



Wittgenstein's Ladder: Poetic Language and the Strangeness of the Ordinary

Marjorie Perloff

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Marjorie Perloff, among our foremost critics of twentieth-century poetry, argues that Ludwig Wittgenstein provided writers with a radical new aesthetic, a key to recognizing the inescapable strangeness of ordinary language. Taking seriously Wittgenstein's remark that "philosophy ought really to be written only as a form of poetry," Perloff begins by discussing Wittgenstein the "poet." What we learn is that the poetics of everyday life is anything but banal.

"This book has the lucidity and the intelligence we have come to expect from Marjorie Perloff.—Linda Munk, *American Literature*

"[Perloff] has brilliantly adapted Wittgenstein's conception of meaning and use to an analysis of contemporary language poetry."—Linda Voris, *Boston Review*

"*Wittgenstein's Ladder* offers significant insights into the current state of poetry, literature, and literary study. Perloff emphasizes the vitality of reading and thinking about poetry, and the absolute necessity of pushing against the boundaries that define and limit our worlds."—David Clippinger, *Chicago Review*

"Majorie Perloff has done more to illuminate our understanding of twentieth century poetic language than perhaps any other critic. . . . Entertaining, witty, and above all highly original."—Willard Bohn, *Sub-Stance*

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