



The Blue and Brown Books (Preliminary Studies for the Philosophical Investigations)

By Ludwig Wittgenstein

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These works, as the sub-title makes clear, are unfinished sketches for Philosophical Investigations, possibly the most important and influential philosophical work of modern times. The 'Blue Book' is a set of notes dictated to Wittgenstein's Cambridge students in 1933-1934: the 'Brown Book' was a draft for what eventually became the growth of the first part of Philosophical Investigations. This book reveals the germination and growth of the ideas which found their final expression in Wittgenstein's later work. It is indispensable therefore to students of Wittgenstein's thought and to all those who wish to study at first-hand the mental processes of a thinker who fundamentally changed the course of modern philosophy.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Wittgenstein's later work, so long the privilege and possession of a few, is at last before the public at large. The so-called Blue and Brown Books, originally dictated to his students in Cambridge in the thirties, and circulated, not without precaution and secrecy, now follow the Investigations and the Remarks on Mathematics, and with this the opening up process is complete. The event is welcome: it is certain that we need more free discussion, rather than obscure reference to Wittgenstein's doctrines the Blue Book already announces all the main themes of the later Wittgenstein--so rich yet so intimately interlocked. Use and meaning and the fallacious 'name' theory; understanding and the mastery of a technique; rules, language-games and 'forms of life'; these doctrines, and the denial of 'private languages,' fit together like the parts of a puzzle. This book, for the sake of its compactness, and something of a special zest that has been admired, may make it a good introduction to the later Wittgenstein it is only here [The Brown Book] that language-games and the problems of rules come into full prominence. And the importance of the latter cannot be over-emphasized; later philosophers have used the notion but rarely explored it as Wittgenstein did." -- David Pole, Philosophy "There could be no better introduction to Wittgenstein's thought than the Blue Book, whose simplicity and forthrightness must make an instant appeal. The progressive complications of the Brown Book make a natural bridge to the still more subtle, but often confusing, exposition of the Investigations. Every serious student of philosophy will want to own this volume." -- Max Black "These studies have exercised considerable influence on the development of contemporary English philosophy." -- "The Heythrop Journal (Oxford)

From the Back Cover

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About the Author

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) was born in Austria and studied at Cambridge under Bertrand Russell. He volunteered to serve in the Austrian army at the outbreak of World War I, and in 1918 was captured and sent to a prison camp in Italy, where he finished his masterpiece, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, one of the most important philosophical works of all time. After the war Wittgenstein eventually returned to Cambridge to teach.

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