; they follow nature even in singing. Man goes beyond what is given to him, he creates. Man is given voice, yet he goes beyond it. He creates songs, he sings.<sup>24</sup> (Translated by author).

When we see the world through music, through Art, through Literature, we understand it properly.<sup>25</sup>

Of all creatures only man knows himself because his impulse of knowledge comes back to him in its excess. Therefore in Art, man reveals himself, feels his personality more intensely than other creatures because his power of feeling is more than can be exhausted by his objects, Man as a knower is not fully himself.... His mere information does not reveal him.<sup>26</sup>

Here we find that there is a difference between description and revelation. Facts can be described but human excesses or surplus gets revealed only in Art, literature and other discourses which can never be described in factual terms. They are indescribable in factual language. Hence they are unsayable in Tractarian terms, but they

are also showable, they show themselves in Art, literature, Ethics, Aesthetics and Religious discourses.

Hence for Tagore, ethics is beyond the domain of science, where man

...can amply afford to say that goodness is for the sake of goodness. And upon this wealth of goodness—*where honesty is not valued for being the best policy, but because it can afford to go against all policies*—man's ethics is founded. (Italics mine).<sup>27</sup>

While elucidating this notion of goodness for the sake of goodness, he points out that 'there is a division in man, a dualism in his consciousness of what is and what ought to be. In the animal this is lacking, man's conflict is between what is desired and what should be desired.' What is desired' dwells in the heart of the natural life which we share with animals (the domain of facts); but 'what should be desired' belongs to a life which is far beyond it' (the domain of surplus).<sup>28</sup>

Now there is often a conflict between what is desired and what ought to be desired, conflict between animal life and man's life. To desire what ought to be desired often demands sacrifice on the part of the agent. Most of the time it is what he/she desires most. So he has to fight against his own desires, against himself. Rabindranath believes that this necessity of a fight with himself has introduced an element into man's personality which is character. From the life of desire it guides man to the life of purpose. This life is the life of the moral world.<sup>29</sup>

We find its counterpart in Wittgenstein's fabric of the moral world represented in *Notebooks 1914-16*. He speaks of renouncement which can provide us with a 'happy eye', can transform the world by bringing in changes in 'the limits of my world'. He himself practised it in his own life by renouncing his inheritance and living a modest life throughout his career.<sup>30</sup> Now this distinction between what is and what ought to be runs parallel to the most fundamental distinction between 'fact' and 'truth'. What we do or what happens belongs to the domain of facts whereas 'good' as predicate belongs to the domain of surplus. Unlike ordinary predicates, it does not refer to any factual property of an object. Thus 'goodness' points to something which transcends beyond utility, beyond the domain of facts. The 'goodness' which one 'ought to desire' is not reducible to usefulness. By 'goodness' Rabindranath means rather 'what works for better harmony and is a mark of our spiritual plenitude' (sahitya, pp. 37-38.). To elucidate:

Whatever is beneficent is in deepest union with the whole world, in secret harmony with the mind of all humanity.<sup>31</sup>

It is this deepest union that does not allow a person to use another *as a means*. If one uses another as a means then the deepest union with the whole world is disrupted. Moreover, Rabindranath was of the opinion that ‘we do not express the whole truth about the benign if we say it is called ‘good’ because it benefits us. The truly benign serves our need and it is beautiful: that is, it has an unaccountable attraction that surpasses its use.’<sup>32</sup> What surpasses its use is also beyond significant expression. Thus, ethics is ‘an attempt to run up against significant language’, although it gets manifested in creative actions. The goodness of an action depends on the way a human being survives on its surplus and the manner in which he is related to other human beings. That is, if by performing an action a man rises above his physical, material ego and its desires and transcends himself to the spirit of surplus, he does something good; for to transcend to the spirit of surplus means to be united with ‘universal man’ or ‘the man of one’s heart’. In order to transcend to the spirit of surplus one has to ‘turn his own passions and desires from tyranny into obedience.’<sup>33</sup> To put it simply, for Tagore, to be moral means to rise above one’s emotions and passions, to be happy and in tune with the whole world. Here, one can hear the echo of this in *Notebooks 1914-1916*:

How can man be happy at all, since he cannot ward off the misery of this world? Through the life of knowledge....The life of knowledge is the life that is happy in spite of the misery of the world. The only life that is happy is the life that can renounce the amenities of the world...To it the amenities of the world are so many graces of fate.<sup>34</sup>

Commentators are puzzled regarding the interpretation of such passages in the writings of early Wittgenstein. Cyril Barrett is of the opinion that ‘it has to be admitted that Wittgenstein is pretty isolated in his view. He is not in line with hedonists or utilitarians or emotivists or ethical relativists.’<sup>35</sup> We can see Wittgenstein’s view meshes nicely here with that of Rabindranath’s as far as the transcendentalism and inexpressibility is concerned.

#### *Ethics as Mystical and Non-sensical*

T6.522: There are indeed things that cannot be put into words. They make themselves manifest. They are what is mystical.

T6.44 It is not how things are in the world that is mystical, but that it exists.

T6.45: To view the world *sub-specie- aeterni* is to view it as a whole- a limited whole. Feeling the world as a limited whole—it is this that is mystical.

In our earlier discussion, we have seen how Wittgenstein distinguished between what can be talked about and what cannot. Here he is adding that what cannot be talked about falls under the head 'mystical'. 'The mystical' is related to a particular type of viewing the world, viewing it as a limited whole. Now we will see how Ethics for Wittgenstein as well as for Rabindranath fits in with all the above characterisations.

About the mystical Wittgenstein says:

T6.44 it is not how things are in the world that is mystical, but that it exists.

Again:

It is the experience of seeing the world as a miracle.<sup>36</sup>

These quotations suggest that Wittgenstein is equating wonder at the existence of the world with the treating of the existence of the world as a miracle. Since what is mystical is that the world exists, the wonder, he speaks of, is wonder at something mystical. This also fits with what Wittgenstein suggests in the *Notebooks 1914-16*, where he writes:

Aesthetically, the miracle is that the world exists.<sup>37</sup>

We can see that he holds that his seeing the world as a miracle—wondering at its existence—is not the scientific way of seeing things; for he also says:

The truth is that the scientific way of looking at a fact is not the way to look at it as a miracle.<sup>38</sup>

Now the question arises: which way of looking at the world makes it a miracle? According to Wittgenstein, this is the way of seeing the world '*sub specie aeterni*' (T6.45). For Wittgenstein then seeing the world as miracle and taking its existence as mystical is the same thing as what he speaks of in T6.45, seeing it as a limited whole or seeing it *sub specie aeterni*. We can see that this is closely connected with things Wittgenstein says in the *Notebooks*. There he says:

The usual way of looking at things sees objects, as it were, from the midst of them, the view *sub specie aeternitatis*, from outside. In such a way that they have the whole world as a background. Is this it perhaps... In this view



the object is seen together with space and time instead of in space and time.

The thing seen *sub specie aeternitatis* is the thing seen together with the whole logical space.<sup>39</sup>

It seems that here he suggests that to view a thing *sub specie aeterni* means viewing it as the most significant thing which is not at par with other things in the world, it comes to the fore and the whole world goes to the background. We will see later that this viewing from eternity is peculiarly common to both ethical and aesthetical viewpoint.

Most importantly, 'The wonder that the world exists' serves for Wittgenstein, as an example of 'absolute value judgement'. To him, it is experience *par excellence* and it is mystical; it cannot be put into words. Here one might object that the term 'wonder' is being misused. We usually wonder at a thing which is not natural or normal; whereas in the case of the wonder that the world exists, we cannot even conceive of the world as non-existing. So it cannot have proper sense. Now do we really understand what exactly he intends to mean by the expression 'I wonder that the world exists'? Do we really understand the nature of these experiences? Even as simple it goes far beyond our comprehension. We understand clearly how it lacks sense but we fail to grasp actually what these experiences connote and how it becomes absolutely valuable. Here I would like to point out that the examples Wittgenstein uses, to elucidate absolute value judgements which cannot be represented factually are nicely articulated in the poems of Rabindranath Tagore. Hence, I shall bring in some of Rabindranath's poems to elucidate Wittgenstein's notion of absolute value judgements. The first poem I will refer to is 'The Awakening of a Stream'.<sup>40</sup> This poem depicts unbounded joys experienced by the poet for the existence of the world. Regarding this experience he says in his Hibbert lectures:

When I was 18, a sudden spring breeze of religious experience for the first time came to my life and passed away leaving in my memory a direct message of my spiritual reality. One day while I stood watching at early dawn the sun sending out its ray from behind the trees, I suddenly felt as if some ancient mist had in a moment lifted from my sight, and the morning light on the face of the world revealed an inner radiance of joy. The invisible screen of the common place was removed from all things and all men and their ultimate significance was intensified in my mind....<sup>41</sup>

Another important insight we find in another *poem* where he speaks of the wonderful experience of the whole world embracing his

heart: 'That is, I don't know how my heart unfolded and embraced the whole world today'<sup>42</sup> (translated by author). It is true that one cannot picture the event of the world embracing one's heart or awakening of one's 'vital consciousness', still one is attempting to express something which is inexpressible (in the Tractarian sense) and in this way one commits oneself to non-sensicalities. Still they are important because they are artistic representation of 'viewing the world *sub specie aeterni*'.

Wittgenstein, while elucidating the experiences representative of absolute value judgments stated another example, such as: I am absolutely safe, whatever happens. Here also the term 'safe' has been misused, because the term 'safe' can be used meaningfully only if I can compare it to or contrast it with other words depicting the imminent danger from which one can claim to be safe. I can meaningfully say that I am safe in my room in the sense that a leopard cannot attack me, and I am safe if I had Chikungunia but it did not relapse; but I cannot use the term 'safe' while saying 'I am always safe'. If I do that, I am misusing the language. Explaining this, Wittgenstein says that 'it is the state of mind in which one is inclined to say 'I am safe, nothing can injure me whatever happens'. This is connected with the idea of 'I am safe in the hands of God'. Now 'being absolutely safe' does not imply that it excludes the possibility of happening any misery to the individual. Rather he can face all kinds of misery without being affected by it. One might feel the presence of the Indian concept of *sthita prajna* here. Cyril Barrett says:

[T]his notion of being absolutely safe is an oriental notion which Wittgenstein imbibed from Schopenhauer.<sup>43</sup>

Wittgenstein was influenced by Schopenhauer no doubt, but he read Schopenhauer at the age of 19, but when he is writing 'A Lecture on Ethics' in 1929, it was not Schopenhauer, but Rabindranath's writings that impressed him much at the time. I do not want to say that Wittgenstein took these ideas from Rabindranath, for so far we do not have any evidence regarding acknowledgement or indebtedness to Rabindranath in any of Wittgenstein's writings; but what is evident is that there are affinities between the ideas of two great minds as far as these experiences are concerned. For example, we can cite a poem from Rabindranath:

Even if there is a tempest, the headache is not yours, enjoy the fury of the waves and do not worry. Let the night and deep darkness descends, the helmsman secures the boat and will row you across to safety.<sup>44</sup>

The helmsman is no other than God and you are absolutely safe, whatever happens, in the hands of God. Here Wittgenstein points out that ‘certain characteristic misuse of language runs through all ethical and religious expressions’, which has made them non-sensical. And we have seen earlier how much reverent he was towards these non-sensicalities. Here what leads to nonsensicality is ‘the longing to reach out’ and ‘a passion for the absolute’. It is this desire to know the reality that makes us unsatisfied with saying what can only be said. Whether or not this feeling is communicable (shown or said), Wittgenstein feels in himself this tendency deeply. So this drawing of a boundary around the sphere of what can be said significantly is not done to condemn or ridicule those who have attempted to cross the boundary. But still the question remains: If nothing about the absolute value and ethics can be put into words then what about the status of those examples which Wittgenstein uses (e.g. you ought to do such and such, I wonder at the existence of the world) to make us understand what the absolute value judgements are like? Wittgenstein says that they are all non-sensical, as we have seen in the example of ‘the wonder that the world exists’.

Let us see what Wittgenstein thought about this sort of non-sensicality which is involved in ethical and religious expressions, he says:

I see now that these non-sensical expressions were not non-sensical because I had not yet found the correct expressions but that their non-sensicality was their very essence. For all I wanted to do with them was just to go beyond the world and that is to say, beyond significant language. But this is just impossible. My whole tendency and the tendency of all men who ever tried to write or talk ethics or religion was to run against the boundaries of language. This running against the walls of our cage is perfectly, absolutely, hopeless. Ethics, so far as it springs from the desire to say something *about the ultimate meaning of our life, the absolute good, the absolute valuable*, can be no science. What it says does not add to our knowledge in any sense. But it is a document of a tendency in the human mind which I personally cannot help respecting deeply and I would not for my life ridicule it.<sup>45</sup>

Wittgenstein, instead of ridiculing this tendency, conceived the true centre of ethical interest lying in the investigations of ‘the meaning of life’ or again ‘the sense of the world’. As to the sense of the world, Wittgenstein says: ‘The sense of the world must lie outside the world’ (T6.41). Answers to the questions concerning the sense of the world must necessarily take us beyond the world (i.e., all that is the case). It is true that Rabindranath will not allow his ‘truth’ to

be 'non-sensical' as he did not approach it from a linguistic point of view. But his reverence to silence as depicting the sense of the world<sup>46</sup> comes very close to the heart of Wittgenstein. We cannot sensibly express our communication with reality in words, this is sensibly inexpressible. One can reach there silently and 'lay down one's silent harp at the feet of the silent.'<sup>47</sup>

Truth is inexpressible though it gets manifested in various things, especially Art, which includes drawing, painting sculpture, music and dance, ethics, aesthetics and religious experience. Now we will move to the second section where the sameness of Ethics and Aesthetics will be discussed.

#### *Ethics and Aesthetics are One and the Same*

The important paragraph regarding Aesthetics in the *Tractatus* is at the close of the proposition T6.421 with a parenthetical remark: *Ethics and Aesthetics are one and the same*. Apparently though, these two discourses are different. Usually ethics deals with actions which can be judged as good or bad, just or unjust depending on whether it fulfils or fails to fulfil the ethical criteria. In that sense, the approach of ethics is more general and objective whereas the approach of Aesthetics is rather subjective. Aesthetic attributes are not generally applicable to human actions, it applies to individual items of the world, right from the domain of the appearance of human beings to the domain of plants, animals, and insects and also the non-living universe. Ethics deals with action, whereas aesthetics deals with 'contemplation'. 'Moreover, it is possible, we are told, to bypass the aesthetic in a way in which we cannot bypass the ethical: aesthetic awareness is rarely forced upon us and aesthetic situations do not seem to affect our lives significantly but ethical situations, in Sartre's words, 'spring up around us like partridges' and even if a person decides to ignore an ethical matter then that decision is itself an ethical one.<sup>48</sup> So why mix the two domains? Why think that the two are one or 'one and the same'? There are controversies<sup>49</sup> regarding the ontological identity of these subjects of discourses as Pears and McGuinness translation provokes one to think in such terms. The original sentence in German Language is: *Ethik und Aesthetic sind Eins*.

Pears and McGuinness translate '*eins*' as 'one and the same' though '*eins*' usually means one. 'One' does not necessarily connote ontological identity, rather according to some interpreters, it might hinge on the concept of unity. There are other interpretations as

well which translate ‘*eins*’ as representing unity and interdependencies.<sup>50</sup> However, there is one reference in which Wittgenstein provides us with a clue how to interpret this ‘*eins*’. In ‘A Lecture on Ethics’ delivered in 1929, he says he will use the term ‘ethics’ in a sense:

...which includes what I believe to be the most essential part of what is generally called *Aesthetics*. Ethics, he says, is ‘the enquiry into what is valuable, or, into what is really important...the enquiry into the meaning of life, or into what makes life worth living, or into the right way of living.

Here he is explicit that the two subjects are not identical as the definition of Ethics will include only a part of Aesthetics; that might be ‘the most essential part’, still it is not the whole of it. Hence, he is not obliterating the basic distinction between the two subjects but pointing to some fundamental points of affinities and interdependencies of the two.

However, we can here refer to Engelmann, who writes about this sentence:

I guess that the statement of the Tractatus, ‘Ethics and aesthetics are one’, is one of the most frequently misunderstood propositions of the book. Surely it cannot be assumed that this wide-ranging and profound thinker had meant to say that there is no difference at all between ethics and aesthetics! But the statement is put in parentheses, said by the way, as something not really meant to be uttered, yet something that should not be passed over in silence at that point. And this is done in the form of a reminder recalling to the understanding reader an insight which he is assumed to possess in any case.<sup>51</sup>

Here, following David Olson Pook, I would like to suggest that we should take Wittgenstein (and Engelmann, for that matter) at their word. Ethics and aesthetics are one, and yet at the same time Wittgenstein certainly did not mean to say that there is no difference between them.<sup>52</sup>

Why did he think that ethics and aesthetics are one? We get a clue rather in *Notebooks 1914-16*:

The work of art is the object seen *sub specie aeternitatis* and the good life is the world seen *sub specie aeternitatis*. This is the connection between art and ethics.<sup>53</sup>

Viewing *sub specie aeterni* provides the link between these two disciplines. Now what does this phrase *sub specie aeternitatis* connote? We find references to this Latin phrase *sub specie aeternitatis* in writings of Baruch Spinoza.<sup>54</sup> Spinoza uses it while elucidating his concept

of 'intellectual love of God'. Wittgenstein did not use *sub specie aeternitatis* all the time. He uses *sub specie aeterni* (T6.45), *sub specie eterni* (NB p.86e) as well. However, all these expressions mean the same: 'viewing from eternity'.

In *Culture and Value*, we find Wittgenstein explaining what he means by viewing *sub specie aeterni*:

It seems to me that there is a way of capturing the world *sub specie aeterni*...It is as though thought flies above the world and leaves it as it is, observing it from above, in flight' (CV 5/7).

Explaining 'viewing *sub specie aeterni*' in terms of 'viewing from above, in flight' might remind us that Ludwig was an aeronautical engineer at the beginning of his career. And it provides us also with an insight that such viewing leaves everything in the world 'as it is'. It cannot bring about any change in the facts or events of the world. And when you see from above, as if from flight, everything seems to be on the same level.

Now what happens when one views an object 'from eternity'? That object becomes the whole world. Wittgenstein elucidates: 'the thing seen *sub specie aeternitatis* is the thing seen together with the whole logical space.'<sup>55</sup> Logical space 'in the *Tractatus* indicates the domain of possibilities, of those which are actual, constitute the world. Again the world is also equivalent to reality which consists of both positive and negative state of affairs i.e., it comprises the whole logical space; hence if the object viewed *sub specie aeterni* is viewing it with the logical space then it implies that it constitutes the whole world.

Rabindranath also says the same thing about viewing an object from the point of view of aesthetics. He says that we find a rose beautiful when we feel the unity of a rose coinciding with the unity of the universe, and thus it takes us beyond temporality. This unity tunes with the inner unity of oneself along with the unity of the universe.<sup>56</sup> For Wittgenstein, to view a thing *sub specie aeterni* means also viewing it as the most significant thing which is not at par with other things in the world. He explains it with the example of a stove.

As a thing among things, each thing is equally insignificant: as a world each one equally significant. If I have been contemplating the stove, and then am told but now all you know is the stove, my result does indeed seem trivial. For this represents the matter as if I had studied the stove as one among the many things in the world. But if I was contemplating the stove, it was *my world* and everything else colourless by contrast with it.<sup>57</sup>

So, it seems that viewing the world as a limited whole or *sub specie aeterni* is also connected with viewing it ethically or attaching a value and significance to it. Viewing *sub specie aeterni*—means viewing from outside. And the sense of the world with which ethics is related also lies outside i.e. ‘outside the whole sphere of what happens and is the case’. For all that happens and is the case is accidental. What makes it non-accidental cannot lie within the world, since if it did it would itself be accidental.<sup>58</sup> Similarly if one views the world ethically then it becomes a different world.

Wittgenstein makes connection between viewing from eternity and good life explicit when he says:

Good life is the world viewed *sub specie aeterni*.<sup>59</sup>

However, the above discussion points out that viewing *sub specie aeterni* are the connecting link between ethical and aesthetical discourses. Such viewing differs from any factual or scientific viewing as the latter is always fragmentary. Hence, it can never be expressed in scientific language. Factual representation thus functions as a cage and ethics and aesthetics can be taken as attempts to run against the boundaries of the cage. But in their attempt to transcend the boundaries they show themselves and make ourselves understood. It can show that factual or propositional representation is not everything. There are items which go beyond factual representation; there are points of views which are not fragmentary or partial; but which can take an overview of the whole. Thus, we experience value as transcendental, since the facts and propositions that represent them all function at the same level (T6.41). It is interesting to note here that Wittgenstein connects this kind of viewing as ‘viewing with a happy eye’ ‘because...the beautiful is what makes happy’ (NB 20.10.16 & 21.10.16). The experience of value arises from such wholeness, from the perceived harmony between the individual and the world.<sup>60</sup> ‘This experience of unity is what being happy means’,<sup>61</sup> seeing from the viewpoint of eternity is not to perceive the object in terms of causality or in orientation toward a certain end. With this move Wittgenstein separates the question of human value from scientific questions.<sup>62</sup> There are several opposite interpretations regarding the source of such cryptic remarks. Here I would like to suggest that it is in essence Tagorean. Tagore says:

Whatever is beneficent is in deepest union with the whole world, in secret harmony with the mind of all humanity. When we see this beautiful accord of the true and the beneficent, the beauty of truth no longer eludes our perception. Compassion is beautiful; so are forgiveness and love....In our

Puranas Lakshmi is the Goddess of not only beauty and riches, but also beneficence. *The image of beauty is the fullest manifestation of the good and the image of the good the consummate self of beauty.*<sup>63</sup> (Italics by the author).

To Rabindranath, both Ethics and Aesthetics belong to the domain of surplus which is beyond the domain of facts. We have seen at the outset that beauty exceeds what is necessary. That is why we recognize it as wealth. Rabindranath believes that ‘beauty cannot be the aim of art and literature unless it is good. In goodness also we discover that wealth...When we see a brave man abandon his self interest or sacrifice his life for the sake of moral principle, we witness a marvel that is greater than our pain and pleasure, larger than our self interest, nobler than our lives. By virtue of this wealth, goodness does not count loss as loss, or stress as stress. It remains unhurt by any injury to self interest. That is why goodness as much as beauty induces us to willing sacrifice. Beauty expresses God’s plenty in all the world’s functions; goodness does the same in human life. Goodness has made beauty more than something to be seen with the eye or understood with.’<sup>64</sup>

This is the reason that they cannot be represented by ordinary factual language. They are the inexpressible. But like Wittgenstein, Rabindranath also thinks that they transcend the boundaries of language and somehow make themselves understood by means of suggestiveness of language. He believes that ‘poets reveal the benign to the world in its ineffably beautiful form. The truly benign serves our need and it is beautiful: that is, it has an unaccountable attraction that surpasses its use’. This is why ethics and aesthetics are one and the same for both the thinkers. Their views converge in maintaining that words are incapable of expressing Values which incorporate Truth, Beauty and Goodness. Ethics, thus, depicts human tendencies to run against the boundaries of language which, though fruitless, still deserve our deep respect and admiration.

#### NOTES

1. Henceforth it will be referred to as *Tractatus* and in short form: *T*.
2. The book’s point is an ethical one. ‘My book draws limits to the sphere of the ethical from the inside, as it were, and I am convinced that this is the ONLY rigorous way of drawing those limits.’ Paul Engelmann, *Letters from Ludwig Wittgenstein with a Memoir*, trans. L. Furtmüller, ed. B. F. McGuinness (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967), pp. 143-144.
3. P.M.S. Hacker did not take this point seriously. He said ‘Wittgenstein’s attempt to maintain that the *Tractatus* is an ethical treatise is “either self-deluding, or disingenuous” (83). Von Wright completely ignores the ethical implications of



- the work, Frank Ramsey's criticism 'But what we can't say we can't say, and we can't whistle it either is seconded by Otto Neurath that 'One must indeed be silent, but not about anything.'
4. Martin Kampchen, *Rabindranath Tagore and Germany*, (Calcutta: Max Mueller Bhavan, 1991), p. 12.
  5. Ray Monk, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius*, (New York, The Free Press, 1990), p.131.
  6. This lecture is the only public lecture that Wittgenstein delivered in Cambridge during his stay. It had been prepared sometime between September 1929 and December 1930.
  7. Ludwig Wittgenstein, 'A Lecture on Ethics', *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. LXXIV (1965), p. 7.
  8. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
  9. *Ibid.*
  10. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
  11. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
  12. Rabindranath Tagore, *Personality: Lectures Delivered in America* (New York: Macmillan, 1923), p. 34.
  13. Tagore made a distinction between 'tathyo'o 'satya'. I have translated 'tathyo' as fact. 'Fact' is a loaded philosophical term referring to 'meaning of a proposition', 'objects in relation' and 'true state of affairs'. Here, I mean existent state of affairs, which give us information in the spirit of Tagore's writings.
  14. Rabindranath Tagore, *Kavyer Gadyariti*, published in the journal *Rupam*, 1924, Cited in V.S. Naravane, *Rabindranath Tagore: A Philosophical Study* (Delhi: Macmillan India, 1977), p. 34.
  15. There are commentators like Norman Malcolm who discern an independent ontology in the *Tractatus* and view the structure of language as derived from that. David Pears defends a 'basic uncritical realism' as the proper interpretation, and Hintikka and Hintikka espouse a form of 'sense data realism'. See Martin Stokhof, *World and Life as one Ethics and Ontology in Wittgenstein's Early Thought* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), p. 246.
  16. Stokhof, *World and Life as one Ethics and Ontology in Wittgenstein's Early Thought*, p. 246.
  17. Rabindranath Tagore, *The Religion of Man* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1931), pp. 106-107.
  18. John Keats, *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, *The Oxford book of English verse 1250-1900*, ed. A.T. Quillar Couch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1919), p. 17.
  19. Rabindranath Tagore, *Creative Unity* [1922] (Portland: The Floating Press, 2009), p. 17.
  20. Rabindranath Tagore, 'Sahitya' [1924], trans. Swapan Chakravorty, in *Rabindranath Tagore: Selected Writings on Literature and Language*, ed. Sukanta Chaudhuri (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 264.
  21. Friedrich Waismann, *Wittgenstein and the Vienna circle* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1979), pp. 117-118.
  22. Cyril Barrett, *Wittgenstein on Ethics and Religious Belief* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), p. 49.
  23. Tagore, *Personality*, pp. 9-11.
  24. 'Pakhire diyecho gaan, gai sei gaan, tar besi korenase daan, Amare diyechho swar, ami taar besi kori daan, ami gaai gaan', Rabindranath Tagore, 'Balaka', poem no. 27, in *Rabindra Rachanavali*, Vol. 2, p. 271.

25. Rabindranath Tagore, *Gitanjali*, Puja parjai, song no. 26, trans. Amitabha Basu, *Lyrics to love from the poet of the world*.
26. Ibid. Also see Tagore, *Personality*, p. 12.
27. Tagore, *Personality*, p. 10.
28. Ibid., p. 80 (bracket used by the author).
29. Ibid.
30. Wittgenstein donated a large part of his inheritance to Ludwig von Ficker, whom he had never met and only knew as the editor of the literary journal *Der Brenner*, requesting that the money should be distributed 'among Austrian artists...without means.' See Monk, *Ludwig Wittgenstein*, p. 106.
31. Rabindranath Tagore, 'The sense of beauty', trans. Swapan Chakravorty, in *Rabindranath Tagore: Selected Writings on Literature and Language*, ed. Sukanta Chaudhuri (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 172.
32. Ibid., p. 173.
33. Tagore, *Personality*, p. 81.
34. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Notebooks 1914-16* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1969), p. 81.
35. Barrett, *Wittgenstein on Ethics and Religious Belief*, p. 49.
36. Wittgenstein, 'A Lecture on Ethics', p. 11.
37. Wittgenstein, *Notebooks 1914-16*, p. 86e.
38. Wittgenstein, 'A Lecture on Ethics', p. 11.
39. Wittgenstein, *Notebooks 1914-16*, p. 83e.
40. 'Nirjhaer Swapnobhongo'. Abu Sayeed Ayyub refers to it as 'the awakening of a stream'.
41. Tagore, *The Religion of Man*, pp. 93-94.
42. 'Hridayaji mor kemone gelo khuli, jagat asi setha koriche kolakuli'.
43. Barrett, *Wittgenstein on Ethics and Religious Belief*, pp. 54-55.
44. 'Tufan jodi ese thake, tomar kiser dai, Cheye dekho dheuer khela, kaj ki bhabonai. Asuk nako gohon rati, hok na andhakar, Haler kache majhi ache, korbe tori paar. Poschime tui takiye dekhis meghe akash doba, Anande tui puber dike dekh na tarar sobha. Uthbe re jhor, dulbe re book, jagbe hahakar, haler kache majhi ache, korbe tori paar.' Rabindranath Tagore, *Gitanjali*, Song no. 53, trans. Tapati Gupta.
45. Wittgenstein, 'A Lecture on Ethics', pp. 11-12.
46. 'But there where spreads the infinite sky for the soul to take her flight in, reigns the stainless white radiance, there is no day, nor night, nor form, nor colour and never never a word.' (Poem no. 68).
47. Tagore, *Gitanjali*, Poem no. 53.
48. Diane Collinson, 'Ethics and Aesthetics are One', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (Summer 1985), p. 266.
49. This issue is rather vague in the *Tractatus*, a fact that entails a continuous dispute among its commentators (Chason, pp. 34-49). Most of them tend to reject logical equivalence between aesthetics and ethics, and the remained question is what, then, is the common radix of the separate notions (Tilghman, p. 46; Barrett, p. 20; Zemach, pp. 55-57) cited in Shlomy Mualem, 'The Imminence of Revelation Aesthetics and Poetic Expressions in Early Wittgenstein and Borges', *Variaciones Borges*, Vol. 18 (2004), p. 200.
50. Kathrin Stengel, 'Ethics as Style: Wittgenstein's Aesthetic Ethics and Ethical Aesthetics', *Poetics Today*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (2004), pp. 609-625.
51. Paul Engelmann, *Letters from Ludwig Wittgenstein with a Memoir* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967), p. 143.

52. David Olson Pook, 'Working on Oneself: Wittgenstein's Architecture, Ethics and Aesthetics', *Symploká*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Winter 1994), pp. 65-66.
53. Wittgenstein, *Notebooks 1914-16*, dated 07.10.1916.
54. Prop. XXXV: 'God loves himself with an infinite intellectual love'. Prop. XXXVI: 'The intellectual love of the mind towards God is that very love of God whereby God loves himself, not in so far as he is infinite, but in so far as he can be explained through the essence of the human mind, regarded under the form of eternity (sub specie aeternitatis); in other words, the intellectual love of the mind towards God is part of the infinite-love wherewith God loves himself.'
55. Wittgenstein, *Notebooks 1914-16*, p. 83e.
56. Tagore, *Personality*, p. 82.
57. Wittgenstein, *Notebooks 1914-16*, p. 83e.
58. Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*, para 6.41.
59. Wittgenstein, *Notebooks 1914-16*, p. 73e.
60. Julian Friedland, 'Wittgenstein and the Metaphysics of Ethical Value', *Ethics*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (June 2006), pp. 91-102.
61. *Ibid.*, p. 92.
62. Benjamin R. Tilghman, *Wittgenstein, Ethics and Aesthetics: The View from Eternity* (London: Macmillan, 1991), p. 44.
63. Tagore, 'The sense of beauty', p. 172.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 173.