In this article I argue that Wittgenstein's mature theory of meaning is mentalistic and internalistic: reference is determined by mental representations which play a semantic role in virtue of their aesthetic properties. That thesis, I know, sounds odd; the accepted view is that Wittgenstein held that mental representation is irrelevant to meaning. He is taken to have shown that mental objects are semantically inert: a cat-image, for example, cannot constrain the application of the term 'cat' at all, for it can be interpreted as sanctioning any application whatever of that term. A cat-image may be taken to enjoin that 'cat' denotes noncats, or snakes, or prime numbers, or anything else. Most interpreters believe that Wittgenstein has drawn the conclusion, that nothing, mental or otherwise, can proscribe an extension. Therefore, mental items are semantically useless. They cannot predetermine the application of any expression: an expression has an actual use in a public language game, and that is the only meaning it has. A related argument (anticipated by Lewis Carroll\(^1\) and Kant\(^2\)) is that any mental rule that is supposed to direct the application of 'cat' requires another rule on how to interpret and apply the first rule, and a vicious regress follows. Mental specimen of the extension of the term are equally useless, since for any object, x, whatever, there is a concept that applies to these samples as well as to x\(^3\). Thus the meaning of a term one uses


2. The faculty of judgement, Kant says, can use a rule of application, "but not as an objective rule to which it can adapt its judgement, because, for that, another faculty of judgement would again be required to enable us to decide whether the case was one for the application of the rule or not" (*Critique of Judgement*, Preface, 169).

cannot have anything to do with what one may have in mind.

Thus many interpreters hold that according to Wittgenstein no item can serve as a normative constraint on the application of a term like 'cat', i.e., as the meaning of 'cat'. The result is an opacity of reference similar to that advocated by Quine: if there can be no semantic constraints on how 'cat' is to be used there are no constraints on what 'cat' denotes and 'this is a cat' can have no truth conditions. Hence, there is no way to say what our terms refer to. The only constraint on the use of 'cat' is the brute fact that a game is played in the course of which tokens of 'cat' are minted, and during which certain kinds of behavior are socially reinforced. To understand a linguistic expression would then be, to use it in a manner that meets with others' approval (whatever that is). Thus there is nothing that a given expression is about: there is no fact of the matter, what kind of things it refers to. One can only watch a game that involves the use of that expression and, if one is so inclined, join it.

The above argument and its skeptical conclusion have indeed featured very prominently in Wittgenstein's thought, but I think that he regarded it as a puzzle, an aпорia, for which he has, after years of hard work, found a satisfactory solution. I deny that for Wittgenstein the meaningfulness of linguistic expressions consists in their being used in complex maneuvers like those of schools of fish. This view is absurd; if use is all that there is to meaning, mental representations being kept out of the account, then falling snow flakes, or clouds of molecules whose motions exhibit a certain pattern, and whose behavior reenforces conformity to that pattern, play language games. Wittgenstein was far too good a philosopher to hold such nonsense; on the contrary, the mentalistic theory of meaning he has developed in his later years shows how to avoid it.

Wittgenstein's solution to the puzzle lies in the phenomenon of seeing as, an experience that he said was a cross between thinking (or interpreting) and seeing. One has that experience when a stimulus object is seen, all of sudden, as belonging together with certain others: "When I suddenly recognized him my visual impression suddenly seemed to change into this. Was it a sort of understanding? Was it a sort of seeing?"4. Wittgenstein held that the skeptical argument