

Title: Wittgenstein, Psychoanalysis, Philosophy

Affiliation: The University of Tokyo

Name: Ren Yoshida

Abstract:

This presentation revisits Ludwig Wittgenstein's critiques of Sigmund Freud, specifically focusing on the confusion between reasons and causes in psychoanalysis, while contextualizing these critiques with insights from G.E.M. Anscombe. Instead of attempting to systematically reconstruct Wittgenstein's fragmented remarks on Freud—an effort already explored by previous researchers, with its limitations well noted—I build upon these established analyses to summarize the key points of his critiques and emphasize their implications in the acquisition of self-knowledge. Wittgenstein did not leave a comprehensive treatise on Freud; however, he provided scattered critical notes that exposed Freud's ambiguity, especially his neglect of the grammatical distinction between reasons and causes. The ambiguity in psychoanalytic explanations—interpretable as addressing either causes or reasons—blurs this distinction. The presentation examines Wittgenstein's critique of Freud from Wittgenstein's perspective: reasons for actions are known to the agent immediately, in stark contrast to causes, which are known inductively. Importantly, while Wittgenstein criticized psychoanalysis for confusing reasons and causes, he did not advocate for a strict separation between them in all contexts. Anscombe mirrors this nuanced stance in her work *Intention*, where she acknowledges cases where a reason for action can also be its cause. Although the distinction between reasons and causes is often perceived as parallel to that between philosophy and empirical sciences, the relationship between these knowledge types is more complex. This presentation will delve into Wittgenstein's and Anscombe's subtle but significant distinctions in their approaches to reasons and causes. Wittgenstein's critiques of Freud do not center on the Freudian method being less scientific, but rather on it being too "philosophical". In conclusion, this presentation builds on the analysis of the distinction between reasons and causes to reinterpret Wittgenstein's critiques of Freud, arguing that psychoanalysis fails as a suitable method for acquiring self-knowledge. Stanley Cavell once summarized Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* as an "attempt to undo the psychologizing of psychology." In a parallel vein, Wittgenstein's critiques of Freud can be viewed as an attempt to undo the psychologizing of psychoanalysis.