

The Austrian Ludwig Wittgenstein Society
in cooperation with the Vienna Circle Society,
with the support of the Federal Government of Lower Austria, section Science and Research,
and the municipalities of Kirchberg, Otterthal, and Trattenbach,
are pleased to present the

44th International Wittgenstein Symposium
August 6–12, 2023

100 YEARS TRACTATUS

Organised by
Esther Heinrich-Ramharter (Vienna), Alois Pichler (Bergen)
and Friedrich Stadler (Vienna)

BEITRÄGE
CONTRIBUTIONS



100 JAHRE *TRACTATUS*

100 YEARS *TRACTATUS*

Beiträge der Österreichischen Ludwig Wittgenstein Gesellschaft

Contributions of the Austrian Ludwig Wittgenstein Society

Band XXIX
Volume XXIX

100 JAHRE *TRACTATUS*

Beiträge des 44. Internationalen Wittgenstein Symposiums
6. – 12. August 2023
Kirchberg am Wechsel

Band XXIX

Herausgeber

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in Zusammenarbeit mit Joseph Wang-Kathrein

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Produziert mit Unterstützung der Abteilung
Wissenschaft und Forschung (K3)
des Amtes der NÖ Landesregierung

WISSENSCHAFT • FORSCHUNG
NIEDERÖSTERREICH 

Kirchberg am Wechsel, 2023
Österreichische Ludwig Wittgenstein Gesellschaft

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Editors

Esther Heinrich-Ramharter
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Disclaimer: All contributions in this volume have been selected and peer-reviewed, but not copy-edited.
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Produced with the support of the
Department for Science and Research (K3)
of the Province of Lower Austria

WISSENSCHAFT · FORSCHUNG
NIEDERÖSTERREICH 

Kirchberg am Wechsel, 2023
Austrian Ludwig Wittgenstein Society

Verleger | Publisher

Österreichische Ludwig Wittgenstein Gesellschaft
Austrian Ludwig Wittgenstein Society

Markt 63, A-2880 Kirchberg am Wechsel
Österreich/Austria

www.alws.at

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ISSN 1022-3398 | ISBN 978-3-9505512-1-1

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Die Redaktion dankt allen Gutachtern für ihre äußerst hilfreichen Rezensionen.

The editors are grateful to all referees for their most helpful reviews.

Die Beiträge und das Abstracts-Heft wurden mit Unterstützung einer von Joseph Wang-Kathrein, Universität Innsbruck, erarbeiteten Datenbank erstellt. Kontakt: joseph.wang@uibk.ac.at

The *Contributions* and the booklet of *Abstracts* were compiled with the support of a database developed by Joseph Wang-Kathrein, University of Innsbruck. Contact: joseph.wang@uibk.ac.at

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Wittgenstein als Philosoph der dynamischen Sprache? Versuch einer Bergsonisierung

Pavel Arazim (Prague, Czech Republic)

Abstract

Henri Bergson mag auf den ersten Blick als eine ideale Zielscheibe der Kritik Wittgensteins erscheinen. Seine poetischmystische Ausdrucksweise scheint eher Nebel und künstliche Probleme zu erzeugen, als die Klarheit und übersichtliche Darstellung, welche Wittgenstein anstrebt. Jedoch beruht diese Einschätzung eher auf Vorurteilen, welche vor allem Russell über Bergson verbreitet hat und welche ihre unheilvolle Kraft bisher nicht eingebüßt haben. Tatsächlich aber strebt Bergson eine spezifische Art der Klarheit an. Indem er die Zeit und Bewegung philosophisch zu klären versucht, bemüht er sich genau wie Wittgenstein um die Auflösung der Fragen, welche von einer sprachlichen Verwirrung stammen. Und obwohl er mit seiner Betonung der dynamischen Aspekte der Realität für Wittgenstein etwas zu radikal oder thesenhaft sein mag, lässt sich auch diese Betonung sehr wohl mit einigen der zentralen Anliegen Wittgensteins vereinigen. Es ist also durchaus von Interesse, die zwei Autoren in Dialog treten zu lassen, weil dadurch beide besser verstanden werden können.

Obwohl Wittgenstein bereits mit vielen Philosophen, auch weit außerhalb der analytischen Tradition, verglichen wurde, scheint Bergson nicht sehr viel Aufmerksamkeit der Wittgenstein Forscher auf sich zu ziehen. Auf den ersten Blick mag das kein Wunder sein. Bergson scheint ja viel davon zu repräsentieren, wogegen Wittgenstein in der Philosophie leidenschaftlich kämpfte. Bergson wird als Philosoph der vagen Unklarheit gesehen, welche der von Wittgenstein beschworenen übersichtlichen Darstellung engengesetzt ist. Auch scheint Bergson oft auf der Suche nach verborgenen Tiefen zu sein, welche Wittgenstein wiederholt als unsinnig zu demaskieren trachtet. So redet Bergson gerne bereits im *Essai* aus dem Jahre 1889 (Bergson 1994, S. 97) vom *Le moi profond*, also vom tiefen Ich, welches er mit dem oberflächlichen, gesellschaftlich funktionierenden Ich kontrastiert. Auch will Bergson sehr oft durch genauere phänomenologische Beobachtung das erfassen, was uns üblicherweise entgeht. Man könnte weitere Gründe anhäufen, warum Wittgenstein und Bergson wenig mit einander zu tun haben (sollten). Trotzdem bemühe ich mich zu zeigen, dass die zwei Autoren in wichtigen Hinsichten viel gemeinsam haben. Und vor allem, dass es für die Lektüre und Interpretation von beiden durchaus lehrreich sein könnte, sie miteinander in Dialog treten zu lassen. Die Ansicht von Bergson als einem allzu mystischen Autor beruht letztendlich vor allem auf einer ablehnenden Interpretation von Bertrand Russell in (Russell 1912). Ein Vergleich mit

Wittgenstein öffnet hingegen den Pfad zu einer fruchtbareren Bewertung dieses nach wie vor faszinierenden französischen Philosophen.

1. Wie der Kerngedanke Bergsons in Wittgenstein sein Echo findet

In erster Annäherung kann man Bergson als einen Philosophen der Dynamik und Bewegung bezeichnen. Und das in doppeltem Sinne. Zum einen ist für ihn die Bewegung viel wichtiger und präsenter als man üblicherweise annimmt. Zum anderen wird das Phänomen der Bewegung normalerweise laut Bergson schlecht verstanden und deswegen muss ihm besondere Aufmerksamkeit gewidmet werden.

Fangen wir mit dem zweiten Punkt an. Bergsons Hauptthese besagt, dass man die Zeit nicht auf den Raum reduzieren kann. Bereits im Vorwort zum *Essai* spricht Bergson von der Notwendigkeit, die „Vermengung der Dauer mit der Ausdehnung“ zu überwinden, (Bergson 1994, S. 7). Die Zeit ist also ein selbstständiges Phänomen. Und die Bewegung lässt sich ohne Zeit nicht denken. Wenn wir nun die Bewegung unter der nach Bergson unechten Perspektive betrachten, welche in der Zeit nur eine weitere Dimension des Raumes sieht, so scheint sie uns auf ihre Phasen reduzierbar, wie er in seiner Analyse darlegt (vgl. Bergson 1994, S. 84-91). Wenn sich ein Gegenstand vom Punkte A zum Punkte B bewegt, so kommt man schnell zu dem Schluss, dass er sich durch den Punkt C, welcher genau in der Mitte der Strecke liegt, bewegen muss. Oder besser gesagt, es gibt einen Augenblick, wo der Gegenstand genau auf diesem Punkt steht. Jedoch ist eine solche Betrachtung, nach Bergson, wesentlich falsch. Vor allem wird dadurch die Bewegung weggedacht, indem sie auf ihre Phasen reduziert wird. Wenn man also die Zeit auf den Raum reduziert, so reduziert man auch die Bewegung auf die räumlichen Orte, welche sie durchläuft. Die unechte, reduktionistische Perspektive sieht dann in der Bewegung eigentlich nur die Folge der durchgegangenen Punkte, welche durch vier Zeit-Raum Koordinaten charakterisiert sind. Dabei vergisst man, dass wir es „mit keiner Sache, sondern mit einem *Fortschritt*“ (Bergson 1889, S. 84-5) zu tun haben.

Eine überraschend analoge Betrachtung kann man in der *Philosophischen Grammatik* finden (vgl. Wittgenstein 1969, S. 253). Dort redet Wittgenstein darüber, wie eine Tangente t_1 eines Kreises allmählich in eine andere

Tangente t_2 übergeht. Es ist nun natürlich zu erwarten, dass die Tangente irgendwann mit der genau in der Mitte zwischen t_1 und t_2 liegenden Tangente t zusammenfallen muss. Jedoch, bemerkt Wittgenstein, dieser Schluss entbehrt jeder Rechtfertigung. Es ist nur ein philosophisches Vorurteil, welches uns zu der Behauptung verleitet, dass irgendwann so ein Moment kommen muss. Vielmehr entstehen durch diese Vorurteile über Zeit und Bewegung laut Bergson Zenos Paradoxien. Hier würde Wittgenstein wohl zustimmen und in Bergson einen Verbündeten sehen, der gegen das Aufkommen artifizierter philosophischer Fragen spricht.

Und tatsächlich redet Bergson über die artifizierten philosophischen Probleme. Zwar behauptet Bergson nicht im Einklang mit Wittgenstein, dass alle philosophischen Fragen auf Missverständnissen beruhen, dennoch glaubt er, sehr im Geiste Wittgensteins und der logischen Positivisten, dass viele philosophischen Fragen falsch gestellt und demnach *questions mal posées* sind. So soll etwa das Problem der Möglichkeit der menschlichen Freiheit nach einer eingehenden philosophischen Klärung „selbst verschwinden“ (Bergson 1994, S.7). In Bezug auf viele prominenten philosophischen Fragen, wie die der Freiheit oder der Paradoxien Zenons, glaubt Bergson im Einklang mit Wittgenstein, dass eine gute Philosophie dann nicht nach den bestmöglichen Antworten suchen soll. Vielmehr zeigt solche Philosophie, warum solche Fragen eigentlich Scheinfragen sind und durch welche Verwirrung sie entstehen konnten. (Deleuze 1966) sieht die Aufdeckung der falsch gestellten Fragen als eines der Hauptanliegen Bergsons.

2. Bewegung fast omnipräsent

Bergson ist außerdem überzeugt, dass die Bewegung viel häufiger anzutreffen ist, als man üblicherweise glauben würde. Besonders prägnant drückt er das in einer Passage über den Fluss des Bewusstseins aus, in welcher er auch das Bleiben in demselben Zustande als eine verkappte Bewegung sieht (vgl. Bergson 1907, S. 7). Diese Sicht mag für Wittgenstein bereits allzu theoretisch und verallgemeinernd sein, aber trotzdem, wie ich noch zu zeigen versuche, könnte er ihr viel abgewinnen.

Es lässt sich eine Analyse Wittgensteins vorstellen, nach welcher Bergson letzten Endes die Bedeutung des Wortes *Bewegung* verdreht. Vielleicht ließe

sich dadurch ein analytisches Korrektiv zu Bergson erarbeiten, der seinem Werke mehr als Russells rasche Abwertung gerecht werden könnte. Das heißt, eine sprachkritische Bewertung im Sinne Wittgensteins könnte zeigen, dass Bergson das Wort *Bewegung* und andere mit ihm zusammenhängende allzu frei verwendet und dadurch seiner, beziehungsweise ihrer Bedeutung beraubt. Wenn wir das jetzt aber dahingestellt lassen, können wir doch auch in dieser Hinsicht wichtige Gemeinsamkeiten zwischen Wittgenstein und Bergson finden.

Bergson bietet im Allgemeinen eine Perspektive an, welche die Dinge eher als kontinuierlich und einander durchdringend sieht, denn als getrennt und präzise konstruiert. Obwohl er damit wieder für Wittgensteins Geschmack etwas zu weit gehen mag, sieht man eben solche Motive auch bei Wittgenstein. Diese lassen sich klarer sehen, wenn wir die Begriffe Spiel, Sprachspiel und Familienähnlichkeit mehr in Fokus rücken.

In einem Aufsatz über den Begriff des Spiels bei Wittgenstein (Lauer 2014, S. 230) wird das Spiel in den Zusammenhang mit einer Bewegung, und zwar mit einer unvorhersehbaren und schillernder Bewegung der Wellen gebracht. Diese Auffassung vom Spiel geht bereits auf Gadamer zurück (vgl. Gadamer 1990, S. 109). Wenn Wittgenstein viele philosophische Fragen als grammatische Konfusionen zu enttarnen versucht, so lässt er uns die besprochene Thematik aus unterschiedlichen Blickwinkeln betrachten, um uns von der Kraft irreführender Analogien zu befreien. Damit führt Wittgenstein seine Leser zu einem mehr spielerischen Blick auf die eigene Erfahrung. Dieser Blick ist, wenn wir der Auffassung Lauers folgen, hiermit auch dynamisch oder zumindest dynamischer als üblich. Das besprochene Phänomen, und hier zeigt sich eine Verwandtschaft mit Bergson, wird dann selbst als eher dynamisch und lebendig statt als stabil und starr gezeigt.

So bespricht Wittgenstein im *Blauen Buch* (vgl. Wittgenstein 1984, S.42) worin es besteht, dass ich einen Freund zwischen 16:00 und 16:30 zu Besuch erwarte. Wittgenstein lässt uns unterschiedliche Charakteristika erwägen, die manchmal als das Wichtigste, ja als das Wesen des Erwartens selbst, erscheinen, die aber in anderen Kontexten ganz an Bedeutung verlieren. Manchmal scheint das Erwarten darin zu bestehen, dass ich aufgeregt bin, vielleicht schaue ich auf die Uhr, vielleicht koche ich einen Kaffee. Alle diese

Merkmale können aber in anderen Kontexten für die Erwartung ganz irrelevant sein. Genauso ist es mit Wittgensteins Analyse des lauten Lesens, welcher wir im *Blauen Buch* (Wittgenstein 1984), sowie in den *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* (Wittgenstein 1984a) begegnen. Man versucht wieder einen wesentlichen Zug zu finden, jedoch bleiben nur die unterschiedlichen Familienähnlichkeiten zwischen den Fällen der Anwendung.

Es ist jetzt ein kleiner Schritt über Wittgenstein hinaus, wenn man die Bedeutung als eine Bewegung auffasst. Und zwar als eine Bewegung zwischen den Anwendungskontexten, welche eine Familie bilden. Und obwohl Wittgenstein Wert darauf legt, die Modellbeispiele oder Anwendungskontexte klar zu unterscheiden, kann man dennoch sagen, dass sie sich durchdringen, genau im Sinne Bergsons. Die Bedeutung scheint in der Bewegung zwischen ihnen zu liegen. Und diese Bewegung kann jeder nachvollziehen, der eine Sprache spricht. Obwohl sie theoretisch kaum zu beschreiben ist, beinhaltet sie für jeden, der eine Sprache beherrscht, recht wenig Erstaunliches.

3. Bergsons Verhältnis zur Sprache

Bergson scheint über die Sprache nicht sehr positiv zu denken. Sprache und Logik scheinen für ihn die größte Last der Schuld dafür zu tragen, dass wir die Zeit und Bewegung übersehen, bzw. falsch verstehen. Überhaupt redet er von Logik und Sprache meistens mit dieser negativen Betonung, zum Beispiel, wenn er zeigt, wie eine logische Folgerung zusammen mit einer „mechanistischen Auffassung der Freiheit“ zum Determinismus führt (Bergson 1994, S. 133). Damit scheint er sehr auf der Spur derer zu sein, über die Wittgenstein kritisch festhält, dass sie etwas ungemeinen Subtiles zu fangen versuchen, wofür unsere Sprache allzu grob ist, wie in der Bemerkung 122 der *Philosophischen Untersuchungen*, (Wittgenstein 1984a). Dennoch ist auch Wittgenstein eine gewisse Art von Sprachkritik nicht nur nicht fremd, sondern er befürwortet sie, indem er die Philosophie vor allem als Sprachkritik ansieht. Besonders prägnant drückt er diese Auffassung aus, wenn er in der Bemerkung 109 der *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* (Wittgenstein 1984a) die Philosophie als einen „Kampf gegen die Verhexung unseres Verstandes durch die Mittel unserer Sprache“ bezeichnet.

Obwohl Wittgenstein das Dynamische auf Kosten des Stablen nicht so stark bevorzugt wie Bergson, muss man ihn dennoch als fast bergsonischer als Bergson selbst bezeichnen, denn er sieht das Dynamische eben auch in der Sprache, welche Bergson eher stellvertretend für das Stabile, ja Starre sieht. In diesem Sinne öffnet der Vergleich zwischen den beiden Autoren die Möglichkeit, Bergsons Gedanken sogar auf das Gebiet anzuwenden, welches er selbst für ihnen entgegengesetzt betrachtete.

4. Trotzdem eine Gemeinsamkeit - das Zeigen

Bergson behauptet, dass er im Grunde etwas sehr Einfaches und eigentlich schon immer Bekanntes zeigen will, wenn er über die Zeit und Bewegung spricht. Er schlägt in diesem Sinne keine neue und feinere Sprache vor, wie es die Logik spätestens seit Russels Analyse der *definite description* versucht. Was er zeigen will, ist für ihn der Sprache unzugänglich.

Man kann darin einen Mystizismus Bergsons erblicken, welcher sehr nahe den abschließenden Passagen von des *Tractatus* steht, etwa der Passage 6.522 (Wittgenstein 1984a). Auch über Bergson ließe sich vielleicht sagen, dass der wichtigere Teil seiner Werke der ungeschriebene ist. Mystizismus mag da aber eine zu karikierende Betitelung sein. Bergson behauptet nämlich, dass er seine Leser nur daran erinnern will, was sie bereits sehr gut aus dem normalen Leben kennen. Eigentlich sei es nur ein voreingenommenes Philosophieren, welches uns das alles vergessen macht.

Der Zug der Wohlbekanntheit, ja Alltäglichkeit, steht im Gegensatz zu dem angeblichen nebligen Mystizismus. Somit steht Bergson auch dem späteren Wittgenstein viel näher, als man vermuten könnte. Und vielleicht zeigt diese Interpretation des angeblichen Mystizismus bei Bergson, wie man auch das im *Tractatus* beschworene Mystische verstehen kann. Nämlich viel harmloser als es klingen mag und somit auch gar nicht so fremd der späteren Philosophie Wittgensteins.

Die berühmte Devise Wittgensteins „denk nicht, sondern schau!“ aus der Bemerkung 66 der *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* (Wittgenstein 1984a) kann man sehr wohl auch als für Bergson charakteristisch betrachten. Etwa bei den beiden gemeinsamen Aufmunterungen zur Betrachtung dessen, welche

psychischen Phänomene ein gewisses Ereignis begleiten, ist es für Bergson wie für Wittgenstein zentral, sich vor den Tendenzen zu hüten, etwas hineinzunehmen, was uns einseitige Analogien voraussetzen verleiten. So geht es bei Wittgenstein um angebliche bestimmte Gefühle, die das echte Lesen, echte Erwarten oder echte Verstehen eines Wortes begleiten sollten. Im typischen Fall finden wir da gar nichts, oder nur vage zusammenhängende Familienähnlichkeiten zwischen unterschiedlichen Erlebnissen.

Bergson bezweifelt das Verständnis von Geisteszuständen als spezifischen Entitäten, die man als Gedanken, Gefühlen und dergleichen zu katalogisieren geneigt ist. Seine Gründe dafür sind vielleicht nicht direkt im Sinne Wittgensteins. Nach Bergson sind die Geisteszustände eher in der Zeit als im Raum zuhause und dementsprechend ist ihre Multiplizität von einem anderen Charakter, indem sie nicht klar von einander zu unterscheiden sind, sondern einander durchdringen, was den räumlichen Gegenständen unmöglich ist. Bergson positioniert sich unter anderem mit dieser ablehnend-rhetorischen Frage: „Und dennoch zählt man Gefühle, Empfindungen und Vorstellungen, lauter Dinge, die einander durchdringen und die, jedes seinerseits, die ganze Seele einnehmen?“ (Bergson 1994, S.70) In diesem Sinne kann er, ganz wie Wittgenstein, viele philosophische Fragen, die mit psychischen Entitäten verbunden sind, als Scheinfragen abtun.

5. Ideale der Exaktheit

Nicht nur Bergson, sondern nicht selten auch Wittgenstein (vgl. Materna 2015) wird gerne vorgeworfen, sie seien allzu unklar und nebelig. Dabei gehört zum Kern ihrer Philosophie, dass sie beide das übliche Ideal der Exaktheit hinterfragen. Wittgenstein analysiert wiederholt, wie es zur Entstehung von philosophischen Fragen kommt, zum Beispiel, ob der Name *Nothung* eine Bedeutung hat, obwohl das benannte Schwert längst zertrümmert ist, wie es bereits im *Braunen Buch* auf S. 158 thematisiert wird (Wittgenstein 1984). Dort wirft Wittgenstein solcher Philosophie unter anderem einen falschen Begriff der philosophischen oder logischen Analyse, sowie eine falsche Auffassung der Exaktheit, die auf der Unkenntnis des Begriffs der Familie beruht, vor. Hier meint Wittgenstein wohl vor allem die Familienähnlichkeit.

Genauso findet man etwa in der Bemerkung 71 in den *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* (Wittgenstein 1984a) die Kritik des Ideals der Exaktheit, etwa wenn unterstellt wird, dass der Befehl „Halte dich ungefähr hier auf!“ nicht genau genug ist. Wittgenstein scheint viel mehr zu meinen, als normalerweise in der analytischen Tradition gerne zugegeben wird. Bereits seit Russell, wohl sogar seit Frege, ist klar, dass die Alltagssprache und Praxis nicht den Forderungen der logischen Exaktheit genügt. Sie glauben aber, dass es die einzige Exaktheit ist, die es gibt. Hinsichtlich der alltäglichen Sprache meinen sie dann etwas herablassend, dass sie doch funktionieren könne, auch wenn sie so chaotisch sei. Wittgenstein scheint aber sagen zu wollen, dass hier die Anwendung der Ideale der logischen Exaktheit nicht unrichtig, sondern unsinnig ist. Wenn man über genügende oder ungenügende Klarheit eines Befehls im Alltagsleben überhaupt sprechen soll, dann geht es um eine ganz andere Exaktheit. Und das Befehl „Halte dich ungefähr hier auf!“ kann im je relevanten Sinne ganz exakt sein. Natürlich kann er in vielen anderen inexakt sein, aber nicht zwangsläufig deswegen, weil keine genauen geometrischen Koordinaten des Ortes, wo man zu stehen hat, angegeben wurden.

Das bringt uns zu Wittgensteins These, dass der Sichtraum nicht der geometrische, etwa euklidische Raum ist, die er in den *Philosophischen Bemerkungen* (Wittgenstein 1964) und in der *Philosophischen Grammatik* (Wittgenstein 1969) vertritt. Bergsons Ablehnung der Reduzierung der Zeit auf den Raum kann dann sehr ähnlich interpretiert werden, nämlich als die Verteidigung der Autonomie des Sprachspiels, welches sich auf die Zeit in der Form beruft, welche Bergson als *durée* bezeichnete. Obwohl Bergson der Sprache nicht so viel Aufmerksamkeit gewidmet hat wie Wittgenstein, gab es bereits Versuche ihn dahingehend zu interpretieren (vgl. Pariente 1969). In dieser Interpretation wollte Bergson den Diskurs über die gelebte Zeit ebenfalls als einem anderen Ideal der Exaktheit verpflichtet verstanden wissen. Insofern könnte er seine Aussagen als in relevantem Sinne sehr präzise und genau ansehen. Und gar nicht nebelig. Hier zeigen sich die zwei Philosophen wieder als Verbündete. Und schon der Begriff der Familienähnlichkeit, um welchen sich Wittgensteins Analysen so wesentlich drehen, enthält viel von dem dynamischen Element, welches Bergson so wichtig war.

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Acknowledgement

Diese Arbeit wurde von dem Grant der The Czech Science Foundation (GAČR), Nummer 23-07119S mit dem Namen *Meaning as an object - principles of semantic theories* unterstützt. Dieses Projekt wird von Jaroslav Peregrin, meinem Kollegen am Institut der Philosophie der Tschechischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (FLÚ AV ČR), geleitet.

Wittgenstein's Critique of Darwin's Theory in the *Tractatus* and the Considerable Dissonance in Interpretations within Wittgensteinian Scholarship

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Abstract

Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859) developed a concept of selection that attempted to explain how the genetic characteristics of species can change over time to produce new species. Wittgenstein refers to Darwin's theory of evolution in only one sentence of the *Tractatus* without giving the reader a sufficient explanation for his claim that "Darwin's theory has no more to do with philosophy than any other hypothesis of the natural sciences." (TLP 4.1122) Wittgenstein's statement in the *Tractatus* is actually a by-product of his discussion of the question of what the nature of philosophy is. Wittgenstein's Tractarian remark mentioning Darwin aims at the fact that Darwin discovered a fruitful new aspect and not a true, scientific theory. These are not mere assertions; Darwin confirms this himself in three letters quoted here. In the end, Wittgenstein only reproduced in the *Tractatus* what Darwin himself had already freely admitted.

1. Wittgenstein's Remark Mentioning Darwin in the *Tractatus*

Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859) famously developed a concept of selection that attempted to explain how the genetic characteristics of species can change over time to produce new species. Wittgenstein refers to Darwin's theory of evolution in only one sentence of the *Tractatus* without giving the reader a sufficient explanation for his claim that "Darwin's theory has no more to do with philosophy than any other hypothesis of the natural sciences." (TLP 4.1122)

In his concept of evolution, Darwin assumed that the genetic characteristics of a species can change over time and lead to speciation, that new species consequently evolve from existing species and ultimately form new species, and that all species have a common ancestor. In this respect, Darwin used natural selection to pursue an explanatory hypothesis for the adaptations of organisms. For this, he wanted to develop observational experiments to test the validity of his hypothesis.

In Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, the apodictic sentence comes at the end of a sequence of sentences dealing with the distinction between science and philosophy, and is found towards the end of the treatise, as evidenced by the order of the tract's sentence numbers. Wittgenstein's statement was already

controversial during his lifetime. The discussion of Darwinism, however, was not a Wittgenstein-specific feature, but was in the air during this period, especially at Cambridge, where Wittgenstein studied. Already George Edward Moore believed he had to defend Wittgenstein's infamous statement about Darwin's theory as follows:

[E]veryone would agree with Wittgenstein that Darwin's Theory of the Origin of Species, including man, has nothing more to do with philosophy than any other hypothesis of Natural Science: and that whatever it may have to do with it, it's not the business of philosophy to discuss whether it's true or not. (Moore 1966, 10).

Even if Moore were to follow in part, that it is not the business of philosophy to figure out if Darwin's theory is true or not, this would not explain why Wittgenstein generalizes his statement to all of philosophy. What is clear is that Wittgenstein's interest was not in the influence that scientific discoveries might have on philosophy. He was more concerned with drawing a clear distinction between the work of a scientist and the work of a philosopher. For Wittgenstein, however, it was clear that the task of philosophy is not to question the hypotheses of the natural sciences.

It is actually astonishing that in the Wittgenstein research it has not even been established until today how many partially or completely contradictory interpretations of the movement TLP 4.1122 there are in the meantime

2. A Summary of the Different Positions of Wittgenstein's Remark in the *Tractatus*

J. J. C. Smart (1966) in a commemorative publication for Herbert Feigl called "Philosophy and Scientific Plausibility" and Ernest Gellner in his article "The Ascent of Life" (1974) consider that science and especially Darwin's theory of evolution are important for philosophy. While Smart argues that it would be important to develop new theories even if it is not certain that they would be advantageous over the prevailing idea, Gellner points out that philosophy would create philosophies based on concepts.

For Smart, any scientific theory is nothing more than an illustration of scientific plausibility, so he does not comment as to the character of Darwin's

writing, whether it is descriptive method or theory. To this extent, he is not bothered by metaphysical speculations that may anticipate the science of the future. Gellner takes a similar line here by arguing that, according to Russell, a philosophy should be based precisely on a broad foundation of knowledge, which need not necessarily be philosophical. Therefore, Darwin's approach would have been correct to present the features of the concept of evolution in a non-formal way, from which philosophy would also benefit, since only this would enable it to examine philosophical questions about evolution on the basis of these explanations.

P. M. S. Hacker (1986) in his book *Insight and Illusion* and John Preston (2017) in his article „Wittgenstein, Hertz, and Boltzmann“ take a special role insofar as they always identify Wittgenstein's utterance as a critique in reaction to another position(s). For Hacker, Wittgenstein's utterance is a critique of Russell's views. This criticism, he argues, arises from Wittgenstein's statements about the nature of philosophy, which in the *Tractatus* is no longer based on the description of logical form, since this cannot be accomplished, but only exclusively on the distinction of philosophy from the natural sciences. While Russell adheres to logical atomism, Wittgenstein rejects it, since in his view it leads to a wrong understanding of the essence of philosophy. For Wittgenstein, philosophy cannot be expressed in philosophical propositions and is therefore no longer the proposition or the logical conclusion, but the activity as such.

For Preston, on the other hand, Wittgenstein's utterance is rather a criticism of Boltzmann and Mach, since both were evolutionary epistemologists, while Wittgenstein propagated the philosophical irrelevance of natural science in the *Tractatus*. Preston is convinced that if philosophy is the description of the logical forms of our thoughts and so of all possible facts (which, as we know, it cannot do) and logic only represents the results of natural science, then Wittgenstein's conception is consistent with Boltzmann's philosophy of science. This would mean that the natural sciences are a genuinely scientific object of investigation, whereas philosophy can never be. From this it could be deduced according to Preston that there are only supposed philosophical problems or puzzles that are unsolvable for science, but no real ones. This would also have been Boltzmann's attitude toward traditional philosophical questions, which is why he emphasized the importance of overviews and clear scientific representations. This view would later have been adopted by Wittgenstein.

Newton Garver (1994) in his book *This Complicated Form of Life* takes an entirely different position, accusing Wittgenstein of discrediting epistemology. Evolution, he argues, implies for philosophy that since philosophy and science are simply evolutionary aspects of an evolved species, they should simply be described in their biological setting. This connection between evolution and philosophy, he argued, came about only after the publication of Darwin's work. However, Wittgenstein rejected this particular connection between philosophy and science as superficial and insisted that philosophy and science were fundamentally different and that philosophy consisted only of activities to clarify propositions. Since there can be no dichotomy between propositions and activities, Garver argues, science for Wittgenstein includes activity just as philosophy does. A distinction is therefore not possible.

For Christopher Hookway in his contribution "Wittgenstein and Naturalism" (2017), Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* denies that philosophical knowledge is possible. Rather, Wittgenstein would have advocated epistemic naturalism, according to which all knowledge is always scientific in nature. Since the totality of true propositions constitute the natural sciences, inductive inferences would have to be ruled out. For Wittgenstein it is decisive that philosophy is an activity that aims at the logical clarification of thoughts, so that no metaphysical statements are made. This, he argues, therefore precludes philosophical theory. Consequently, philosophy can neither provide explanations nor justify theories. It can only use the sentences which are also used by those who establish scientific theories in the natural sciences.

Last but not least, Marco Brusotti in his book on *Wittgenstein, Frazer and the "ethnological approach"* (2014) also takes on Wittgenstein's interpretation of Darwin's theory of evolution. While Darwin first saw his natural selection as a kind of empirical hypothesis or an object of causal explanation, Wittgenstein saw his work more as a kind of synopsis of possibilities. According to Brusotti, Wittgenstein stated that Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* was equivalent to a parable that attempts to circumscribe ordered relations. This synopsis in terms of descriptions of possibilities, he said, was also a discovery, but it did not reveal the actual facts, only hypothetically describing one possibility among many of how things might be. The concept of evolution thus guides our

research focus, but it does not represent a scientific theory. Rather, it is a descriptive method or clear representation that many readers intuitively agree with.

Hookway's – even if he fails to recognize the descriptive method or clear presentation that many readers intuitively agree with – and Brusotti's reading are thus, in this polyphony presented here, the only two that I understand to be in agreement with the point Ludwig Wittgenstein wanted to make with his statement in the *Tractatus* about Darwin's theory of evolution.

3. What Was the Point of Wittgenstein's Statement in *Tractatus* about Darwin's Theory of Evolution?

Wittgenstein's statement in the *Tractatus* about Darwin is actually a by-product of his discussion of the question of what the nature of philosophy is. This can already be seen in the fact that the name Darwin is mentioned only once in the whole *Tractatus*. On the other hand, the clarification of the nature of philosophy is in the foreground when, for example, TLP 4.111 states: "Philosophy is not one of the natural sciences."

In the late philosophy, Wittgenstein's position on Darwin's theory of evolution becomes much clearer when he manifests, for example, in *Culture and Value*: "The real achievement of a Copernicus or a Darwin was not the discovery of a true theory but of a fertile new point of view." (CV 1998, 26). Undoubtedly, by equating Copernicus and Darwin, Wittgenstein aims at the representation of known facts and not at their new discovery.

For Copernicus, as is well known, in his work *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium*, which established the heliocentric understanding of the universe, did not distinguish himself by new discoveries, but rather by a new arrangement of old known facts. These were so skillfully arranged that they brought a new picture on the old known planetary system. Although earlier philosophers had also considered heliocentric theories, it was Copernicus who first developed a comprehensive heliocentric account that rivaled the geocentric system of the Ptolemies in its scope and predictive ability.

This kind of rearrangement of known facts, i.e. the new representation of them, explains the beginning feeling in the viewer that a new dynamic has been triggered, which corresponds to a new development. Wittgenstein was well aware of this, because he states "that is why one often thinks one has discovered the real state of affairs, if one has only found a new possibility, how it could have behaved. (Darwin's theory.)" (BNE: MS 116: 220; transl by the author).

Here at the latest it should be clear why Wittgenstein draws a parallel between Copernicus and Darwin, when he makes a similar claim about the theory of evolution: "[Y]ou might say what is satisfactory in Darwin is not such 'hypothesis', but his 'putting the facts in a system' – helping us to make a 'synopsis' of them." (MWL 1993: 107).

For Darwin as well as for Copernicus it is therefore true that they created a new conceptual framework, which let well-known facts appear in a new light and allowed them speculative new insights, which, however, they were not able to prove scientifically. Strictly speaking, they did not create theories, but rather impactful working hypotheses that fundamentally transformed their fields. This was the fruitful thing about their representations. They opened up a new perspective on old things.

Darwin, with his description of the concept of evolution, is still considered the inventor of the theory of evolution, and this despite the fact that his own work, while attempting to provide some evidence, does not sufficiently prove his thesis either empirically or causally, and thus, strictly speaking, does not qualify as a theory. Darwin, by the way, never claimed this for himself.

4. Conclusion

Wittgenstein's Tractarian remark mentioning Darwin aims at the fact that Darwin discovered a fruitful new aspect and not a true, scientific theory. This is exactly what Darwin himself was aware of and he did not deny. In a letter to Asa Gray of June 18, 1857, he himself states that his "theory of evolution" was rather "speculation" than true science: "It is extremely kind of you to say that

my letters have not bored you very much, & it is almost incredible to me, for I am quite conscious that my speculations run quite beyond the bounds of true science." (Darwin 1857a).

A little later, in the same year to the same correspondent, Asa Gray, he concedes even more clearly on November 29, 1857, that his work was primarily hypothetical and could hardly be called inductive, which would be a characteristic of a scientific theory: "What you hint at generally is very very true, that my work will be grievously hypothetical & large parts by no means worthy of being called inductive; my commonest error being probably induction from too few facts." (Darwin 1857b).

Consequently, there is no doubt that Wittgenstein's statement "Darwin's theory has no more to do with philosophy than any other hypothesis in natural science" (TLP 4.1122) is even in perfect agreement with Darwin's own view of his "theory of evolution". He did not see even in his work the requirements for a scientific theory fulfilled. Nevertheless, he held on to this view, because it was plausible for him and from his point of view was able to explain what could not be explained otherwise. It was not by chance that he wanted to develop observational experiments even after the completion of the writing in order to check the validity of his hypothesis.

How unvarnishedly and soberly he was aware of these deficiencies of his skillful, if scientifically not sufficiently well-founded, description of the evolution he assumed, a letter of Darwin to Cuthbert Collingwood of March 14, 1861, makes clear: "But I believe in Nat. Selection, not because, I can prove in any single case that it has changed one species into another, but because it groups & explains well (as it seems to me) a host of facts in classification, embryology, morphology, rudimentary organs, geological succession & Distribution." (Darwin 1861).

In the end, Wittgenstein only restated and criticized in the *Tractatus* what Darwin himself had already freely admitted, namely that the Darwins' theory is not a theory but a hypothesis, however one that is "putting the facts in a system" in order to make a synopsis of them. It is a little irritating when

philosophers, a good 100 years after Darwin's admissions in his letters, begin and continue to this day to want to defend foundations that Darwin self-critically believed were not there.

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Acknowledgement

I thank Dr. Jareño Alarcón (Murcia), Dr. Jens Kertscher (Darmstadt) and Dr. Peter Keicher (Karlsruhe) for their comments.

On the Grammar of Mathematical Propositions

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Abstract

In this paper, I shall heed Wittgenstein's advice in RFM VII-16, that "mathematical propositions stand in need of [...] a clarification of their grammar." That mathematical propositions have primarily the function to formulate rules is, I submit, the most important idea that Wittgenstein introduced in reflecting on mathematics. It is appropriate to call it revolutionary. Yet, although it is a breakthrough, it is a difficult proposal to work with; the complications one encounters when trying to spell it out make me suspect that Wittgenstein himself may not have felt that he fully tamed it.

In this paper, I shall heed Wittgenstein's advice, that "mathematical propositions stand in need of (...) a clarification of their grammar." (RFM 1978: VII-16) Since this clarification is supposed to avert misunderstandings and confusions, let me first ask: what do grammatical misunderstandings look like when it comes to mathematics? They take a variety of forms, but the most important one arises from the kind of assimilation indicated in RFM 1978: I, Appendix III-4. I shall come back to this key-remark often and hence I shall assign it a label (S):

S: We are used to saying "2 times 2 is 4", and the verb "is" makes this into a proposition [Satz], and apparently establishes a close kinship with everything that we call a 'proposition' [Satz]. Whereas it is a matter only of a very superficial relationship.

It is obvious that '2 times 2 is 4', a well-formed declarative sentence, can be used to express a proposition. What is the worry, then? The concern, I suggest, is that the verb 'is' here may induce us to believe that when we say this, we make an *assertion*; also, that we make a *description*. Hence, we are warned that the "kinship" of '2 times 2 is 4' and the sentences that are typically used to express *these types* of propositions is only "superficial". As we shall see soon, what he says here is preparation for a deeper point, that a sentence like '2 times 2 is 4' – or, more precisely: the proposition expressed by it – has, in fact, *another* use.

To elaborate: I take it that in S Wittgenstein *accepts* that '2 times 2 is 4' *can* be used to make a truth-apt assertion. (In a commentary on this remark, Sunday Greve and Kienzler (2016) seem to disagree with this point.) However, his

intention is to signal that the proposition expressed by this sentence can have *a different function, or use*. This use – which is not mentioned in S, but in many other remarks, some of which will be discussed below – is a *normative* one: *to formulate a rule*, which, most significantly, *lacks a truth-value*. Moreover, he will insist that it is the fulfillment of this prescriptive-regulative function that is not “superficial”, and which turns this proposition into a proper *mathematical* one. In saying this, it is extremely important to stress that for him, the appearance of some mathematical symbols in a sentence does not automatically turn it (and the proposition it expresses) into a mathematical one. He does *not* regard the mere appearance of a sentence – which may include numerals or names of operations (e.g., ‘+’, ‘×’) – as an indication that the sentence expresses a mathematical proposition (see, e.g., LFM 1976: 33: “Some propositions belong to mathematics but other propositions containing mathematical symbols are not mathematical propositions.”). What matters is the use we make of the sentence, and, implicitly, of the proposition expressed by it; that is, the function we assign to it. One can confidently say that for Wittgenstein a necessary condition for a proposition to be called ‘mathematical’ is to be assigned a normative function.

Now, when it comes to what Wittgenstein takes to be the “superficial” function of propositions like ‘ 2×2 is 4’ and ‘7 is prime’ – namely, to make truth-apt assertions – there is one additional point to note: in virtue of the assertoric appearance of ‘two times two is four’, it is tempting to think of this proposition in *representational-descriptive* terms as well. This is due, again, to its similarity with other descriptive propositions, expressed by sentences having a parallel grammatical structure, such as ‘An oxygen atom bonded to another oxygen atom make up an O_2 molecule’. On this model, as a descriptive proposition, ‘two times two is four’ would also represent a composite fact: one object, denoted by the numeral ‘four’, is represented as somehow composed of, or arising from combining, two other objects, denoted by the numeral ‘two’.

So, the warning of S is that our fixation on the “close kinship” between ‘2 times 2 is 4’ and an assertoric-descriptive proposition also fixates us on only one of its roles (to describe, to make truth-apt assertions), and the effect of this fixation is that we overlook its other (normative) role. What is worse, this fixation almost immediately brings in the platonist imagery; hence

Wittgenstein will also warn against taking such propositions to have the descriptive-representational role that the platonists insist upon. However, it would be wrong to think that we are necessarily led to platonism, since other traditional *-isms* are available. For instance, we could very well be led toward conventionalism instead, provided that we drop our commitment to representationalism-descriptivism (while continuing to regard the main function of the proposition as being the assertoric one). Yet platonism is the natural choice here, as it were, as it seems very natural to look at the proposition ‘2 times 2 is 4’ as corresponding to a compositional super-fact (which, once obtained, makes this descriptive proposition true).

Sentences like the one above can also be accounted for along conventionalist lines. To see how, recall first that for a conventionalist the declarative sentence ‘2 times 2 is 4’ also has a *unique* function, to make a truth-apt assertion; basically, to *be* a true statement – and note that this assumption, about this function, is something that *both* conventionalism and platonism share, despite the fact that they are otherwise very different doctrines. Recall also that the conventionalists, unlike the platonists, do not explain the necessity of the proposition $2 \times 2 = 4$ in representational-descriptive terms, i.e., as getting its meaning from a correspondence with a super-fact. They do not think of this proposition in compositional terms either; for them, this proposition does not represent (describe) some kind of composition of two objects. And, left without this corresponding ontological ‘support’ offered by the super-reality of super-facts and super-objects, the conventionalists explain this proposition’s status as a necessary truth in a different way. As we also saw, they say, in essence, that what gives it this special standing is *us*. Or, more explicitly, that what makes it a necessary truth is *a convention*. That is, a convention we made to adopt certain definitions, or an *agreement* to treat it as irrefutable, as immune to revision.

So, with both doctrines on the table, it looks like we have to choose between these two alternative *explanations*. First, the platonist one is that $2 \times 2 = 4$ is necessarily true *because* it correctly describes a corresponding super-reality. Second, the conventionalist explains that $2 \times 2 = 4$ is necessarily true *because* what it asserts follows from a convention we have made; namely, to define its constituent terms in a certain way, and thus to treat this proposition as irrefutable. And, if these two doctrines (platonism and conventionalism) still

do not content us, is it not obvious that we should concoct yet other ('better') doctrines?

This dilemma marks a crucial moment in our discussion. We should begin to suspect that we face a false dilemma. That is, that such a choice is illusory; that maybe *neither* of these explanatory doctrines is in fact needed.

As we recall, the first step in the right direction is to accept that propositions like '2 times 2 is 4' need "a clarification of their grammar". That is, we should check what their functions are since, perhaps, some kind of confusion (i.e., assimilation) of functions takes place. Wittgenstein voices this suspicion as follows:

[A] proposition [Satz] that is supposed to be impossible to imagine as other than true has a different *function* from one for which this does not hold.
(RFM 1978: IV-4)

This is the moment of lucidity when one asks the key-question that launches the grammatical investigation: what are the functions of the proposition expressed by, e.g., the sentence '2 times 2 is 4'? The result of this investigation is, as we recall, a *perspicuous presentation* of its functions (uses, roles). To find them, one has to carefully "*look and see*" (PI 2009: §66), to observe the use of such propositions. (One obviously cannot guess this, as PI 2009: §340 notes.)

So, if one looks, what does one see? First of all, the obvious linguistic fact mentioned above, that we *often* and *customarily* formulate rules, norms and prescriptions by using propositions expressed by declarative sentences – and not only by normative-imperative ones. Take for instance these two propositions:

A match is played by two teams, each with a maximum of eleven players.

There are two different ways of moving the king: by moving to an adjoining square, and by castling.

Both these propositions formulate *rules* – of the games of football and chess, respectively. (These are exact, official formulations, found here <https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/lawsandrules/laws/football-11-11/law-3---the-players> and here <https://handbook.fide.com/chapter/E012018>.)

Accessed 4 Sept. 2022. Importantly, when giving the rules, the chess and the football official handbooks systematically *mix* the declarative and the normative formulations.) Wittgenstein’s suggestion is that the same may be the case for other propositions (again, expressed as declarative sentences); here, the ones belonging to mathematics, e.g., ‘2 times 2 is 4’ or ‘7 is prime’. Despite their descriptive form, they are used in a normative-prescriptive capacity. (And yet note that this similarity does not mean that mathematics is ‘just a game’.) To formulate rules by such descriptive propositions, and thus to *disguise* rules in the form of descriptive propositions and assertions, is one of the means by which language “bewitch[es] our understanding” (PI 2009: §109). We are reminded here of something that Wittgenstein calls a ‘grammatical’ phenomenon: that formally descriptive propositions, looking like assertions, *also* serve to formulate rules and prescriptions.

Let us take stock. The grammatical survey of mathematical propositions yields the following list of their possible roles. Thus, ‘ 2×2 is 4’ can express a proposition used

- (i) to make an assertion, a truth-apt statement
- (ii) to represent, describe (truly or falsely) some ‘fact’

and also can

- (iii) formulate a non-truth-apt *rule*.

On these three options, Wittgenstein takes the following stances. First and foremost, he warns against conflating functions (i), (ii) and (iii). Second, he regards function (i) as “superficial”. Third, he urges that (iii) is the primary function of such a sentence. Moreover, he rejects (ii). (This is essentially the rejection of platonism, but note that I have not explicated what he thinks is wrong with it. Doing this is unfortunately impossible in this paper.)

At this point it is crucial to observe that by failing to be clear about these different functions, *both* the platonists and the conventionalists share the assumption that the *primary* and *unique* function of a mathematical proposition is the assertoric function (i). (The platonist would also accept the descriptive function (ii) as well, while the conventionalist would not.) Yet, as we just saw, Wittgenstein’s suggestion is that such a proposition has yet

another function; namely (iii) above, to formulate a *rule*, or a *norm*. (Note also that suggesting this additional normative function is not to discover a *novel* fact about language, as we saw; recall the second sentence from PI 1953: II, xiv. Obviously, it is not a *mathematical* discovery either.)

Curiously, this normative function of the mathematical propositions is, as far as I can tell, not mentioned in PI *at all* – and I would not venture any exegetical hypothesis as to why. But there are plenty of places in RFM and LFM where this normativism is put forward explicitly. Let me list six such instances, although many more are available:

Mathematics forms a network of norms. (RFM 1978: VII-67)

What I am saying comes to this, that mathematics is normative. (RFM 1978: V-40; the next sentence in this remark is “But ‘norm’ does not mean the same thing as ‘ideal’.” This is, again, an anti-platonist point.)

One can say of the sentences [Sätzen] of mathematics that they are *normative* sentences. And this characterizes their use. (IDP 2016-: Ms 123, 49v)

I proceed from certain rules, and I get a new rule: that $136 \times 51 = 6936$. (LFM 1976: 101)

And if the child now shews how 3 and 2 make 5, then he shews a procedure that can be regarded as a ground for the rule ‘ $2 + 3 = 5$ ’ (RFM 1978: VII-9)

Finally, and suggestively:

The mathematical proposition says to me: Proceed like this! (RFM 1978: VII-72)

The idea that mathematics may not be in the business of making statements can be traced back to Weyl (1921 [1998]) and Ramsey (1929 [1990]), two thinkers whom Wittgenstein engaged with – or, according to Misak (2016), even earlier, to C. S. Peirce. Going into the details of their conceptions, and of how they relate to each other, would take us too far afield, especially since for Wittgenstein we have to consider *two* philosophers, the middle Wittgenstein, and the later one. Comprehensive discussions of these matters can be found in

Marion (1995; 2003), Hacker (1996), Rumfit (2014), Misak (2016) and Methven (2020).

That mathematical propositions have primarily the function to formulate rules is, I submit, the most important idea that Wittgenstein introduced in reflecting on mathematics. It is appropriate to call it revolutionary. Yet, although it is a breakthrough, it is a difficult proposal to work with; the complications one encounters when trying to spell it out make me suspect that Wittgenstein himself may not have felt that he *fully* tamed it. But sorting out these difficulties is definitely worth trying, since it is a pivotal insight indeed: virtually everything else in his thinking – his take on necessity and the traditional philosophies of mathematics, his conception of proof (including Cantor’s proof), and so on – revolves around it.

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Acknowledgement

I thank Kevin Cahill, Jeffrey Schatz and Alois Pichler for insightful comments on previous versions of this paper, as well as an anonymous referee. I am the only one responsible for the final version.

On the Nature of 'Names' in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*

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Abstract

In this paper I deal with the question of 'names' in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (henceforth TLP). This is a complex and widely debated question, but I hope to be able to shed light on it thanks to a comparison with a particular method that it is possible to see at work in Boltzmann's writing on thermodynamics; it is an analogy which is particularly evident in the proposition 6.341 where Wittgenstein describes the role of science in bringing "the description of the universe to a unified form" (TLP: 6.341). I hope that this comparison will help to clarify the difference between Wittgenstein's way of dealing with the question and any attempt to build up a philosophical theory of proper names from either a physicalistic or a phenomenological point of view. This attempt may be found in Russell's writings, but it is typical of neo-positivism as well; hence, I'll try to show that Wittgenstein's approach to the question radically differs from these ones.

1. The Relationship between Names and Objects

Alan Watt once affirmed that Western philosophy has always paid more attention to nouns-objects, whereas Eastern thought has conceived from its origins the whole reality as a network of interrelated entities; so he described the grammatical nature of the distinction between objects and events by means of an example:

"What happens to my fist [noun-object] when I open my hand?" The object miraculously vanishes because an action was disguised by a part of speech usually assigned to a thing! (Watt 1957: 25)

In tractarian terms, this is the description of the distinction between an event or a 'state of affairs' (here is the action of clenching a fist), corresponding to a proposition ("I'm clenching my fist") and the object (that is a fist) corresponding to the noun ("fist"). Wittgenstein, indeed, writes:

Propositions represent the existence and non-existence of states of affairs" (TLP 4.1)

The name means the object. The object is its meaning. (TLP 3.203)

The idea of a linguistic origin of philosophical problems is crucial in Russell's analysis of language as well. Indeed Russell's aim is to reduce metaphysics to its linguistic origin, as it is clear from his interpretation of Parmenides:

When you think, you think of something; when you use a name, it must be the name of something. Therefore both thought and language require objects outside themselves. And since you can think of a thing or speak of it at one time as well as another, whatever can be thought of or spoken of must exist at all times. Consequently there can be no change, since change consists in things coming into being or ceasing to be. (Russell 1945: 49)

We can observe here that, in his opinion, the philosophical question of Being is rooted in the linguistic question concerning proper names; hence this question is relevant because of its metaphysical implications: the problem here is that of deciding if there is a stable reality beneath a surface of ever changing appearances.

In addition, according to Russell, the question of 'proper names' is also related to the logical problem of defining the meaning of a sentence where there is a world which does not refer to anything; so, for example, we might ask ourselves what the following sentence means: "The actual king of France is bald". As Diamond pointed out, Frege and Russell took different directions in answering this question. Indeed, according to Russell when I utter that sentence, what I really mean is that there is a king in France and he is bald, so that the sentence is false. According to Frege, on the contrary, the meaning of the components (i.e. the names) depends on the meaning of the whole sentence (Diamond 1996: 73-93; see also TLP 3.3): we can imagine that the sentence means that a certain 'king of France' is bald; and therefore the sentence is meaningful, but we do not know whether it is true or false.

In the following paragraph I'd like to describe Russell's solution to the question, in the next one I'll try to show how much Wittgenstein's approach is different from Russell's.

2. Russell and the Foundation of Physics

Russell's analysis of language may be considered paradigmatic of the kind of approach characterising empiricism and neo-positivism. In short he started considering names as an abbreviation for descriptions (as in the previous example):

Suppose some statement made about Bismarck. [...] What this person was acquainted with were certain sense-data which he connected (rightly, we will suppose) with Bismarck's body. His body as a physical object, and still more his mind, were only known as the body and the mind connected with these sense-data. (Russell 1918: 125)

Then he distinguished between knowledge by description (which means being able to analyse an object in its parts) and knowledge by acquaintance (that is the direct knowledge of sense-data). Russell compared the ultimate constituents of matter, say sense-data, to notes which are the ultimate constituents of a symphony: a 'thing', from this point of view, is not more "real" nor "substantial" than the role of a trombone in the symphony, a "thing" is only a collection of sense-data or "sensibilia" (i.e. possible sense data). Thus, as Hadot pointed out, for him the role of philosophy was to analyse language and show that knowledge is grounded on experience (Hadot, 2004, p.64): his aim was namely to establish "physics upon solipsistic basis" (Russell 1918: 92), by building up all physical concepts from sense-data, or 'sensibilia'.

The paradox, from Wittgenstein's perspective, is that this theory requires language to be formulated and Russell's strategy implies therefore firstly that it is thanks to a mental act consisting in being "acquainted with" sense-data that we can make sense of our concepts and secondly that we should be able to set ourselves outside language to describe it (as Russell admitted in the *Preface* to Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*). In the next paragraph I'll try to show that Wittgenstein's aim was to prove the intrinsic limitations of this attempt.

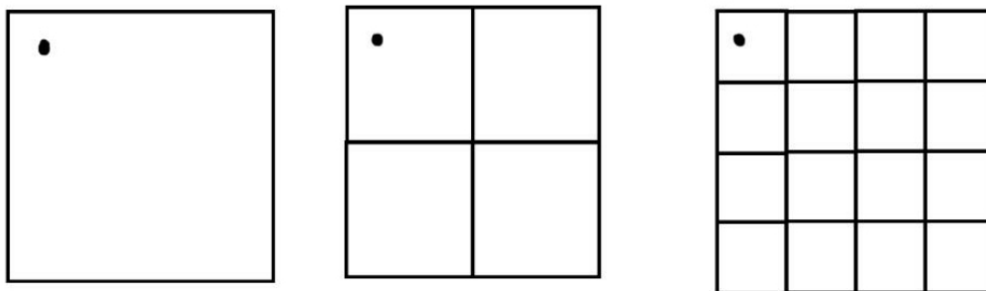
3. Wittgenstein and the Insurmountability of Language

Wittgenstein, as opposed to empiricist and neo-positivism philosophers, ruled out the possibility of a philosophical foundation of physics. In the *Tractatus*, indeed, there is no clear indication about the nature of objects names refers to; besides Wittgenstein explicitly rules out the possibility of being able to say what kind of elementary proportions there are (TLP 5.55 and 5.5571): names for him can only be 'named' it is impossible to build meaningful sentences about what names are (TLP 3.221). This means that, even if "empirical reality is limited by the totality of objects" (TLP 5.5561), it is impossible to work out a theory about the ultimate constituents of the world (TLP 1.1) and to provide in

this way a philosophical foundation of empirical knowledge (i.e. a philosophical foundation of physics). I hope that the comparison with Boltzmann method might help explain this crucial point.

Boltzmann faced up to the problem of determining the position of a molecule of gas in space: it was very difficult because space is continuous and the number of possible positions is infinite. So he adopted a particular trick which can be more easily explained when we consider two dimensions instead of three (adding the third dimension later does not change the kind of solution): he imagined to cover the surface with a grid, which could be made of squares; given an arbitrary dimension of the grid, we can assume that each particle which occupies the same cell in the grid has the same position. In this way it is possible to enumerate all the possible positions of a particle on the surface: the finer the grid, the more accurate the description of the position of the particle on the surface is (fig.1). Thus, if we have a function describing the behaviour of the particle, we can consider the 'limit' of this function when the dimension of the grid tends to zero: this is the 'real' position of the particle in the continuum. (Boltzmann 1995: 31 and 317, see also Laserna 2016: 38-39).

Fig.1



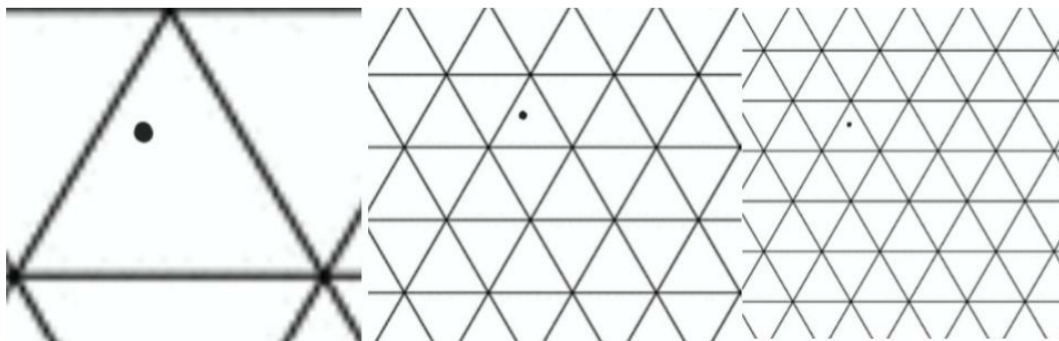
Wittgenstein described exactly this method in the proposition 6.341, where he explained that in this way it is possible to find the “bricks for building the edifice of science” (TLP, 6.341). Similarly, Russell in his *Mysticism and Logic* tried to determine the “ultimate constituents of matter”, the “notes” the “symphony” is made of (Russell 1918: 76). Reductionism is namely the method to solve philosophical problems through an analysis of language. Boltzmann, in

a similar manner, described during a conference on Schopenhauer, what the goal of the “philosophy of the future” was for him. It was to put an end to the painful feeling that there is a mystery, this feeling is the spiritual migraine which is ordinary named metaphysic (Boltzmann 1974: 198, see also Gargani 2008: 65-67 and Gargani 1992: 126-127). In the *Tractatus* this goal is to be reached by developing a sign-language, that prevents us from philosophical confusion (TLP 3.324) which generates when one word has two a more different meanings (TLP3.323 and 3.325).

Wittgenstein, however, as opposed to Russell, does not specify what kind of ‘bricks’ we need to build ‘the edifice of science’. On the contrary, he states that it does not matter the kind of ‘bricks’ we have to use:

Let us imagine a white surface with irregular black spots. We now say: Whatever kind of picture these make I can always get as near as I like to its description, if I cover the surface with a sufficiently fine square network and now say of every square that it is white or black. In this way I shall have brought the description of the surface to a unified form. This form is arbitrary, because I could have applied with equal success a net with a triangular or hexagonal mesh. (TLP 6.341, see Fig.2).

Fig.2



Wittgenstein, here, adopts Boltzmann’s strategy: we can arbitrarily choose our sign-language and we will remove confusions by means of a process of logical analysis. Diamond (1996: 94-114) effectively described the basic features of this analysis by considering a sentence such as “Cesar is a prime number”: the

sentence might be analysed as Frege did, and in this case it will be regarded as a meaningful sentence (say "A certain Cesar is a prime number") without a reference (say a sentence we are not able to say if it true or false); similarly Wittgenstein's method consists in showing that the origin philosophical problems is that some parts of our sentences do not have a proper meaning (TLP, 6.53).

The problem is that we don't know what the application of a sentence is; in Cavell's terms we don't know its 'projection' (Cavell 1979: 172-189), we are not able to figure out in which context we would use that sentence, and accordingly we don't know what fact the sentence represents and what is the sentence about. We can imagine that in everyday life it is possible to reply by explaining what we 'meant': in the example above, the element without a definite meaning might be "Cesar" or "prime number", and we might therefore imagine that we mean that "Cesar" is the name of a number even if it is not; the sentence would be meaningful and false in accordance to Russell's analysis, and it wouldn't be an elementary proposition, but a molecular one ("Cesar is a number and it is prime"). Conversely we could also imagine that "prime number" could be a metaphor for not having anything in common with other people, so that the sentence might be considered to be true. It is accordingly the context that enables us to solve this kind of problems and to build up a sign-language where meanings are clearly shown (e.g. numbers are represented by numerals):

Expressions like '1 is a number', 'there is only one number nought', and all like them are senseless. (TLP 4.1272) .

In a proper sign-language each sentence shows its meaning and what it is about, as Wittgenstein remarked in his notebook on the 5th November 1914, where he wrote that "the proposition represents the situation" "as it were off its own bat" ("*So stellt der Stz den Sachverhalt gleichsam auf eigene Faust dar*") (Wittgenstein 1961: 26 and 26e, see also Gargani 1992: 152-157). In the *Tractatus*, he gives therefore a model to follow while analysing language: the meaning of the sentence must depend on the meaning of its components which are nouns (TLP 3.318), the meaning of molecular propositions must depend on the meaning of the elementary ones (TLP 4.4), and every kind of implication must be expressed by means of logical connectors. In this way a

sign-language can make it explicit what we mean, and the criterion to be used in building it up consists in paying attention to the application of logic (TLP3.262), as in the aforementioned example, and accordingly it is in this way that it is possible to decide “what elementary propositions there are.” (TLP 5.557). Thanks to this analysis it is possible to reduce all the different applications of language (different language games according to his later terminology) to a single system and this is the aim of reductionism (TLP 6.341).

To conclude, an ‘ideal sign-language’ should be regarded only as the limit at which the analysis tends: it is the sign-language we obtain when every problem has been clarified and where signs clearly show what they refer to, so that we don’t have to look at the application of language to understand the meaning of the sentence (TLP 2.0211 and 2.0212). Accordingly we are not able to describe our experience apart from our language, so that, as Wittgenstein states, the “limits of language (of that language which alone I understand) mean the limits of my world.” (TLP 5.62). Thus, Wittgenstein’s approach to the question is completely different from Russell’s one: for him, it’s only within the insurmountable dimension of language that it is possible to define our experience of the world (Hadot 2004: 72). It is therefore at the same time impossible and pointless trying to define the nature of the constituents of the world on which basis Russell aimed to ground the entire building of science.

In short, when Wittgenstein wrote the *Tractatus*, he probably had in mind Russell’s attempt to give a philosophical foundation of physics by defining the constituents of knowledge we refer to by means of a special mental act (these are sense-data or ‘possibilia’ we know by acquaintance). However, Wittgenstein’s aim was to show the failure and the pointlessness of this attempt which would have implicated to be able to describe language from outside.

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Wittgenstein's Use of the Prefix "Non-" in the *Tractatus*: Beyond Substantial and Austere Readings

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Abstract

The paradoxical claim in the *Tractatus*—that its propositions are nonsensical and serve as elucidations—has given rise to two interpretations which are often contrasted. According to substantial readings the relevant propositions are technically nonsensical but have a communicative function since they can somehow gesture at truths. According to Diamond's austere reading they are sheer nonsense but the speaker who wants to utter them can be understood due to imaginative activity. Both readings share a similar structure and weakness: They absolutely deny sense on some level and then introduce a new rather obscure source of sense to compensate for it. Both readings treat the prefix "non-" in "nonsensical" as an absolute denial of sense. An alternative reading is possible if the prefix "non-" is treated as a relative denial of sense and if sense is understood as "direction" or "use". Propositions with sense are those which direct all competent speakers by providing them with information about facts in logical space. Someone who outright denies the relevance of informative propositions would simply not be a competent speaker. Nonsensical propositions are those which advertise different modes of being in logical space as such. If one accepts them one's life gains a new basic direction. Depending on how one relates to logical space as such the experience of the world is transformed. Speakers can freely engage with and reject the propositions without thereby altering their status as competent speakers: Nonsensical propositions thus only have a relative directing or guiding function.

Wittgenstein's paradoxical claim in the *Tractatus* that the book's propositions are "nonsensical" and yet serve as "elucidations" (TLP 1974: 6.54) has given rise to two readings which are often presented as polar opposites: Substantial and austere readings.

The Substantial Reading

According to a "substantial" reading of the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein puts forward a philosophical theory: the picture theory of language. Central to this theory is the idea of an isomorphism between language and the world. The world consists of combinations of x objects which can stand in y relations to each other: It is mirrored by language which consists of x names which can be combined to form y relations. In a well-formed proposition names are combined in such a way that they picture possible combinations of objects (facts).

It is a side effect of this theory that only the propositions of natural science which describe contingent facts in the world are meaningful while logical

tautologies and contradictions have to be qualified as “senseless” and ethical, aesthetic and philosophical propositions which proclaim metaphysical *a priori* truths have to be rejected as “nonsensical”. The *Tractatus*-paradox is “solved” by treating it as an uncomfortable side-effect of an otherwise valuable theory. Such an interpretation is offered by Bertrand Russell in his 1922 introduction to the *Tractatus* in which he also admits that it leaves him “with a certain sense of intellectual discomfort” (TLP 1974: xxiv).

The Austere Reading

It is not surprising therefore that this reading was challenged by austere interpreters who claim that a proper reading of Wittgenstein needs to do justice to the fact that Wittgenstein calls philosophical propositions “*simply [...] nonsense*” (TLP 1974: xxiv). Substantial readings introduce an unsound distinction between propositions which are (a) sheer nonsense and (b) substantial nonsense: propositions which are technically nonsensical because they violate the logical form of the proposition “but *do* manage to gesture towards those things that cannot be put into plain words” (Diamond 2000: 150). Such a distinction is criticized because it practically re-introduces sense through the back door.

The ambitious task of an austere reading is thus clear: It needs to be made plausible how the nonsensical propositions of the *Tractatus* can do philosophical work while being truly sheer nonsense. Cora Diamond (2000: 155) claims that “whenever someone wanted to say something metaphysical, you show him that, as far as meaning goes, ‘piggly wiggle’ would do as well as some word he used”. If we were to translate all nonsensical metaphysical propositions of the *Tractatus* such as “Objects contain the possibility of all situations” (TLP 1974: 2.014) simply to the nonsense of “piggly wiggle” it is wholly unclear how they could be used in a philosophically fruitful manner and be related to problems discussed by Frege and Russell. If that, however, is true then it seems that there need to be *different kinds of nonsense* and not simply *sheer nonsense*. Diamond acknowledges that and in fact makes a distinction between *philosophically productive nonsense* and *unproductive nonsense*.

How does Diamond cash out the difference between these types of nonsense? What all nonsensical propositions have in common is that they have not been

given any sense: "A sentence that is meaningless is not any special kind of sentence; it is a symbol which has the general form of a proposition, and which fails to have a sense simply because we have not given it any" (Diamond 2000: 151). Wherein they differ is that certain meaningless but potentially productive propositions are *accompanied by the illusion of sense*. Such an illusion of sense could arise in the following way. Someone, for instance, meaningfully uses the term "way" in the context of asking for the way to the next bus stop. The word is then uttered in a new context in which it has no defined use such as "The way that can be trodden is not the enduring and unchanging way." While the word "way" has no sense in this new context the person who utters it still carries with it the mental accompaniments of meaningful propositions in which it is used. Now mental accompaniments, as Frege emphasized, are wholly irrelevant to the logical characteristics of a sentence. We now have a vision of how the illusion of sense can arise: A word is used in a context in which it has no defined use, but it still carries with it mental accompaniments which then create the illusion of sense.

How are these nonsensical propositions philosophically productive? According to Diamond we cannot understand them – they *are truly* nonsensical – but we can understand the person drawn to them. "To want to understand the person who talks nonsense is to want to enter imaginatively the taking of that nonsense for sense. [The *Tractatus* demands of its readers] a kind of imaginative activity, an exercise of the capacity to enter into the taking of nonsense for sense, of the capacity to share imaginatively the inclination to think that one is thinking something in it. If I could not as it were see your nonsense as sense, imaginatively let myself feel its attractiveness, I could not understand you" (Diamond 2000: 157– 158). Such an imaginative activity would clarify that metaphysical propositions never satisfy our actual criteria for sense and thus help us abandon them as nonsensical.

Diamond attempts to save the status of nonsensical propositions as radically nonsensical by radically disconnecting the speaker whom we can understand from his nonsensical sentences which we cannot understand. Such a disconnect does not easily fit the *Tractatus* in which meaning is tied to how speakers use signs: "What signs fail to express, their application shows. What signs slur over, their application says clearly." (TLP 3.262). The status of understanding a speaker while not understanding his sentences which are

sheer nonsense remains obscure. The austere reading seems to repeat the malaise of the substantial reading. Both readings affirm that nonsensical propositions are nonsensical and thus strictly speaking incomprehensible. Both try to give a philosophical account of how these nonsensical propositions can do work. Both re-introduce a hidden source of sense: The substantial reading introduces truths which can be gestured at and comprehended; the austere reading introduces speakers whom we can understand imaginatively.

The Prefix "Non-": Absolute vs. Relative Negation

The repetition of the same structure in both readings points to a shared source: In both readings the prefix "non-" in "nonsensical propositions" is taken as an *absolute* negation of sense. Trying to find some sort of understandability in propositions whose sense is radically denied might be as futile as trying to solve the equation " $x \cdot 0 = 1$ ". The explicit and radical denial of sense makes it necessary for a new variety of "sense" to re-emerge in both readings. An alternative approach is possible if one interprets the prefix "non-" as a *relative* denial of sense which is inspired by a certain every-day-use of the German words *Sinn* (sense) and *Unsinn* (nonsense).

The key to understanding how the prefix "non-" could be used as a *relative* negation in the *Tractatus* is to emphasize that the German word *Sinn* (sense) in every-day-language can be used with the meaning of *direction* or *use*. Propositions which have sense in the *Tractatus* are those which are able to *direct* language-users. They are able to do this because they point at facts in the world. The paradigmatic case Wittgenstein thinks of in the *Tractatus* is a speaker who is stuck because he lacks information about the world and then can go on because he gets the relevant information. What is called the picture theory of language is an attempt to clarify how this directing function could work so smoothly. "The pictorial relationship consists of the correlations of the picture's elements with things" (TLP 1974: 2.1514). Since picture and pictured reality share a logical form "[l]ogical pictures can depict the world" (TLP 1974: 2.19) in a determinate manner. Signs such as "Es regnet" or "Дождь идет" can provide precise information about the world because they share its logical form. Someone who does not understand informative propositions and is not directed by them – does not take information into account to guide their actions – is simply not a competent speaker.

If propositions with sense are combined to form tautologies or contradictions they become senseless (*sinnlos*). "I know nothing about the weather when I know that it is either raining or not raining" (TLP 1974: 4.461). That tautologies are necessarily true and contradictions necessarily false, however, "shows the formal – logical – properties of the world" (TLP 1974: 6.12). Logical propositions display the logical form which a speaker needs to understand so that informative language can get off the ground. Someone who fails to regard objects as self-identical could not understand any proposition and there would be no way to inform him about the logical properties of the world. It is *senseless* therefore to inform someone about logic because only a person who *already* recognizes logical form can detect it in logical propositions.

Propositions with sense and those which lack sense demarcate what all competent speakers understand: The necessarily logically structured world of contingent facts. While every competent speaker in principle knows how to handle an informative proposition such as "There are mice in the kitchen" a person *can* be a competent speaker and reject as nonsensical or incomprehensible propositions such as "Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior", "All problems of philosophy are confusions of everyday-language" or "In the field of emptiness being and non-being are two superimposed layers of reality" which do not simply point towards facts in the world. An example of such a rejection is reported by C.G. Jung (1995: 74-75) who interpreted the dream of a patient as an unconscious death-wish to which the patient replied with the word "Nonsense!" ("*Unsinn!*"). Later the patient died due to risky behavior. Jung thinks if the patient had accepted his interpretation he would have survived because he would have gained a new perspective on his whole life. The point here is the following: Nonsensical propositions *would give the life of those who accept them a specific direction* but a speaker can *reject them without thereby losing the status as a competent speaker*. For example: If I am at the airport and reject the information on destination boards, boarding passes and so on as nonsensical I am not a competent speaker. If I meet a group on the way to the airport who propose a specific worldview which does not proclaim specific facts but expresses a general way of relating to the world of facts as a whole – whatever contingent facts may be the case – it is a fair move to either accept their attitude or to reject it. The prefix "non-" denies the absolute directing function of propositions with sense which every competent speaker

needs to take into account but affirms a relative directing function which depends on the person who engages with them.

How does the relative directing function work? The nonsensical propositions of ethics, aesthetics and philosophy express different ways of inhabiting logical space. While logical propositions such as "Either it does rain or it does not rain", "Either P is killed or P is not killed" showcase the logical structure of the world ethical propositions express different ways of relating to logical space. A relation to logical space can be grasped as a specific pattern which is affirmed in relation to it. A specific ethical mode of being would, for instance, recognize that both propositions "P is killed" or "P is not killed" are logically possible but exclude one possibility as absolutely shameful. Due to excluding certain logical possibilities as shameful and affirming others as absolutely good logical space is in some sense modified. The world one inhabits is not merely logical space but logical space transformed by the ethical relation one has to it. The person who adopts a certain ethical attitude which affirms the absolute value of other human beings might gain happiness since he is convinced that his life has a general, meaningful direction whatever facts may occur. "If the good or bad exercise of the will does alter the world, it can only alter the limits of the world, not the facts – not what can be expressed by means of language" (TLP 1974: 6.423). Similar to how someone who does not already think logically cannot be made to understand and accept as valid logical space by informing him about it, someone cannot be made to understand and accept an ethical attitude towards logical space by giving him information. Understanding logical space means *being* in it, understanding an ethical attitude means *living it* and no one else can undertake that for you. Nonsensical ethical propositions support and advertise modes of being and thus aim to direct other speakers who however remain free to reject them: A mode of being advertised as salvific by one speaker can be rejected as sick and misguided by another speaker while both according to the *Tractatus* remain fully competent users of informative language. Furthermore speakers only truly understand nonsensical propositions when they adopt the advertised mode of being which might be impossible for them. Likewise the strict philosophical distinction between propositions with sense, senseless propositions and nonsensical propositions the *Tractatus* advertises as a solution to all philosophical problems, expresses a philosophical attitude towards the world which a reader

can adopt if the reader *himself* manages to adopt it but which could also be rejected without denying any facts about the world.

Conclusion

An alternative interpretation or solution of the *Tractatus*-paradox is now possible: The propositions of the *Tractatus* are neither called nonsensical because they are absolutely nonsensical and incomprehensible nor because they merely technically violate the logical form of the proposition but because they only manage to be of use to speakers if they freely engage with them in a specific way. The relevant potentially productive nonsensical propositions direct people by inviting them to a new form of life. The invitation can be rejected and may not even be understood. The suggested, intimidated, hinted at form of life is only adequately understood once it is actually lived. Once the form of life is actually lived the relative directing function of nonsensical propositions is superfluous and they can be discarded.

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The World as Limited Whole : A Few Remarks on Schopenhauer's Influence on Wittgenstein

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Abstract

In this paper I will argue that Wittgenstein's metaphysical subject is a reformulation of Schopenhauer's pure subject of cognition, which is compared to the "eternal eye of the world". The overall aim of this paper is to show that a careful consideration of the role of intuition in Schopenhauer's philosophy can offer new insights into the influence he had on Wittgenstein. In particular, this work starts from the conception of the *sub specie aeterni*, which is a Spinozian expression that Schopenhauer and Wittgenstein use to address the aesthetic experience. This notion is strictly related with contemplation, the detached and comprehensive experience of a totality, a whole, that configures the subject-world relationship in a peculiar way. In this eternal present, subject and world merge and this results in a change in the way of seeing and living things. I will first outline Schopenhauer's account of *sub specie aeterni* to highlight the pivotal notions related to this conception in aesthetics and ethics. I will then turn to Wittgenstein to examine how he elaborates on Schopenhauer's thought especially in the *Notebooks*.

1. In this paper I claim that by accessing the *Tractatus* through the notion of the *sub specie aeterni*, Schopenhauer's influence on Wittgenstein will gain in depth. In particular I argue that Wittgenstein's *metaphysical subject* is a reformulation of Schopenhauer's *pure subject of cognition*. The *sub specie aeterni* is the expression that both philosophers use to account for the comprehensive experience of the world that is temporally defined as eternal present and spatially characterized as a totality, a *whole*. The result of this contemplation is an alteration of perspective, in the way of seeing and living life.

In the following section I will present Schopenhauer's account on aesthetics and ethics from *The World as Will and Representation*. In the last section, I will turn to Wittgenstein to examine how he elaborates on the Schopenhauerian conceptions.

2. *Sub specie aeterni* or *sub aeternitatis specie* appears in §34 of *The World as Will and Representation* [=WWR] in a quotation of Spinoza's *Ethica*: «The mind is eternal to the extent that it conceives things under the form of eternity (*sub aeternitatis specie*)». With this temporal expression Schopenhauer deepens the

explanation of aesthetic contemplation, when «The particular thing instantly becomes the *Idea* of its species and the intuiting individual becomes the *pure subject of cognition*» (WWR 202).

Contemplation is a peculiar cognizant moment that all of a sudden disrupts the ordinary way of knowing, i.e. representation.

Representation is the distinction and reciprocal relation between subject and object: this is the transcendental condition of knowledge. «No object without subject; no subject without object» repeats Schopenhauer. The subject knows only appearances through the transcendental forms of time, space and causality. Accordingly, we only know *things-for-us*. Representations arise from a pre-theoretical activity, that human beings and animals share, as a result of the processing of sensory stimuli that affect the body. The object is recognized as such because it is the *cause* of the sensitive perception felt by the body, i.e. the subject. The highly developed human brain can further process every representation and *abstract* from the instantaneous and countless sensitive origin through concepts and judgements. Thanks to rationality we build systems of knowledge (sciences) and operate with *representations of representations*.

Nonetheless, while we are aware of ourselves as knowing subjects, we also stand in an immediate identity with our body. There is no conceptual mediation, hence representation, although this is how the subject can represent itself as an object. The willing subject is what we *know* of ourself in representation, yet we *are* both simultaneously and immediately. It is from here that what we call *will*, the intimate, immediate and individual essence of the subject is extended by Schopenhauer with an analogical deduction to the world (the totality of objects).

When contemplation has the upper hand, representation is suspended and rarefied. The subject loses itself in the object, it obliterates its individuality, the connection with its body. Consequently, the subject does no longer apply the form of representation, hence it exits the flow of time to enter the dimension of the *nunc stans*, the endless present, eternity. The subject becomes the «eternal eye of the world» (WWR 308). Equally, the object is isolated from any connection with other objects, including the individual and its body. The

subject-object relation is balanced, the two merge and collapse into each other: the subjective self-consciousness vanishes into the pervasive existence of the object, that becomes a totality, and at the same time this "pure" subject acknowledges to be the actual bearer of the object as a totality.

Schopenhauer describes this knowledge as a consideration according to the «what» and not to the «where, when, why, wherefore, and how» (WWR 201). This «what» is the content of contemplation, the platonic Ideas, the intuitive eternal and universal archetypes (*genus*). They are the highest level of appearances we can represent, since they are not touched by individuation and plurality (*species*). The intuitive elevation is basically a view that is irreducible to concepts. It evokes the meta-physical, the world – if any – beyond physics, i.e. representation, which shall be an unlimited whole, a realm of indistinction and timelessness, which is completely opposite to our limited standpoint of representation.

Consequently, the «World as Will» is the world known as an Idea, grasped as a timeless totality, where the Will is the *Urphänomen*. It is the best concept we can use to represent something that goes beyond representation by staying within its limits (WWR 135; Barbera 1989). Schopenhauer proposes an original Platonic reading of the Kantian dualism of appearance-Thing-in-itself, which corresponds to the *doxa-épisteme* distinction and to the existential dualism of finitude-eternity.

Philosophy – states Schopenhauer – aims to answer the question: «What is life about?» and to solve the riddle of existence, that is the meaning of death. The riddle arises from the opposition of finitude and eternity. Contemplation is the source of the feeling of eternity and this is what art and authentic philosophy address. From the *sub specie aeterni* dimension we can philosophically grasp the transcendental and metaphysical truth that «The indivisible point that touches the tangent [of the spinning circle of time] would be the extensionless present: as the tangent does not roll with the circle, the present, the object's point of contact (whose form is time) does not roll with the subject (which has no form) because it does not itself belong to what can be cognized but is rather the condition for everything that is» (WWR 306). The subject and the Will stay in the extensionless present, since they are transcendental-metaphysical condition of the representation. Since the latter is in fact appearance, it is an

illusion. Life, normally intended as limited, appears in its truthful not-empirical endlessness. Thanks to philosophy one can overcome the fear of death (that for Schopenhauer is the source of the metaphysical puzzlement that inspires religion and philosophy) for it is only the apparent end of one's own life when considered empirically, within representation.

As a result, contemplation *feels good*: «Everyone is well in the state [of contemplation] where he is all things; but is poorly where he is only one thing» (WWRs 388). Schopenhauer explains that we move to «A state in which our personality, our willing with its constant agony, disappears for as long as the pure, aesthetic delight continues» (WWR 246). This intuitive well-being consists in a dis-interested attitude, since it is a will-less consciousness detached from affection and intentionality. Since our essence is the Will to live, which manifests itself in our body and in our cognitive capacity, hence knowledge is at the service of the Will to live, the suspension of the ordinary Will-affirming representation frees the individual from any implication with the world and body. We acquire a sort of gaze from above, a standpoint from the outside, which is not a physical dislocation, but rather a change in perspective, and ultimately a relief.

Similarly, Schopenhauer explains that ethics depends on a similar dynamic. The subject «Lifts his gaze from the particular to the universal, when he views his own suffering as a mere example of the whole and, becoming a genius in the ethical sense, treats it as one case in a thousand, so that the whole of life, seen essentially as suffering, brings him to the point of resignation» (WWR 423).

Compassion is the feeling that entails a suspension of the subject-object distinction on a practical level. It enables one to exceed one's own individuality in its egoistic interests. We feel the same with the others and the whole world since we all share the same essence. This is the *Urphänomen* of ethics. This ethical intuition sometimes occurs as a detached perspective of the whole path of one's life and suffering. It provides a «conversion» or a «transcendental alteration» in the subject. In very rare cases this alteration is so fully embraced that it becomes an ascetic *ethos*. Hermits and saints turn down any act of «affirmation of the Will» by silencing the immediate home of the Will: the body. Consequently, they are also able to enter the a-cognizant

dimension of the *Nothingness*, the complete absence of representation (subject-object distinction), the absolute, since they totally unite with God. This mystical union is the most excellent example of the «negation of the Will».

According to Schopenhauer, ethics and aesthetics depends on intuition and a specific disposition towards life and world, felt or seen as a *relative* whole. Philosophy has to make clear that even if they are its tool «Concepts are barren when it comes to the true and inner nature of virtue, just as they are for art» (WWR 395). The philosopher puts into words the intuitions to point out the truth and authenticity of the contemplative experiences, in order to safeguard the possibility of virtue and beauty.

3. In the first part of *Tractatus* [=TLP] 6.45 Wittgenstein states: «Die Anschauung der Welt *sub specie aeterni* ist ihre Anschauung als – begrenztes – Ganzes». The Odgen edition translates *Anschauung* (intuition) with «view», Pears/McGuinness edition with «contemplation». This oscillation of terms works well and can be explained if Schopenhauer is taken into account. As the previous section shows, the role of intuition is crucial for Schopenhauer's philosophy and it is strictly linked to the *sub specie aeterni* account. For, it is exactly through intuition that we experience the world in its aesthetical and ethical aspects, which is ultimately an experience of a «relative totality», what Wittgenstein calls a «limited whole».

Wittgenstein seems to follow Schopenhauer and he presents exactly this double path of intuition: the aesthetical one of the *sub specie aeterni* and the ethical one of the intuition as a feeling, which is the *Mystical* (6.45 TLP). In TLP 6.421 Wittgenstein writes that ethics and aesthetics are one since they are transcendental condition (as logic) and cannot be expressed. As the *Mystical*, they can only show themselves (TLP 6.522). Wittgenstein dwells also on the concepts of time and eternity related to death which is seen as an apparent end, similarly to Schopenhauer (TLP 6.4311).

I suggest taking the *sub specie aeterni* as a preferential point of access to explore the influence of Schopenhauer on Wittgenstein. I refer in particular to the *Notebooks* [=NB] where the expression seems to play an important role from a genetic standpoint. It appears that this expression helps Wittgenstein to reach the conclusion of a long consideration began in June 1916 about God and

the meaning of life. With *sub specie aeterni* (NB 83) Wittgenstein is finally able to detect the nature of the connection between aesthetics (the work of art) and ethics (the good life) which he previously found because of the coincidence of «world» and «Life». Ethics and aesthetics are conditions of the world/life (NB 77).

These remarks bring about the Schopenhauerian dualism of perspectives, the inherent one of the representation and the exceptional distant one of intuition (from the outside), which opens onto metaphysics, aesthetics and ethics. In Wittgenstein's case metaphysics is substituted by logic, but the result is anyway a *vision* of a whole, which arises from a different relation with the world of a cognizant kind, since it is philosophy that allows us to acknowledge this change in perspective.

«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» (NB 83). In fact, we are always within the limits of thought when we trace its limits by depicting the condition of language and thought. This whole is limited, *relative* and not absolute. It is undeniable that although immanently, the philosopher (which is a subject) has to reach a different standpoint to draw this conclusion and Wittgenstein seems to find the right one in Schopenhauer's account of contemplation.

While addressing the «what» (as Schopenhauer says and does), which is the Mystical (TLP 6.44) – to which the «how» of the world is indifferent (TLP 6.432) – Wittgenstein writes: «The solution to the problem of life is to be seen in the disappearance of this problem. But is it possible for one so to live that life stops being problematic? That one is living in eternity and not in time?» (NB 74; TLP 6.521). The answer is to get to the endless present standpoint from which philosophically speaking the problems dissolve. «Only a man who lives not in time but in the present is happy. For life in the present there is no death. Death is not an event in life. It is not a fact of the world. If by eternity is understood not infinite temporal duration but non-temporality, then it can be said that a man lives eternally if he lives in the present» (NB 74-75; TLP 6.4311).

The dissolution of the problem of life is then about a qualitative alteration which has nothing to do with contingent and factual changes (and solutions).

«The world of the happy is a different world from the world of the unhappy» (NB 77) since «If good or evil willing affects the world it can only affect the boundaries of the world, not the facts, what cannot be portrayed by language but can only be shewn in language. In short, it must make the *world* a wholly different one. The world must, so to speak, wax or wane as *a whole*. As if by accession or loss of meaning» (NB 73; TLP 6.43). The change comes from the experience of the world – life – as a «whole» that is altered in terms of waxing and waning its limits or outlines.

This recalls the loss of individuation that occurs in contemplation as Schopenhauer explains it, especially in ethics. By overcoming the subjective egoistical boundaries, we extend the world which conversely would be particularly restricted. It is in ethics that the intuition is less cognizant and more disruptive, it may result in a spiritual *conversion*.

In the NB Wittgenstein dwells also on the Schopenhauerian distinction between *willing* and *knowing* subject, which is ultimately solved with the *metaphysical subject*.

It is interesting that Wittgenstein uses the same image of Schopenhauer «the extensionless point», the point in which the subject touches the circle of time, but he places stress upon the spatial aspect to underline the issue of subject in philosophy. Moreover, Wittgenstein keeps the metaphor of the eye and adds the spatial image of visual field to detect the raw nerve of this kind of philosophical discussions.

We can meet the «I» on the limit of the world, as it shows itself silently as an «extensionless point» and it shrinks to disappear. Philosophically, hence logically, we can only grasp a manifestation of the subject as it is a condition and not an element of the whole, the eye-field, what we call «my world» (TLP 5.62-5.641). What is shown is the relation of coordination, where the non-individual subject disappears into the correspondent world (NB 82). Thus, the knowing subject treated as part of the world is a mere «superstition», an «illusion» (NB 80). Any discourse that assigns to the subject a metaphysical or epistemological importance – even transcendently – says what cannot be said, being anything necessary outside the possibilities of the saying. Equally, the willing subject is affected – despite this metaphysical treatment of the

subject is for Wittgenstein tempting and puzzling, as the NB entries attest. In fact, if the subject belongs to the showing, the scaffold of the world, which is such as pictured in the language, it may suggest that the world is more than just a picture.

While Schopenhauer's philosophy is completely exceeded as an attempt to say what cannot be said, it is its intuitive core which is inspirational for Wittgenstein. The *showing* in TLP elaborates Schopenhauer's contemplation and in fact it maintains the relation with the visual and intuitive experience which Schopenhauer assigns to arts and ethics. Since Wittgenstein adopts also a transcendental framework twisting it from epistemology to logic, he can follow Schopenhauer's dualistic movement of thought.

Wittgenstein reformulates Schopenhauer's *pure eye of the world* conception, since as the *metaphysical subject* of TLP: (a) it is not an individual subject and it has to do with a whole, the life-world perceived in its totality (the Schopenhauerian Idea); (b) world and subject collapse in a theoretical and practical sense; (c) this takes place on the limits of language/representation in terms of exposition; (d) it does not alter the world, but provides a qualitative change in terms of view and attitude towards the world; (e) it helps to dissolve the metaphysical and existential riddles.

With the *sub specie aeterni* and following Schopenhauer Wittgenstein finds the way to introduce and also exclude the subject, the ethics and aesthetics from the TLP, since it is logic as an activity that safeguards the authenticity of these intuitions together with the metaphysical puzzlement of existence.

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The Method of Absolute Negativity and the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*—Wittgenstein, William James and Hegel

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Abstract

Why does the *Tractatus* end in such a peculiar, paradoxical, self-negating way? This paper traces Wittgenstein's philosophical development in Cambridge through the prism of his psychological studies and research. One major influence was Charles Samuel Myers, under whose guidance Wittgenstein developed his own psychological experiments and methods in Cambridge. Myers's explicitly empirical, scientific approach also paved the way for the even deeper impression that William James and his work *The Varieties of Religious Experience* later made on the young Wittgenstein. Through the *Varieties*, Wittgenstein found inspiration in the rich tradition of Christian mysticism, which prompted him not only to make certain momentous decisions in his own personal life, but also to consider how the insights of the mystics might be translatable into a philosophical method. James's references to Hegel's philosophy and his project of a 'method of absolute negativity' are particularly notable in this regard. The paper charts the course of this intellectual development, in which Wittgenstein attempted to unite his logical and philosophical insights with certain ethical demands rooted in our form of life. This ultimately culminated in the literary form of his early masterwork, the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*.

I.

In 1912, just as Wittgenstein was beginning his study of philosophy at Cambridge, a new psychological laboratory was being built to house the psychological research projects that until then had been dispersed across the university. The laboratory was an initiative of Charles Samuel Myers, who had been teaching experimental psychology in Cambridge since 1909. Wittgenstein must have met Myers at one of the numerous concerts and musical events at which the small university city's intellectual elite relaxed after a hard day's work.

He probably even attended the meeting of the Moral Science Club in early February 1912, at which Myers presented the findings of his expeditions to the Indonesian natives and described (and even performed) their 'primitive music', because shortly thereafter Wittgenstein began to conduct his own psychological experiments.

In his diary, David Pinsent documented regular experimental sessions in which he was examined as a test subject using an apparatus designed by Wittgenstein himself. It is not known what exactly this apparatus looked like

or how it functioned. Presumably, however, a kind of metronome was involved, whose sound could be altered in order that the subject's subjective perception could be compared with the objectively played sound. By May, Wittgenstein had completed the apparatus and begun the experimental phase. In an entry dated 15 May, Pinsent comments:

At 2.30 I went *chez* Wittgenstein and we went on to the Psychological Laboratory, where I had arranged to act as a 'subject' in some experiments he is trying: to ascertain the extent and importance of rhythm in music. Not bad fun. (PPW 1990: 3)

When designing this apparatus, Wittgenstein undoubtedly benefited from his earlier studies of mechanical engineering in Berlin and Manchester. Later, during the Second World War, Wittgenstein must have undertaken another very similar project: his friend Maurice O'Connor Drury remembers that Wittgenstein worked on an apparatus that was intended to compare heart rhythm and breathing rate:

I travelled up to Newcastle to spend a few days with Wittgenstein [...]. He took me to his room in the Research Department and showed me the apparatus which he himself had designed for his investigation. Dr Grant had asked him to investigate the relationship between breathing (depth and rate) and pulse (volume and rate).

Wittgenstein [...] had made several improvements in the original apparatus, so much so that Dr Grant had said he wished Wittgenstein had been a physiologist and not a philosopher. (MDC 1981: 147)

This second apparatus was still somewhat related to Myers's research in Cambridge. It was to be used to study 'shell shock', a concept which Myers had introduced into the psychological literature during the First World War (Myers 1940) and which, under the influence of Wittgenstein's research in Newcastle, then got abandoned and broken down into individual descriptions of symptoms (Monk 1991: 444–445).

A lively discussion that Wittgenstein mentioned to Russell in June suggests that this intensive contact with Myers and his own experimental psychological research stimulated Wittgenstein's philosophical thoughts on the relationship between logic and psychology:

I had a discussion with Myers about the relations between Logic and Psychology. I was very candid and I am sure he thinks that I am the most arrogant devil who ever lived. Poor Mrs Myers who was also present got—I think—quite wild about me. (22 June 1912, WC 2008: 30)

However, this dispute does not seem to have caused any deep rift, because shortly afterwards Myers asked Wittgenstein to explain and publicly demonstrate his apparatus at the ceremonial opening of the new research centre on 13 July 1912 (McGuinness 1988: 128). In the *British Journal of Psychology*, this event is documented as an 'Experiment on Rhythm (Demonstration), L. Wittgenstein and B. Muscio (Introduced by C.S. Myers)' (cited in McGuinness 1988: 128, fn. 95).

II.

Besides Myers, another important influence on Wittgenstein's psychological studies was William James. James's psychological research was very popular, and his *Principles of Psychology* (1890) was considered a standard textbook of the still-young discipline. G. E. Moore, whose psychology lectures Wittgenstein attended at that time, had also studied James's *Principles* in detail in preparation for those lectures.

However, it was another book by James—*The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature* (1902)—that would have a lasting impression on Wittgenstein. In Wittgenstein's letter to Russell of 22 June, where he mentions the disagreement with Myers about his views on the relation between logic and psychology, he reveals what was actually on his mind:

Whenever I have time I now read James's 'Varieties of religious exp[erience]'. This book does me a lot of good. I don't mean to say that I will be a saint soon, but I am not sure that it does not improve me a little in a way in which I would like to improve very much: namely I think that

it helps me to get rid of the Sorge (in the sense in which Goethe used the word in the 2nd part of Faust). (WC 2008: 30)

This is notable for several reasons. First, of course, it is interesting that Wittgenstein read the *Varieties* at all. Alongside Russell's *Principles of Mathematics* and Frege's *Begriffsschrift*, it was one of the few philosophical books that Wittgenstein had engaged with in any sort of depth by that point.

Then there is the book's content. James spends over 400 pages discussing topics such as conversion, holiness, religious ecstasy and the mystical, adopting a descriptive, psychological approach in which these things are treated as mental phenomena. Much of the book is devoted to detailed documentation of reported experiences with them; this part reads more like a captivating novel than a scientific textbook. The individual reports are embedded in James's wide-ranging, deeply philosophical observations.

From the book, Wittgenstein learned not only about James's philosophical pragmatism but also Kant's transcendental philosophy, Hegel and British idealism. But most importantly, James's *Varieties* shares detailed, critical observations on the state of the new scientifically and empirically oriented psychology. With regard to Wittgenstein's later ideas in the *Tractatus*, it is surprising to see that James was already pointing out in the *Varieties* that the rationalistic investigations undertaken by the natural sciences and experimental psychology appeared to have an inadequate grasp of, or even to ignore, the deep significance of certain aspects of the mind for human life:

If we look on man's whole *mental life* as it exists, on the life of men that lies in them apart from their learning and science, and that they inwardly and privately follow, we have to confess that the part of it of which rationalism can give an account is relatively superficial. (James 1902: 72)

It might have been after close reading of these very passages that Wittgenstein took against his teacher Myers, who favoured the rationalist and empiricist approach to science. And they may have also critically shaped the *Tractatus*, which at the end turns away from a logical-empiricist approach towards one of paradoxical self-negation. This turning point in the *Tractatus* mirrors James's argument that some of our unconscious insights are able to grasp a deeper and more profound truth than the logical-empirical sciences can attain:

It [i.e. science] is the part that has the prestige undoubtedly, for it has the loquacity, it can challenge you for proofs, and chop logic, and put you down with words. But it will fail to convince or convert you all the same, if your dumb intuitions are opposed to its conclusions. If you have intuitions at all, they come from a deeper level of your nature than the loquacious level which rationalism inhabits.

Your whole subconscious life, your impulses, your faiths, your needs, your divinations, have prepared the premises, of which your consciousness now feels the weight of the result; and something in you absolutely knows that that result must be truer than any logic-chopping rationalistic talk, however clever, that may contradict it. (ibid.)

When Wittgenstein later explicitly emphasised the ethical point of his *Tractatus* in a letter to the publisher Ludwig von Ficker—a point that, however, is not directly expressed in the work, but is to be found outside it, delimited, as it were, by that which can be said (in the propositions of natural science)—and identified precisely this unsayable as the important part, he may have been inspired to do so by his reading of James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*:

The point of the book is ethical. [It] consists of two parts: of the one which is here, and of everything which I have *not* written. And precisely this second part is the important one. For the Ethical is delimited from within, as it were, by my book; and I'm convinced that, *strictly* speaking, it can ONLY be delimited in this way. (November 1919, Monk 1991: 178)

James may have given Wittgenstein the initial impetus towards a new view of the mind and mental life, shifting him away from the scientific, analytical view that yields externally observable and 'sayable' results and towards a view of the mind as possessing an subconscious, mystically experienceable dimension that only 'shows itself' in certain human situations.

It is striking that James characterises the awareness of this mystical, subconscious dimension of mental life as the essential motivation of Hegelian philosophy, and derives from it 'the *Aufgabe*' (task, demand) of 'making it articulate':

What reader of Hegel can doubt that that sense of a perfected Being with all its otherness soaked up into itself, which dominates his whole philosophy, must have come from the prominence in his consciousness of mystical moods like this, in most persons kept subliminal? The notion is thoroughly characteristic of the mystical level, and the *Aufgabe* of making it articulate was surely set to Hegel's intellect by mystical feeling. (James 1902: 379, fn. 1)

It is likely that Wittgenstein read this passage carefully, since in the same chapter James gave him his first introduction to Angelus Silesius as an inspiring example of a negative mystic. This appears to have had a deep and lasting impact on Wittgenstein; years later, when trying to explain the *Tractatus* to Russell, he attributed the work's 'flavour of mysticism' to his familiarity with Angelus Silesius (see below).

And for the same reason, Wittgenstein may very well also have come across James's further explanation of the 'method of absolute negativity' that Hegel used to connect the scientific and the mystical:

The fountainhead of Christian mysticism is Dionysius the Areopagite. He describes the absolute truth by negatives exclusively. [...] Like Hegel in his logic, mystics journey towards the positive pole of truth only by the 'Methode der Absoluten Negativität'. (James 1902: 407–408)

Even in Wittgenstein's later remarks to von Ficker, the relation between the scientifically analysable and *sayable* on the one hand, and the transcendent, ethical life that only *shows* itself on the other, remains absolutely negative.

The mystical, as Wittgenstein identified it in the *Tractatus*, can thus be traced back, at least in certain respects, to the early inspiration he took from James and his remark about Hegelian philosophy's '*Aufgabe*' of articulating the mystical. Complementing this point, it is precisely the remarks on the mystical which set the stage for the *Tractatus*'s conclusion and the transition from the sayable—the 'propositions of natural science'—to that which is philosophically unsayable and 'inexpressible' (6.54) and hence to 'silence' (7):

6.522 There is indeed the inexpressible. This shows itself; it is the mystical.

6.53 The right method of philosophy would be this: To say nothing except what can be said, *i.e.* the propositions of natural science, *i.e.* something that has nothing to do with philosophy: and then always, when someone else wished to say something metaphysical, to demonstrate to him that he had given no meaning to certain signs in his propositions. This method would be unsatisfying to the other—he would not have the feeling that we were teaching him philosophy—but it would be the only strictly correct method. (TLP 1922)

When Russell later read the *Tractatus*, he immediately noticed its ‘flavour of mysticism’, and after his first subsequent meeting with Wittgenstein himself he wrote to Ottoline Morrell with great astonishment about the change he had witnessed in his friend:

I had felt in his book a flavour of mysticism, but was astonished when I found that he has become a complete mystic. He reads people like Kierkegaard and Angelus Silesius, and he seriously contemplates becoming a monk. (20 December 1919, WC 2008: 112)

Russell ascribed Wittgenstein’s conversion to his early encounter with James’s *Varieties* and to his reading of Leo Tolstoy’s *The Gospel in Brief*:

It all started from William James’s *Varieties of Religious Experience*, and grew (not unnaturally) during the winter he spent alone in Norway before the war, when he was nearly mad. Then during the war a curious thing happened. He went on duty to the town of Tarnov in Galicia, and happened to come upon a bookshop which however seemed to contain nothing but picture postcards. However, he went inside and found that it contained just one book: Tolstoy on *The Gospels*. He bought it merely because there was no other. He read it and re-read it, and thenceforth had it always with him, under fire and at all times. (WC 2008: 112)

In the earlier-quoted letter to Russell from June 1912, Wittgenstein had already expressed the hope of being able to improve his own state of mind by reading the *Varieties*, and in this context mentioned Goethe’s *Faust* and the concept of *Sorge*. It is almost certain that he was referring not to reading *Faust* itself, but

rather the biographical notes by Goethe that James quotes and discusses in detail in the *Varieties*, where he argues that Goethe himself was also drawing on his own, very personal experience:

‘I will say nothing,’ writes Goethe in 1824, ‘against the course of my existence. But at bottom it has been nothing but pain and burden, and I can affirm that during the whole of my 75 years, I have not had four weeks of genuine well-being. It is but the perpetual rolling of a rock that must be raised up again forever.’ (James 1902: 135)

This passage comes from the chapter of the *Varieties* on ‘the sick soul’, in which James analyses Goethe’s and Tolstoy’s existential suffering from this Faustian condition. But in the subsequent chapters on ‘conversion’, James only singles out Tolstoy (and not Goethe) as a successful example of mental healing, in which an element of spiritual transformation is combined with a conversion in the way of life.

III.

Through its literary form, the *Tractatus* came to embody this larger development of Wittgenstein’s thinking. On the one hand, it expresses the ideas of the empiricist-logicist project, which are reminiscent of C. S. Myer’s scientific approach to psychology and to some degree anticipate the Vienna Circle’s ‘scientific worldview’.

But at another level, which resulted above all from Wittgenstein’s early acquaintance with William James’s *Varieties of Religious Experience*, this first conception is complemented by the imperatives of mysticism, with an emphasis on the Hegelian ‘*Aufgabe* of making it articulate’ as a deeper aspiration of philosophical truth. By introducing him to the mystics Dionysius the Areopagite and Angelus Silesius, James paved the way for Wittgenstein’s view that certain fundamental truths can only be spoken about *negatively*, in the context of the philosophical *method of absolute negativity*.

For the figures discussed in the *Varieties*, such as Goethe and Tolstoy, this mysticism not only inaugurated a new way of thinking, but also demanded a fundamental change in the way of living and a *conversion* to the ethical life.

With the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein made this demand his own: literarily, philosophically and practically.

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Acknowledgement

I would like to express my profound gratitude to the *Alexander von Humboldt Foundation*, whose generous financial support has been indispensable to this project. I am also immensely thankful for the *University of Zurich*, which has graciously provided the essential institutional framework for my research.

Once Again on Wittgenstein & Logical Multiplicity in Chess

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Abstract

The concept of logical multiplicity that is already present in *TLP* becomes central to understand the continuity in Wittgenstein's thought up until *PI*. In the last few years, the authors and other fellow colleagues have worked together towards the goal of constructing a common framework to interpret Wittgenstein's philosophy. A key point in our research perspective is the study of the role of chess in the development of his thought. Following the track of the role of chess in Wittgenstein's evolution provides us with what we consider are fresh insights that are very difficult to attain otherwise. This paper relates the concept of logical multiplicity to both chess and *Chess960*.

How strange if logic were concerned with an 'ideal' language and not with *ours*. For what would this ideal language express? Presumably, what we now express in our *ordinary language* (*PB*, §3: 52)

All propositions of our *colloquial language* are actually, just as they are, logically completely in order. That simple thing which we ought to give here is not a model of the truth but the complete truth itself.

(Our problems are not abstract but perhaps the most concrete that there are.) (*TLP* §5.5563)

1. Introduction

Examining the role of chess in Wittgenstein's evolution provides fresh insights that are difficult to attain otherwise. This contribution continues our previous work that relates the concept of logical *multiplicity of rules* (from chess theory) and Wittgenstein's *logical (mathematical) multiplicity*. This partially explains the reasons why we see more continuity than disruptions in his thought, which diverges from the popular ideas of the "several Wittgensteins".

2. On logical (mathematical) multiplicity in *TLP* and before *PI*

A great proportion of Wittgenstein's works are devoted to mathematics. The period of the publication of *TLP* is sealed by the influence of Frege's

Grundgesetze. For both, the comparison of the rules of arithmetic (and math in general) with the rules of chess was of great importance. Most likely, that comparison played a role in their conversations during the summer of 1911 and winter of 1912.

Wittgenstein introduces *logical multiplicity* in *TLP* §4.04: a proposition needs to have “exactly as many things distinguishable as in the state of affairs that it represents” so that both a proposition and a corresponding state of affairs must “possess the same logical (mathematical) multiplicity”. Should we attend to *mathematical multiplicity*, we interpret this as if each term that appears on a given proposition corresponds to one (and only one) element in the referred state of affairs. In this view, this is valid regardless if there are multiple instances in which a term comes up in said proposition or its corresponding element in the related state of affairs. Once this is clear, the idea of *logical multiplicity* is still due for further explanation, since Wittgenstein did not define it explicitly in *TLP* or elsewhere –according to his philosophical convictions–. However, it comes up repeatedly not just in the *Nachlass*, but in other instances: In *RLF* (1929) he states that *we can ascribe it to phenomena*: “Now we can only substitute a clear symbolism for the unprecise one by inspecting the phenomena which we want to describe, thus trying to understand their logical multiplicity” (p. 163). It is the “logical investigation” of phenomena what enables us to identify their logical multiplicity, and we can only recognize it *a posteriori* (after such investigation). According to Wittgenstein, *we can also ascribe logical multiplicity to a description* (p. 165), *a proposition* (p. 170), *and an explanation* (*PB* §230: 287). This implies that some propositional constructs (or its constituents) do also have logical multiplicity. Logical multiplicity is also a matter of degrees: one propositional description of a given phenomenon can have a greater one than another. Wittgenstein states that regarding a particular case, a given specific description can have “the right multiplicity” –*RLF*, p. 165–.

Although an analytic philosopher would demand a satisfactory definition, having reviewed references to logical multiplicity in primary literature, our provisional conclusion is that it is something we can recognize, but not exhaustively and precisely define; something that is closer to the realm of what can be shown, but not said.

3. Logical multiplicity of ordinary language: multivocity against the univocity of an “ideal language”

The concept was difficult to grasp at the beginning of 20th century: the tools of “modern [contemporary] logic” were still under development. It seems quite natural that eventually someone would have to turn his attention to the relationship between logical (artificial) and natural languages. *TLP* represents one of the earliest instances of such an endeavor –be it correct or misguided–. The *Zeitgeist* was pregnant with antipsychologism. The mental was clearly seen as metaphysical and as such, not liable of empirical treatment. Logical empiricists were eager to take Mach’s program to its full completion, and saw *TLP* as the means to achieve the ideal of purging formalized scientific theories by logical analysis and elimination of the metaphysical remains from their contents, thus achieving a language of science that was also free of the imperfections of natural languages. It is not a coincidence that Wittgenstein did not like Russell’s prologue, or the interpretation of logical empiricists of his first work. It is not either a coincidence that the title of the second thing he ever published in life was *RLF*. It was already evident that Wittgenstein felt that *TLP* was not clearly understood or that he had not expressed his ideas appropriately enough. The so-called “picture theory” and *logical multiplicity* are two of the factors that we identify as a source for this misunderstanding.

We claim that the concept is central to a closer understanding of what Wittgenstein had in mind while developing his theory of meaning. To us, under “logical (mathematical) multiplicity”, he understood something that goes beyond logic as formal, mathematical logic, either if it relates itself to formal logic. A central aspect of this concept is the faculty of a term (or expression, or even a proposition) containing not only the actual possibilities of facts but also those that cannot be actually realized. Also, the property of being able to capture the potential instances in which something could and could not reach the stage of being a *matter of facts*. Otherwise, language could not express anything about the world or our own thoughts. *Logical multiplicity* manifests itself precisely in the polysemy of natural languages, something a classic

logician (or a logical empiricist) would consider an imperfection of language, but not Wittgenstein, who thought that logic was concerned with *our* language, and not an ideal (“perfect”) one.

Wittgenstein’s conception of language as expressed in *PI* refers to the human need for logical order, “the *a priori* order of the world” that has to be absolutely simple (*PI* §97 and §103, among others). Let us remind that according to Wittgenstein, logical multiplicity can be recognized after logical analysis –not known *a priori*–. The prestige of logical ideal keeps us from seeing that ordinary language is at least as important as formal logic. Furthermore, the multiplicity of language games is not static. As Patiño (1963:123-124) states: ‘In contrast to the traditional picture of language presented by Logic, unitary and schematic, the variety of means and uses of speech is infinite. And this multiplicity is not something fixed, something determined forever’. To us, the multiplicity and variability of language games are also due to logical multiplicity and the fact that *some concepts do possess a greater logical multiplicity* than others do. This will be addressed through some examples from chess in the following section. By adopting such a strategy and not a fully developed argument, we hope to contribute to the realization of Russell’s misunderstanding of *TLP* and the lack of understanding of *logical multiplicity* in Moore (1959). Also, Wittgenstein never intended to help develop an univocal language in the likes of logical empiricists. The idea of logical multiplicity is rather in the realm of “what can be shown but not said”. Seen in this light, ever since *TLP*, Wittgenstein’s concerns were more related to the properties of our actual, ordinary language and its powers to express something about the world and ourselves.

4. Wittgenstein’s chess metaphor revisited: logical multiplicity vs. the fetish of formal logic

“What is characteristic of chess is the logical multiplicity of its rules” is an idea that Wittgenstein expressed many times. Moore (1959:292, ff.) manifests his incomprehension of this thesis while referring to the Lectures of 1930-1933:

But if by 'the rules of chess' he meant, as I think he probably did, the rules which govern the moves which may be made by pieces of different sorts,

e.g. by pawns and bishops, and was suggesting that the 'logical multiplicity' of the rules which govern the possible moves of a pawn and a bishop is sufficient to distinguish a pawn from a bishop, I think he was wrong. The rule that a pawn can only make certain moves certainly, I think, does not mean that any piece the rules for the moves of which have a certain 'logical multiplicity' (whatever that may mean) may only make the moves in question, even if he was right in holding that the rules for the moves of pawns have a different 'logical multiplicity' from those for the moves of bishops; and similarly in the case of all the other different kinds of pieces.

Moore had only a superficial understanding of chess and its rules and the nature of the pieces, whereas Wittgenstein evidences a more profound comprehension of the game and its implications for the theory of meaning. A pawn has a multiplicity of movements that cannot occur with the bishop. The latter, has clearly differentiated (univocal) movements, whereas the pawn has at least half a dozen distinctive (multivocal) features, namely: (i) never goes backwards; (ii) advances forward and captures in diagonals; (iii) captures *en passant*; (iv) when it reaches the end of the board, it can be transformed into a queen, rook, bishop or knight; (v) forms structures as a set or subassemblies; (vi) at the beginning of a game, in the first move, it has the option of moving one or two squares (at the player's will). It is then fair to say that *a pawn has a greater logical multiplicity than a bishop*.

Getting back to Moore, he seems to not have grasped that Wittgenstein's comparison between a bishop and a pawn implies a contraposition between a piece that moves in a clear and univocal way (exclusively in diagonals) with another one, the pawn, that has a multiplicity of options of movements and transformations, which make of it a very special piece. Another important omission by Moore lies in that he does not comprehend that it is not even necessary to replace a missing pawn on the board with a button or another object, for any experienced player can correctly conduct his chess strategy having information only by hearsay of each move made by his opponent. In Wittgenstein's own words in *WWK* (1979, p. 104):

It does not matter what a pawn looks like. It is rather the totality of rules of a game that yields the logical position of a pawn. A pawn is a variable, just like 'x' in logic. It is clear that in chess it is not the actual movements that matter. The moves on a chess-board are not the movements of physics.

Another side of the same issue consists in considering not only the rules of legal movements of the pieces but also the *rules of general strategy*. Once again, we come to a discussion on the *logical multiplicity* of the rules of strategy. An example is the game Bent Larsen vs. Quinteros 1975 (*Figure 1*). Larsen goes against the rules for the openings recommended in chess manuals. The rule is that one is not to make many moves of pawns in the opening. Yet he makes 12 pawn moves in his first 15 turns. His strategy is correct, as the game proved at the end. This example illustrates the extent to which Wittgenstein was right in appealing to chess in his attempts to clarify the notion of logical multiplicity of language and how little attention has been paid to it for his correct understanding.



Figure 1: Bent Larsen vs. Quinteros 1975. 15.a5.

Another example of logical multiplicity of general strategic rules for the middle game comes from Larsen. In Leningrad (1973) against Uhlman and Smejkal, he played the Dutch defense in both games. According to the cannon, the bishop of the black pieces that runs in the light squares is “bad”. Larsen shows that the restriction of mobility attributed to that bishop in such positions is not permanent and that there are means to turn that “bad bishop” into a “good” one. Once asked if he was seeking to play a game of “correct” chess, Larsen prompted: “Not that fast, pal! The key of that matter is that chess does not respond to a strict criterion of correctness: Chess is a multiform

game!”. We interpret this reference to chess as a “multiform game” as an expression of its logical multiplicity.

5. Logical multiplicity, chess and final remarks

G. H. von Wright (1955:527) stated that Wittgenstein “once said that he felt as though he were writing for people who would think in a quite different way, breathe a different air of life, from that of present-day men. For people of a different culture, as it were.” In that vein, we think that we, from a different cultural and temporal context, can now expand the chess metaphor in Wittgenstein to Chess960 and thus, the comprehension of logical multiplicity. *Chess960 is an enhanced variant of the game that precisely exhibits a greater logical multiplicity than classic chess.* We will try to illustrate this by appealing to some examples related to the expansion of the rules. Gligoric (2003:74) points out the complexity of *orthodox chess*. For him, the numerous attempts to modify it did not manage to grasp its complexity and richness. The introduction of Chess960 by Robert Fischer has succeeded where other proposals failed, since the greater logical multiplicity of this variant allows for *bounded randomness* at the opening –which sums for novelties– while preserving the flavor of classic, orthodox chess.

Chess960 constitutes a *revolutionary change* –in a Kuhnian sense–, where there is an expansion of the rules for the initial position of the pieces, and orthodox chess is just one of the 960 possibilities for the start. This initial setting allows for keeping the basic, deep strategy of orthodox chess while allowing randomness at the beginning of games. The logical possibilities and the logical multiplicity of the game are richer and at the same time, it keeps not so skilled players to use preconceived recipes. The game acquires a new dimension compared to traditional chess. It has the effect of altering the opening to the point of defying traditional theory. After a number of 12 to 20 moves, the game looks just like one of classic chess, and the rules of strategy for middle- and endgame remain valid. Chess960 leaves room for creativity while largely preserving traditional rules. Chess960 vastly illustrates the notion of logical multiplicity. The rules for the extraordinary movement of *Castle* (Figure 2) constitute a central example. *An examination of the new rules illustrates the greater logical multiplicity of rules with respect to classic chess.* It is important

to emphasize that even with these new rules, *deep general strategy does not change* for the middlegame and endgame. Adapting the rules of castle of chess960 to the rules of classic chess is what preserves the deep general strategy.

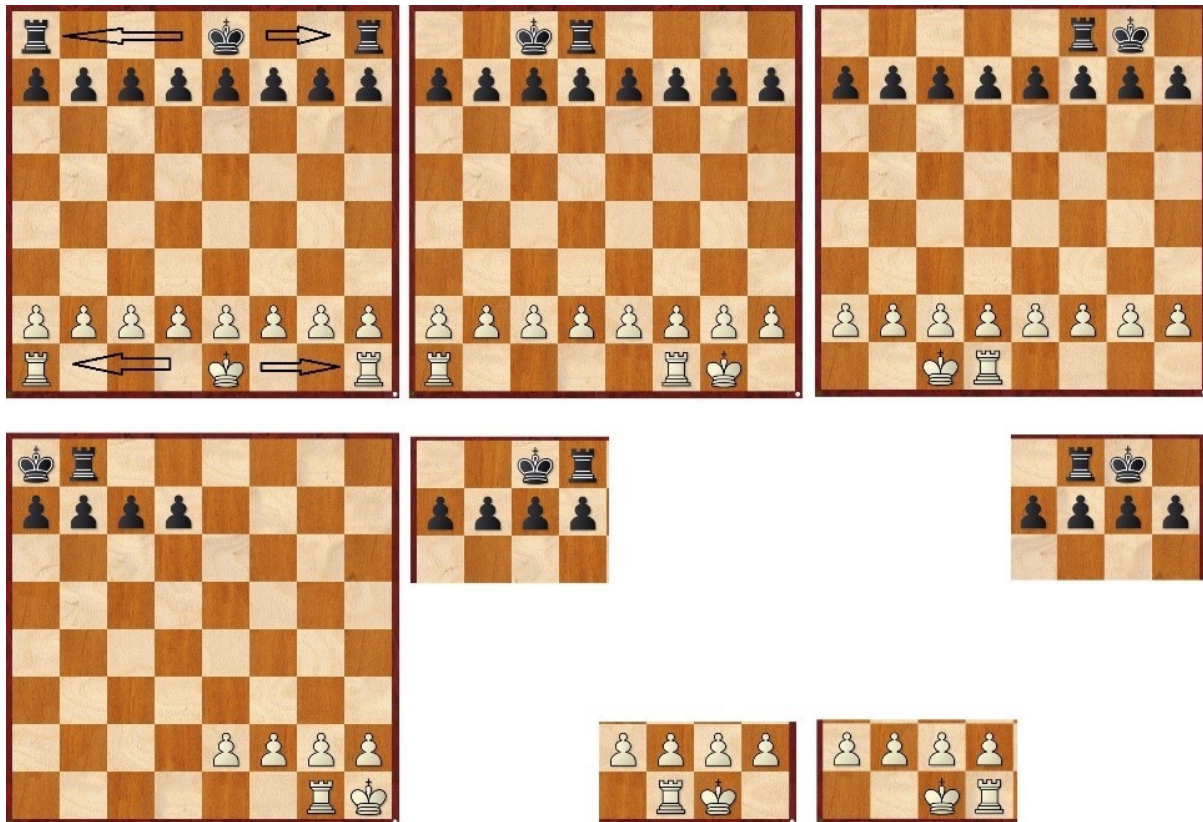


Figure 2: Rules for Castle in Chess960.

The chess960 game of Nakamura vs. Carlsen 2018 (*Figure 3*) is a great example of how castle is possible in the first move –only possible after four moves in classic chess–, one of the many cases that illustrate the enhancement of the logical multiplicity of the rules. We affirm that there is an enhanced logical

multiplicity in that novel game situations are instantiated for the development of the opening of the game in comparison with classic chess. It is only after the revision (analysis) that the implications of the opening situation of the pieces that its complexity can be noticed, just as it is the case with the logical multiplicity of the phenomena that can only be identified after logical research (*cfr.* the previous quote of *RLF* in section 2). This is also indirectly evidenced by the fact that, in tournaments, players and their teams are allowed to analyze the initial position for 10 minutes before starting to play in a *classic chess960* game.

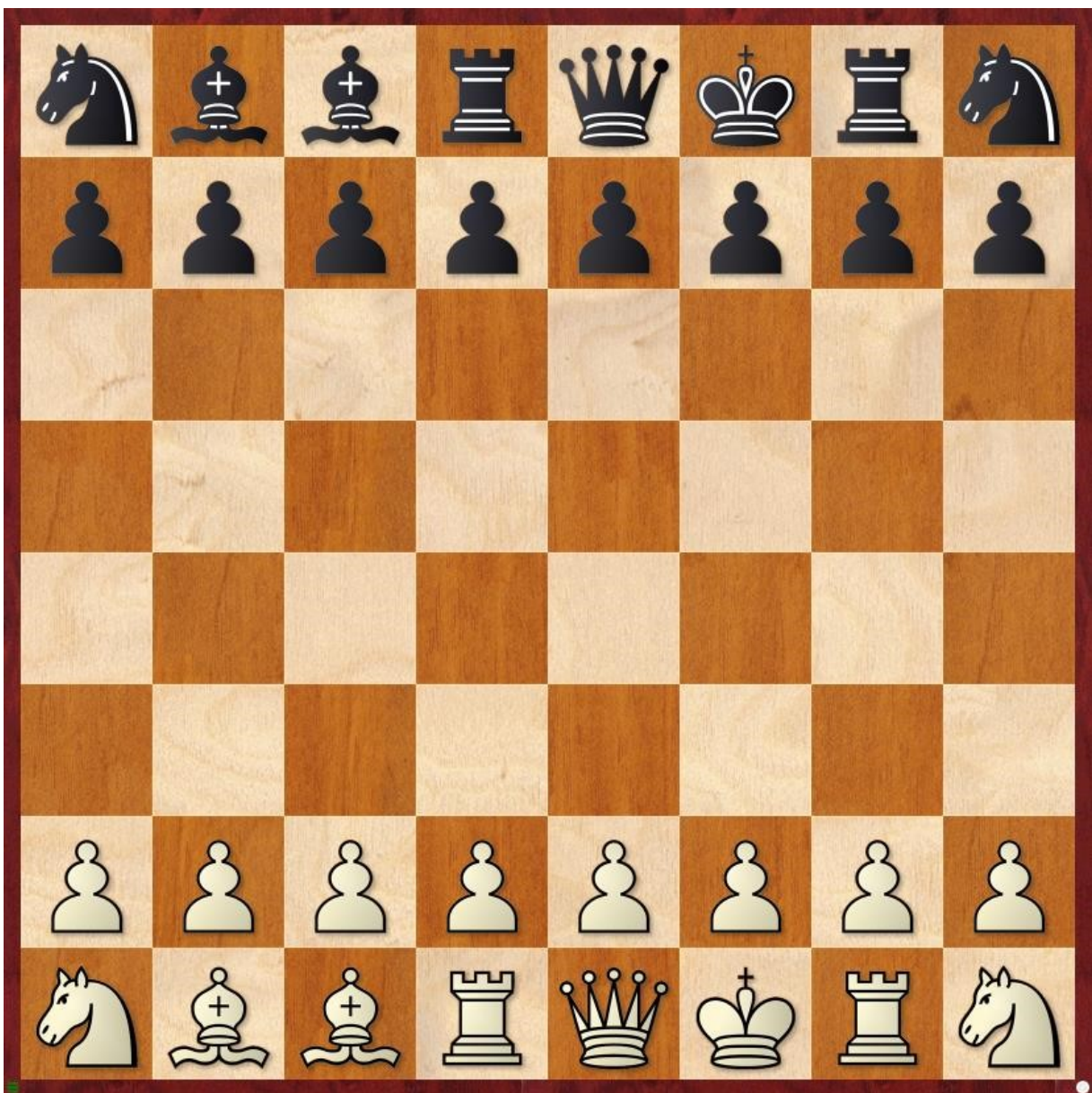


Figure 3: Nakamura vs. Carlsen 2018. Position 324 of chess960. Castle at the first move.

The previous examples illustrate the feature of logical multiplicity by relating current chess developments to what Wittgenstein actually said about logical multiplicity. Of course, being it a feature that can be shown, but not said (as we believe), it is simply not possible to exhaust the subject. Further development is still required, as our research is still a work in progress. Fischer's objective was to keep the fundamental essence of classic chess while promoting innovation. Following Bermúdez (2013), we point out that orthodox chess is to Chess960 what classic particle mechanics are to the physics of relativity. The mutual implications and relations between chess, chess960, cognitive science, and Wittgenstein's philosophy are currently a subject under investigation.

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Acknowledgement

The authors would like to thank the anonymous referee for the useful suggestions for the correction of this paper.

Tractarian Cutlery: Formal Series and Equinumerosity

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Abstract

For Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus*, the limits of language would appear to be roughly the limits of first-order logic. Statements of equinumerosity, however, can't be expressed in standard first-order logic (FOL). It thus might appear that a Tractarian notation can't express such clearly meaningful ordinary-language sentences. If this proved correct, it would pose a significant problem, for one of Wittgenstein's criteria for a satisfactory logical notation is surely that it can express any meaningful sentence. Here I introduce, to the best of my knowledge for the first time, something Wittgenstein suggests but doesn't show how to construct: a bracket-expression representing a formal series (*Formenreihe*) of propositions. This involves a novel way of indicating the form of an arbitrary proposition in the series and the form of the next proposition in the series. The first-order notation in which this is accomplished satisfies Wittgenstein's logico-philosophical demands by employing just one logical operator, $N\alpha(\xi)$, based on his operator $N(\xi)$; and expressing identity and difference of meanings without an identity-sign, but via identity and difference of signs. I employ these conventions to express two propositions that play crucial roles in Frege's logicist derivation of the basic laws of arithmetic and that he analyzes as second-order: a statement of equinumerosity and the statement "*b* is a successor of *a*". This demonstrates that the expressive capacity of the notation I propose is greater than that of FOL.

For Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus*, the limits of my language mean the limits of my world (5.62), and the limits of language, it would appear, mean roughly the limits of first-order logic. (I qualify this suggestion with "roughly" in the light of the simple second-order proposition Wittgenstein gives at 5.5261.) This coheres with his rejection of talk of classes (4.1272, 6.031), Russell's theory of types (3.331-3.332), and Frege's and Russell's treatments of arithmetic (6.2-6.24), issues we can't explore here (cf. Marion and Okada 2014). Certain statements, however, such as "There's at least one fork and at least one knife and there are exactly as many forks as there are knives" ($\#F=\#K$), can't be expressed in standard first-order predicate logic with identity (FOL). For such a statement of equinumerosity is typically analyzed as a second-order statement that there's a relation establishing a one-to-one correspondence between the *F*'s and the *K*'s. It thus might appear that a Tractarian notation can't express such obviously meaningful ordinary-language sentences. If this proved correct, it would pose a significant problem, for one of Wittgenstein's criteria for a "correct *Begriffsschrift*" (5.534; cf. 3.325) is surely that it can express any meaningful sentence.

Here I show how a first-order notation conforming to Wittgenstein's logico-philosophical demands can express statements of equinumerosity, thus demonstrating that its expressive capacity is greater than that of FOL. To accomplish this, I introduce a convention for employing a *Tractatus*-style bracket-expression (*Klammerausdruck*) to represent a formal series (*Formenreihe*) of propositions. This involves a novel technique for indicating the form of an arbitrary proposition in the formal series and the form of the next proposition in the series.

Not only do statements of equinumerosity occur in ordinary language, but they play key roles in Frege's logicist derivation of the basic laws of arithmetic. I also employ bracket-expressions to provide a first-order analysis of another such proposition: "*b* is a successor of *a*" (4.1273), the classical second-order expression of which is formula 76 in Frege (1879: 62); and of "Something is a successor of something else".

I'll employ a notation, $\mathcal{L}_{N\alpha\xi}$ (pronounced "elnax"), introduced in my (2019), expanded to include bracket-expressions representing formal series of propositions. $\mathcal{L}_{N\alpha\xi}$ possesses two key properties Wittgenstein demands of a satisfactory notation. First, it expresses identity and difference of meaning without an identity-sign, but via identity and difference of signs (5.53). $\mathcal{L}_{N\alpha\xi}$ satisfies this demand by employing what's known as "weakly-exclusive" semantics, embodied in semantic rules (Sem2) and (Sem4) below, and which Rogers and Wehmeier (2012: 540-543) convincingly argue should be attributed to the *Tractatus*. Second, $\mathcal{L}_{N\alpha\xi}$ employs just one logical operator, $N\alpha(\xi)$, based on Wittgenstein's $N(\xi)$, which does "double-duty" of sentential and quantificational joint negation.

For Wittgenstein, "every proposition is a result of successive applications to elementary propositions of the operation $N(\xi)$ " (6.001; cf. 5.5). ξ is a variable whose values are propositions, and $N(\xi)$ is an iterable operation resulting in a proposition that's true if and only if these propositions are false (5.5-5.502, 5.51-5.52). He writes: "We can distinguish 3 kinds of description" (5.501) determining the propositions represented by ξ . First, there's "direct enumeration, in which case we can simply substitute for the variable the constants that are its values" (5.501). " $N(p, q, r)$ ", for example, is logically

equivalent to FOL sentence “ $(\sim p \wedge \sim q \wedge \sim r)$ ” (cf. 5.51). Second, there’s “giving a function fx whose values for all values of x are the propositions to be described” (5.501). For example, “[i]f ξ has as its values all the values of a function fx for all values of x , then $N(\xi) = \sim(\exists x).fx$ ” (5.52).

Neither the first nor the second kind of description permits the expression of sentences not expressible in FOL, so they can’t help with our cutlery problem. The third, however, can: “giving a formal rule that governs the construction of the propositions, in which case the terms of the bracket-expression are all the terms of a formal series” (5.501). A series is formal if it’s constructed by beginning with an initial term and generating each subsequent term by iteratively applying an operation (5.232, 5.252-5.253).

Wittgenstein gives an example of a proposition involving a formal series:

If we want to express in conceptual notation the general proposition “ b is a successor of a ”, then we require an expression for the general term of the formal series

aRb ,

$(\exists x)(aRx \wedge xRb)$,

$(\exists x)(\exists y)(aRx \wedge xRy \wedge yRb), \dots$ (4.1273, notation modernized)

He provides a convention for such expressions:

I write the general term of the formal series $a, O'a, O'O'a, \dots$ as “[$a, x, O'x$]”. This bracket-expression is a variable. The first term of the bracket-expression is the beginning of the formal series, the second is the form of an arbitrary term x in the series, and the third is the form of the term that immediately follows x in the series. (5.2522, translation modified)

If a is a proposition, this symbol indicates “the general form of the operation that generates the next term from the proposition that precedes it” (4.1273). I’ll write the bracket-expression representing the formal series of propositions $\varphi_1, \varphi_2, \dots$ as

$$[\varphi_1; \varphi_a; \varphi_{a+1}],$$

for perspicuity replacing Wittgenstein's commas with semicolons. He employs bracket-expressions in giving the general form of propositions (6-6.001) and defining cardinal numbers (6.02, 6.03), but doesn't show how to construct a bracket-expression representing a formal series of propositions involved in the analysis of any actual proposition, such as "*b* is a successor of *a*".

Floyd (2001) employs a version of Wittgenstein's bracket-notation, weakly-exclusive semantics, and an N-notation. Her technique can generate the series of first-order statements $\#F=\#K=1$, $\#F=\#K=2$, . . . (cf. Floyd 2001: 169), using $\#\Phi=\#\Psi=n$ to mean that there are exactly n Φ 's and exactly n Ψ 's. It can't, however, generate the "general proposition" (4.1273) $\#F=\#K$ of which they're instances. Ricketts (2012, 2014) views second-order statements as "generalized disjunctions" or "generalized conjunctions" of such instances, but expresses skepticism that a bracket-notation is workable (2012: 136). Weiss (2017) employs a modified bracket-notation in a non-Tractarian notation to construct formal series of propositions by substituting signs for signs, but permitting only a finite number of variables (2017: 21f). Although this works in the case of the ancestral, it can't express ascriptions of number, such as statements of equinumerosity, since in an infinite domain an infinite number of variables is required (Säbel 2018: 213). And for Wittgenstein a satisfactory logical notation mustn't preclude such a domain (4.2211), even though the number of objects in any universe can't be stated (4.1272).

Thus, to the best of my knowledge, no proposals have been made to date demonstrating how to express a proposition by means of a bracket-expression representing a formal series of propositions.

I'll now propose a way to do this. $[\varphi_1; \varphi_a; \varphi_{a+1}]$ represents formal series of propositions $\varphi_1, \varphi_2, \dots$ iff the following conditions are met:

FS1: φ_1 is a wff.

FS2: φ_a results from φ_1 by inserting finitely many (strings of) signs $\sigma_1, \sigma_2, \dots$, each immediately followed by "...". The numerical values of all newly-introduced subscripts in φ_a must be greater than those of any subscripts occurring in φ_1 , and those of any newly-introduced binding or bound variables must be greater than those of any constant names.

FS3: Removing all occurrences of "..." in φ_a results in a wff.

FS4: φ_{a+1} results from φ_a by replacing $\sigma_1\dots$ with $\sigma_1\sigma_1'\dots$, $\sigma_2\dots$ with $\sigma_2\sigma_2'\dots$, \dots , where σ_1' looks just like σ_1 , σ_2' just like σ_2 , \dots , except that in σ_1' , σ_2' , \dots 1 is added to some or no subscripts in $\sigma_1, \sigma_2, \dots$, respectively.

FS5: Removing all occurrences of “...” in φ_{a+1} results in a wff.

We employ bracket-expressions to generate “interior” formal series of signs that we then use to generate formal series of propositions. Using $\sigma\sigma'\dots$ to stand for any of $\sigma_1\sigma_1'\dots, \sigma_2\sigma_2'\dots, \dots$, this sign represents formal series $\sigma, \sigma\sigma', \sigma\sigma'\sigma'', \dots$; these terms occur, respectively, in $\varphi_2, \varphi_3, \varphi_4, \dots$. This series is generated by the following operation: σ'' results from σ' by adding 1 to any subscripts formed by adding 1 to a subscript in σ in generating σ' from σ ; σ''' results from σ'' by adding 1 to any subscripts formed by adding 1 to a subscript in σ' in generating σ'' from σ' , \dots . In the formal series of propositions represented by $[\varphi_1; \varphi_a; \varphi_{a+1}]$, after φ_1, φ_{n+1} results from φ_{a+1} by replacing each $\sigma_1\sigma_1'\dots, \sigma_2\sigma_2'\dots, \dots$ with the n^{th} term in its respective formal series of signs. $[\varphi_1; \varphi_a; \varphi_{a+1}]$ represents all terms in this formal series of propositions. No circularity (cf. 4.1273) is involved in employing these formal series to express ascriptions of number, since numerals are used just to generate signs, not to express cardinals.

To see how this works, let’s take Wittgenstein’s example “ b is a successor of a ”.

Bracket-expression

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{“}[\underline{aRb}; (\exists \underline{x_1})(\dots \underline{aRx_1} \wedge \underline{x_1R\dots b})\dots]; \\ & \underline{(\exists x_1)((\exists \underline{x_2})(\dots \underline{aRx_1} \wedge \underline{x_1Rx_2} \wedge \underline{x_2R\dots b}))\dots]} \text{”} \end{aligned}$$

represents the formal series of propositions Wittgenstein gives at 4.1273. For perspicuity, $\sigma_1, \sigma_2, \dots$ are underlined and $\sigma_1', \sigma_2', \dots$ are **bold underlined**. Here,

σ_1 is “ $(\exists x_1)$ ”,

σ_1' is “ **$(\exists x_2)$** ”,

σ_2 is “ $x_1 \wedge x_1R$ ”,

σ_2' is “ **$x_2 \wedge x_2R$** ”,

σ_3 is “ $\underline{\quad}$ ”, and σ_3' is “ **$\underline{\quad}$** ”.

The fourth term in this formal series of propositions is thus

“($\exists x_1$)(($\exists x_2$)(($\exists x_3$)($aRx_1 \wedge x_1Rx_2 \wedge x_2Rx_3 \wedge x_3Rb$))))”.

We’ve thus accomplished something that’s to the best of my knowledge novel: showing how to construct a bracket-expression representing a formal series of propositions in a manner conforming to the convention Wittgenstein suggests but doesn’t lay out in detail.

We now need to understand $\mathcal{L}_{N\alpha\xi}$, the Tractarian notation I’ll be employing. Its syntax is this:

Syn1: A predicate $A, \dots, Z, A_1, \dots, Z_n$ followed by finitely many variables $a, \dots, z, a_1, \dots, z_n$ is a wff.

Syn2: If $\varphi_1, \dots, \varphi_n$ are finitely many wff’s and α is a variable, then

$$N\alpha(\varphi_1, \dots, \varphi_n)$$

is a wff.

Syn3: If $[\varphi_1; \varphi_a; \varphi_{a+1}]$ fulfills conditions (FS1)-(FS5) and α is a variable, then

$$N\alpha([\varphi_1; \varphi_a; \varphi_{a+1}])$$

is a wff.

$\mathcal{L}_{N\alpha\xi}$ contains just one logical operator, $N\alpha(\xi)$, which is a jointly-negating quantifier binding occurrences of α in the formulas represented by ξ much as a quantifier in FOL binds variables occurring in its scope. All free variables are constant names. The reader may find helpful the elucidation of $\mathcal{L}_{N\alpha\xi}$ in my (2019), which also provides a translation-procedure from this notation into one all of whose sentences conform to the syntax of FOL.

Here are the semantics of $\mathcal{L}_{N\alpha\xi}$:

Sem1: Each constant name refers to exactly one object.

Sem2: Occurrences of constant names refer to different objects iff these occurrences are tokens of different types of signs.

Sem3: Elementary proposition $\Phi\alpha_1\dots\alpha_n$ is true iff ordered n -tuple of constant names $\alpha_1 \dots \alpha_n$ satisfies n -place predicate Φ .

Sem4: If in $N\alpha_1(\varphi_1, \dots, \varphi_n)$ α_1 occurs free in any formulas $\varphi_1, \dots, \varphi_n$ or in $N\alpha_1([\varphi_1; \varphi_a; \varphi_{a+1}])$ α_1 occurs free in any formulas $\varphi_1, \varphi_2, \dots$ represented

by $[\varphi_1; \varphi_a; \varphi_{a+1}]$, then α_1 is a bound variable whose range doesn't intersect with the range or reference of bound variable or constant name α_2 iff there's a formula in which both α_1 and α_2 occur free.

Sem5: Each bound variable has a non-empty range: all objects in the universe except as precluded by (Sem2) and (Sem4).

Sem6: Given (Sem1)-(Sem5), $N\alpha(\varphi_1, \dots, \varphi_n)$ is true iff each result of uniformly substituting a constant name for all free occurrences of α in formulas $\varphi_1, \dots, \varphi_n$ is false.

Sem7: Given (Sem1)-(Sem6), $N\alpha([\varphi_1; \varphi_a; \varphi_{a+1}])$ is true iff each result of uniformly substituting a constant name for all free occurrences of α in the formulas $\varphi_1, \varphi_2, \dots$ represented by $[\varphi_1; \varphi_a; \varphi_{a+1}]$ is false.

If in $N\alpha(\varphi_1, \dots, \varphi_n)$ α doesn't occur free in any formulas $\varphi_1, \dots, \varphi_n$, then the α , but not the N, in $N\alpha$ is vacuous, so here $N\alpha(\xi)$ works as sentential, not quantificational, joint negation.

We'll now employ bracket-expressions representing formal series of propositions to express "general proposition[s]" (4.1273). For example, to express " b is a successor of a " in $\mathcal{L}_{N\alpha\xi}$, we apply $Nc(\xi)$ to the terms in the formal series of propositions that are logically equivalent to the negations of the terms in the bracket-expression given above, interpreted weakly exclusively. In the $\mathcal{L}_{N\alpha\xi}$ expressions below, " c " doesn't occur free, so $Nc(\xi)$ works as sentential joint negation. " b is a successor of a " thus reads

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{"Nc}([\text{Nc}(\text{Rab}); \\ & \underline{\text{Na}_1(\text{Nc}(\dots\text{Nc}(\text{Raa}_1), \text{Nc}(\text{Ra}_1\dots b)))\dots}; \\ & \underline{\text{Na}_1(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_2(\text{Nc}(\dots\text{Nc}(\text{Raa}_1), \\ & \underline{\text{Nc}(\text{Ra}_1\text{a}_2), \text{Nc}(\text{Ra}_2\dots b))))\dots)]\text{"}. \end{aligned}$$

The operations applied to a formal series of propositions represented by a bracket-expression may also include $N\alpha(\xi)$ in its quantificational role. For example, we can express "Something is a successor of something else" as

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{"Nc}(\text{Na}(\text{Nc}(\text{Nb}(\text{Nc}([\text{Nc}(\text{Rab}); \\ & \underline{\text{Na}_1(\text{Nc}(\dots\text{Nc}(\text{Raa}_1), \text{Nc}(\text{Ra}_1\dots b)))\dots}; \end{aligned}$$

$$\underline{Na_1(Nc(\underline{Na_2(Nc(\dots Nc(Raa_1), Nc(Ra_1 a_2)), Nc(Ra_2 \dots b))))))\dots))}.$$

Here, $Na(\xi)$ and $Nb(\xi)$ are jointly-negating quantifiers binding the (free) occurrences of “ a ” and “ b ” in the bracket-expression.

Turning now to $\#F=\#K$, I’ll begin with an informal explanation of how to express this proposition in $\mathcal{L}_{N\alpha\xi}$. An initial schema for its expression is

$$Nc(Nc([\#F=\#K=1; \#F=\#K=a; \#F=\#K=a+1])).$$

This represents the negation of the joint negation, hence the disjunction, of the terms in the formal series of propositions $\#F=\#K=1, \#F=\#K=2, \dots$. Next, using $\#\Phi \geq k$ to mean that there are at least k Φ ’s, a schema for expressing $\#F=\#K=n$ is

$$(\#F \geq n \wedge \sim \#F \geq n+1 \wedge \#K \geq n \wedge \sim \#K \geq n+1)$$

in FOL, and

$$Nc(Nc(\#F \geq n), \#F \geq n+1, Nc(\#K \geq n), \#K \geq n+1)$$

in $\mathcal{L}_{N\alpha\xi}$. Combining these schemata gives us the following schema for expressing $\#F=\#K$:

$$\begin{aligned} &Nc(Nc([Nc(Nc(\#F \geq 1), \#F \geq 2, Nc(\#K \geq 1), \#K \geq 2); \\ &Nc(Nc(\#F \geq a), \#F \geq a+1, Nc(\#K \geq a), \#K \geq a+1); \\ &Nc(Nc(\#F \geq a+1), \#F \geq a+2, Nc(\#K \geq a+1), \#K \geq a+2)])); \end{aligned}$$

Finally, I represent the formal series of propositions $\#F \geq 1, \#F \geq 2, \dots$, expressed in FOL as

$$\begin{aligned} &(\exists x_1)Fx_1, \\ &(\exists x_1)(\exists x_2)(Fx_1 \wedge Fx_2 \wedge \sim x_1 = x_2), \\ &(\exists x_1)(\exists x_2)(\exists x_3)(Fx_1 \wedge Fx_2 \wedge Fx_3 \wedge \sim x_1 = x_2 \wedge \sim x_1 = x_3 \wedge \sim x_2 = x_3), \dots, \end{aligned}$$

with bracket-expression

$$\begin{aligned} &“[Nc(Na_1(Nc(Nc(Fa_1))))); \\ &Nc(Na_1(\underline{Nc(Na_2(\dots Nc(Nc(Fa_1), Nc(Fa_2)\dots))\dots}))]; \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_1(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_2(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_3(\dots \text{Nc}(\text{Nc}(\text{Fa}_1), \text{Nc}(\text{Fa}_2), \underline{\text{Nc}(\text{Fa}_3)\dots)}))))))\dots)]).$$

Replacing “F” with “K” yields the bracket-expression representing $\#K \geq 1$, $\#K \geq 2$,

We thus express $\#F = \#K$ in $\mathcal{L}_{\text{N}\alpha\xi}$ as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{“Nc}(\text{Nc}([\text{Nc}(\text{Nc}(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_1(\text{Nc}(\text{Nc}(\text{Fa}_1))))), \\ & \text{Nc}(\text{Na}_1(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_2(\text{Nc}(\text{Nc}(\text{Fa}_1), \text{Nc}(\text{Fa}_2)))))), \\ & \text{Nc}(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_1(\text{Nc}(\text{Nc}(\text{Ka}_1))))), \\ & \text{Nc}(\text{Na}_1(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_2(\text{Nc}(\text{Nc}(\text{Ka}_1), \text{Nc}(\text{Ka}_2))))))\dots); \\ & \text{Nc}(\text{Nc}(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_1(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_2(\dots \text{Nc}(\text{Nc}(\text{Fa}_1), \\ & \underline{\text{Nc}(\text{Fa}_2)\dots)}\dots))), \text{Nc}(\text{Na}_1(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_2(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_3(\dots \text{Nc}(\text{Nc}(\text{Fa}_1), \\ & \text{Nc}(\text{Fa}_2), \text{Nc}(\text{Fa}_3)\dots))))\dots))), \\ & \text{Nc}(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_1(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_2(\dots \text{Nc}(\text{Nc}(\text{Ka}_1), \text{Nc}(\text{Ka}_2)\dots))))\dots))), \\ & \text{Nc}(\text{Na}_1(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_2(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_3(\dots \text{Nc}(\text{Nc}(\text{Ka}_1), \\ & \text{Nc}(\text{Ka}_2), \text{Nc}(\text{Ka}_3)\dots))))\dots))))); \\ & (\text{Nc}(\text{Nc}(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_1(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_2(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_3(\dots \text{Nc}(\text{Nc}(\text{Fa}_1), \\ & \underline{\text{Nc}(\text{Fa}_2), \text{Nc}(\text{Fa}_3)\dots)}\dots))))\dots))), \\ & \text{Nc}(\text{Na}_1(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_2(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_3(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_4(\dots \text{Nc}(\text{Nc}(\text{Fa}_1), \\ & \text{Nc}(\text{Fa}_2), \text{Nc}(\text{Fa}_3), \text{Nc}(\text{Fa}_4)\dots))))\dots))))), \\ & \text{Nc}(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_1(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_2(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_3(\dots (\text{Nc}(\text{Ka}_1), \text{Nc}(\text{Ka}_2), \\ & \underline{\text{Nc}(\text{Ka}_3)\dots)}\dots))))\dots))), \\ & \text{Nc}(\text{Na}_1(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_2(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_3(\text{Nc}(\text{Na}_4(\dots \text{Nc}(\text{Nc}(\text{Ka}_1), \\ & \text{Nc}(\text{Ka}_2), \text{Nc}(\text{Ka}_3), \text{Nc}(\text{Ka}_4)\dots))))\dots))))\dots)]\dots)”.$$

The number of terms in formal series expressed in $\mathcal{L}_{\text{N}\alpha\xi}$ often depends on the number of objects in the universe. The n^{th} terms in the formal series of propositions used in our three examples are meaningful only if there are at least $n + 1$ objects.

Our “variable” (5.2522) bracket-expressions representing formal series of propositions are analogous to bound variables in FOL, for they permit the first-order expression of propositions whose truth-conditions may be infinitely complex. Whereas bound variables are used to attribute predicates to countably many ordered n -tuples of objects, bracket-expressions permit the expression of truth-functions of countably many propositions.

The three propositions as analyzed above are first-order. Each is expressed not in its standard second-order way, but as a truth-function of the first-order propositions in the formal series represented by its bracket-expression. That several ordinary-language statements standardly analyzed as second-order can be expressed in this manner therefore circumvents a potential objection to the stringency of Wittgenstein’s logico-philosophical demands.

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Acknowledgement

Thanks to Gregory Landini, Timm Lampert, Yannis Arazam, and Jonathan Gombin.

Neither Picture, nor Theory, nor of Wittgenstein: The “Picture Theory” as the “Fabulating Function”

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Abstract

We present some arguments to reject the so called “picture theory of language” in TLP as a continuation of our previous work (2022). We claim that the “picture theory” can be considered as a fable originated in a significant portion of AngloSaxon tradition. A revision of the literature (not only limited to German and English) strongly suggest that it as a fabulation that developed in the late 1950s and early 1960s under the effects of Anscombe (1959). Bergson (1932) sees the “fabulatory function” as one of the causes of the development of religions. To us, there is a “family resemblance” between some Wittgensteinian interpretations and religious cults: After the formulation of an original fable (the “picture theory”), the original idea is uncritically assumed.

[I]l ne peut agir directement, mais puisque l'intelligence travaille sur des représentations, il en suscitera d' «imaginaires» qui tiendront tête à la représentation du réel et qui réussiront, par l'intermédiaire de l'intelligence même, à contrecarrer le travail intellectuel. Ainsi s'expliquerait la fonction fabulatrice. (Bergson 1932:64).

11. THE SECOND COMING. WELL, GOD HAS arrived. I met him on the 5.15 train.' Thus was Wittgenstein's return to Cambridge announced by Keynes in a letter to Lydia Lopokova [...]. (Monk 1990:255)

Introduction

We present some arguments to reject the positing of a “picture theory” in TLP. This contribution supplies further arguments against that well-established thesis after our previous work (2022). Now we claim that adhering to the thesis of a “picture theory” equals to follow a fable proposed by part of the Anglo-Saxon tradition. The epigraph aims towards considering the so called “picture theory” as a *fabulation* developed in the late 1950s and early 1960s under the influence of Anscombe (1959). For Bergson, the “fabulatory function” is one cause of the development of religions. There is a “family resemblance” between some Wittgensteinian interpretations and religious cults: After the formulation of an original fable (the “picture theory”), the original idea is uncritically assumed.

1. Theory or fabulation? What a theory is and why there is no such thing as a "picture theory" in *TLP*

Although there are two instances where Wittgenstein used the term *Bildtheorie* – MS 102 and MS 108 –, there are reasons to reject this as a smoking gun: One should first revise what is both (i) a philosophical and (ii) a scientific theory: (i) is a position that we adopt regarding a philosophical problem rather than a theory, for which it is ill advised to take it literally as such. As for (ii), we can define it very loosely as a set of propositions that are internally consistent and provide the means to predict the behavior of an object of study. Thus, the "picture theory" would be *at best* a "theory" in the first sense. However, the use of the term "theory" in that sense does not correspond to what a theory actually is.

2. How & when started the talk about a "picture theory"

Revising the literature (a Google Scholar search query via *Harzing's Publish or Perish Software 8.8*), there is a fistful of references to "picture theory" between 1921 and 1954 –7 references–. De Laguna (1924:108) is the first known mention thereof. Edna Daitz (1953:184) –reprinted as O'Shaughnessy (1966)– refers to "the Picture Theory" drawing "examples from three sources: Russell, Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, and Wisdom's articles on '*Logical Construction*' [(1953:184);(1966: 115)]. Between 1954 and 1958, there are 18 mentions of "picture theory" in the literature. **Chart 1** and **Table 1** illustrate the mentions to "*Bildtheorie*" and "picture theory" in the literature from 1921 to 2000.

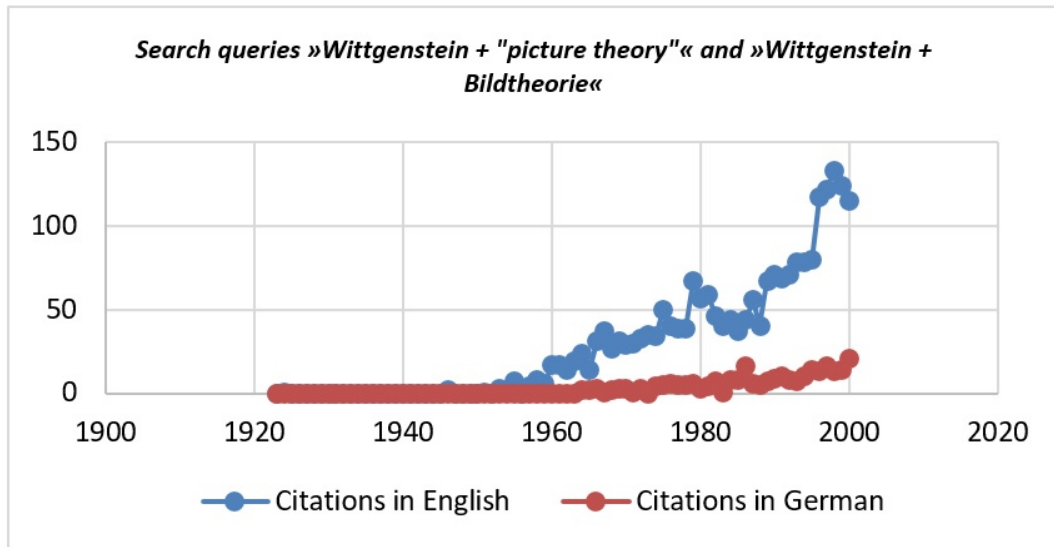


Chart 1: References to “picture theory” and “Bildtheorie” (1921-2000). Source: made by the authors.

Chart 1: References to “picture theory” and “Bildtheorie” (1921-2000). Source: made by the authors.

Year	Citations in English	Citations in German	Year	Citations in English	Citations in German	Year	Citations in English	Citations in German	Year	Citations in English	Citations in German
1921	0	0	1941	0	0	1961	16	0	1981	59	4
1922	0	0	1942	0	0	1962	13	0	1982	52	7
1923	0	0	1943	0	0	1963	15	0	1983	48	1
1924	1	0	1944	0	0	1964	23	2	1984	48	8
1925	0	0	1945	0	0	1965	14	2	1985	42	8
1926	0	0	1946	2	0	1966	32	3	1986	52	12
1927	0	0	1947	0	0	1967	37	1	1987	68	6
1928	0	0	1948	0	0	1968	27	2	1988	46	5
1929	0	0	1949	0	0	1969	30	3	1989	72	7
1930	0	0	1950	0	0	1970	28	3	1990	78	9
1931	0	0	1951	1	0	1971	30	1	1991	73	10
1932	0	0	1952	0	0	1972	33	3	1992	79	8
1933	0	0	1953	2	0	1973	35	0	1993	88	7
1934	0	0	1954	1	0	1974	34	4	1994	84	10
1935	0	0	1955	7	0	1975	50	5	1995	84	14
1936	0	0	1956	0	0	1976	40	6	1996	128	13
1937	0	0	1957	3	0	1977	38	5	1997	130	16
1938	0	0	1958	7	0	1978	39	5	1998	134	13
1939	0	0	1959	6	0	1979	67	6	1999	128	14
1940	0	0	1960	16	0	1980	56	3	2000	126	21

Table 1: References to “picture theory” and “Bildtheorie” (1921-2000).

Source: made by the authors.

It is only in the 1960s that the references to “Wittgenstein’s picture theory” start to proliferate, most likely after Anscombe (1959), who explicitly stated: “My first six chapters aim at giving the reader some idea of the ‘picture theory’ of the proposition” (p. 19). We consider this last work as the inflection point for the use of “picture theory” rather than previous instances that did not catch on

within the community of Wittgensteinian scholars. The first two references to a *Bildtheorie* –associated with Wittgenstein– in German date from 1964, and *it took up until 1986* to reach a two-digit number (12 references). Although we cannot claim to have covered all possible mentions, at least the case for identifying the cause of the trigger for the use of the term “picture theory” with Anscombe (1959) is very compelling. To us, this also affects the treatment of the *Nachlass*.

In our work of 2022 we claimed that there is an “underlying impulse to claim Wittgenstein as a distinctive product of a given national philosophical tradition”. In our view, this has played a prominent role in the persistence of the thesis of the “picture theory”. At best, there are actually some “*Bildideen*” “that affected his original starting point” (p. 61), –the conceptions of *Bild* in Hertz (1894) and Boltzmann (1897; 1905). This does not rule out the influence of the discussion on *Bilder* and *Darstellungen* in Vienna as registered by Janik & Toulmin (1973: 31).

The particularities of different languages constitute another factor that led us to question the “picture theory” (that is, our analysis of the etymology of *Bild* and *Bildung* and different translations of *TLP* to English and Spanish while also considering other elements in the literature). Next, we will refer to the Finnish Georg von Wright (whose mother tongue was Swedish). As we shall see, his case –related to languages different from German and English– is very telling and compelling regarding the translations and their role in crystallizing the notion of “picture theory”.

3. Georg von Wright's *Biographical Sketch* in Swedish (1954) and the debate on Spanish translations

Malcolm (1958) includes it as a first hand testimony of someone that closely knew Wittgenstein. As such, von Wright was an authorized voice given his knowledge of Wittgenstein’s works and life. However, that is not the first English version of the biographical sketch: it was first published in 1955. In this version, von Wright (p. 538) states that

Wittgenstein's "new" philosophy entails the rejection of some of the fundamental thoughts of the *Tractatus*. He abandoned *the picture-theory of*

language, the doctrine that all significant propositions are truth-functions of elementary propositions, and the doctrine of the unspeakable. (Emphasis is ours).

In subsequent editions, the expression "picture theory of language" is preserved. However, the original appeared in 1954 in Finland. *The original text in Swedish* states "Han överger sin teori om språket som bild" ("He abandons his theory of language as image"). Either if we granted that it could also be translated as "He abandoned the picture-theory of language", von Wright, Finnish by birth and a Swedish-speaker, was not a native speaker of German or English. Yet he did not refer to the "picture theory" directly one single time in his works, leaving aside the instance that is to us a mere product of translation. Again, this is not either a smoking gun but still yields the fact that the "picture theory" is a fabrication of the Anglo-Saxon philosophical tradition.

The above serves to highlight the problems introduced by the subtleties related to the translations. Our two works of 2022 contain other considerations with respect to the continuing use of the concept of *Bild* by Wittgenstein from *TLP* to the *PI*. There is also a debate on the translation to other languages: to this day, there are six (!) Spanish translations of *TLP*, which diverge in key concepts, thus affecting the ongoing discussion and understanding of Wittgenstein's philosophy. The debate between the Spaniard Padilla Gálvez and the Mexican Tomasini, two of the translators, is a clear example of this situation. Others have joined since the publication of Padilla Gálvez (2016). Unsurprisingly, one of the main differences between their translations precisely relates to *Bild*. Where Padilla Gálvez translates it as "imagen" (*image*), Tomasini opts for "retrato" (*portrait*). It is clear to us that "portrait" falls short to capture the whole dimension of what a *Bild* is and its *logical multiplicity*.

4. More on why "ein Bild" is not "a picture"

Admittedly, *picture* is one possible English translation of the German word *Bild*. However, *Bild* has a greater *logical multiplicity* than *picture* within our context. Why then, advocating for a different English translation?

It is clear that the young Wittgenstein was well acquainted with the works of Hertz and Boltzmann by 1906 and Frege's *Grundgesetze* by 1911; Studying with Boltzmann was not possible anymore. Kreiser (2001) reports "about the meeting of the 63-year-old Frege with the 22-year-old Wittgenstein from (presumably) 1911" when he was looking for advice after his first British experience (1908-1911). The earliest mention of a picture theory by Wittgenstein himself is in MS 102 (1914-1915), before the publication of *TLP* (1921; 1922) –of which we insist to take it as a figurative use of "theory"–. Based upon this context, we claim that Wittgenstein's conception of *Bild* is almost certainly, a strict derivate from the original developments of the notion in Hertz (1894) and Boltzmann (1897; 1905).

Regarding those works, more than 50% of the references to *Bild* are concentrated in Hertz's *Introduction* (62%) and Boltzmann's *First Lecture* (55.76%). Both parts are the key texts where Boltzmann and Hertz offer their respective conceptions of what a *Bild* and *Gedankenbilder* are. Although there are differences, one common point is that *the task of theorizing starts not just with plain experience, but with mental images* (again, not pictures). As Hertz (1897:1; 1899:1) puts it, the theorization begins with mental images:

In endeavouring thus to draw inferences as to the future from the past, we always adopt the following process. *We form for ourselves images [Bilder] or symbols of external objects; and the form which we give them is such that the necessary consequents of the images in thought are always the images of the necessary consequents in nature of the things pictured.* (Emphasis is ours)

Boltzmann also agrees:

It has never been doubted and is especially emphasized by Hertz in the mentioned book that our thoughts are mere images [*"blosse Bilder"*] of the objects (better signs for them), which have at most a certain relationship with them, but can never coincide with them, but relate to them like the letters to the sounds or the notes to the tones.

Here is the root of the Wittgensteinian concept of *Bild* in *TLP*. For us, there is no need to look elsewhere. The fact that *mental images* are isomorphic with the objects in nature and the discussions of Hertz and Boltzmann (on how the

process leads to the formulation of propositions in the sense of general laws [*Sätze*] and theories) leads directly to the idea of attempting to hypothesize an isomorphic relationship between language and the world. (*Mental Image, not picture, is the concept that better encapsulates the origins of many of the young Wittgenstein's thoughts and developments.* The fear of psychologism and the lack of the means to treat mental images as physical phenomena back then could explain why this has been almost overlooked.

5. What else is there in *TLP*, if not a "picture theory"?

[T]he Anglo-Saxon tradition of translating *Bild* as *picture* has done more harm than good. The term "picture" is related more to figuration than to symbolic representation, more to the visual than to the conceptual. Hence, when one hears or reads the expression "picture theory of Wittgenstein", one immediately thinks of Wittgenstein's conception of language as a kind of "*linguistic visual image*" of the world. In this interpretation, words form statements and the statements form a kind of "picture" or "portrait" of things, the only difference being that instead of shapes and colors, words and statements are used. (Zamora 2007: 374)

What was lacking in 1921 is already available to us since the last three decades thanks to contemporary cognitive neuroscience. As Kosslyn (2005, p. 334) puts it, "[a]ll of the mental functions that we label with a single word, such as perception, memory, reasoning, and *imagery*, are accomplished by systems of processes in the brain". Kosslyn refers to the relation between thought and mental images:

I don't believe that our thinking is composed solely of images. Images are just one tool of thought. The images that come to mind are produced by unconscious processes that themselves are not images. Regarding the blind: They still have "spatial images" (specifying where things are), kinesthetic images (specifying how things feel), auditory images, and so forth. Imagery is not "one thing" – it is a collection of abilities, each being related to a particular sensory modality. (Kosslyn, 2008)

The progress in areas such as mental imagery allows us today to affirm that *mental images are physical processes that take place in the brain, in the form of*

patterns of neural activity that do not constitute any kind of metaphysical entities. This statement reflects part of our theoretical commitments. We also draw here to Bermúdez (2013) –experimental research on expert memory in blindfold Chess960–, among others. Surely, our assumption is not free of objections, but due to constraints in the format of the contributions to this event, we cannot provide here a thorough development of these ideas. We shall get back to the issue in future works.

Mental images, as we claimed in 2022, are of multiple modalities of sensory perception, not just visual. As Damasio (1999: 318) states it:

By the term images I mean mental patterns with a structure built with the tokens of each of the sensory modalities—visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, and somatosensory... [It] includes varied forms of sense: touch, muscular, temperature, pain, visceral, and vestibular. The word image does not refer to "visual" image alone, and there is nothing static about images either. [...] Images in all modalities "depict" processes and entities of all kinds, concrete as well as abstract. Images also "depict" the physical properties of entities and, sometimes sketchily, sometimes not, the spatial and temporal relationships among entities, as well as their actions. In short, the process we come to know as mind [...] is a continuous flow of images many of which turn out to be logically interrelated.

Damasio's quote is not an argument of authority, but rather an instance that synthetically expresses part of our theoretical assumptions derived from the experimental work of Bermúdez on blindfold Chess, expert memory, and cognitive science. It is interesting to note that Pylyshyn deals with the ideas of Wittgenstein in many of his works on mental imagery (2002, 2003a, 2003b). Most of the academic research on Wittgenstein does not the contrary: to take into account what neuroscientific work might imply for a better understanding of his thought. We aim towards this direction. For us, there is no picture theory in *TLP*, but something more in the vein of what Boltzmann and Hertz meant.

5. Final remarks

We hope we have provided arguments to consider that "Wittgenstein's picture theory" might be seen as some sort of *fabulating function*, a product of an Anglo-Saxon interpretation. Wittgenstein's ideas of *Bilder* are actually a development that stems from the ideas of Hertz and Boltzmann. The consideration of different alternatives for the translation of their works supports this interpretation. One last word on the nature of images: if images were just visual, there would not be chess players that are blind from birth. Blind players *do have mental (tactile) images*, different from visual modality – cfr. Bermúdez (2013)–, thus enabling them to play skillfully. It is our hope that this contribution suggests new perspectives for Wittgenstein scholars.

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Note on Table 1 and Chart 1: the source is a *Google Scholar* search query of »"picture theory" + Wittgenstein"« and »"Bildtheorie' + Wittgenstein"« using *Harzing's Publish or Perish Software 8.8.4275.8412* (<https://harzing.com/resources/publish-or-perish>). Redundant items and/or with a non-verifiable publication date were removed). The dataset is available by request to the authors.

Acknowledgement

The authors would like to thank the anonymous reviewer of this contribution, whose comments and suggestions were of great aid.

A Review of the Colour-Exclusion Problem at *Tractatus* 6.3751

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Abstract

I intend to offer a solution to the problem at *Tractatus* 6.3751 predicated upon Canfield's suggestions and Wittgenstein's thoughts in his 1929 paper, "Some Remarks on Logical Form". With this in mind, I will give a brief overview of what is going on here and what the concern is believed to be. From which, I will attempt to offer a tentative answer to these difficulties.

1. Wittgenstein's Elementary Propositions

One of the more underappreciated topics that appears later in the *Tractatus* is the issue regarding the citation of the colour-exclusion problem: "the simultaneous presence of two colours at the same place in the visual field is impossible, in fact logically impossible, since it is ruled out by the logical structure of colour" (TLP 1961: 6.3751). Tractarian objects derive their philosophical significance from their ontological importance and the essential relation of the nature of language to the world. Wittgenstein tells us that objects make up the world's substance (TLP 1961: 2.021). Because a name means an object, and the simple signs employed in propositions are merely names, they represent the unanalysable integrands within our language (TLP 1961: 3.202, 3.203). This fact, in particular, distinguishes objects from their sister term, 'things'. In the pre-*Tractatus* notebooks, dated between 1914 and 1916, things when named function as objects but when described they turn out to be existing combinations of simples that form complex, composite objects (NB 1979: 49, 2.05.15). In contrast to this, objects, as they are in themselves, must remain simple since they do not have nameable parts susceptible to dissolution (TLP 1961: 2.02).

Some have taken this to be definitive proof of the fact that simple objects cannot be reasonably thought of as sense-data. Others, such as Ramsey reason that our inability to sustain the claim that it is impossible for a point in a visual field to be both red and blue is ultimately responsible for the downfall of the *Tractatus* due to the requirement that elementary propositions are logically independent of one another (Ramsey 1923: 473). That said, a proposition is independent from another when they have no truth arguments in common with each other (TLP 1961: 5.152).

According to Wittgenstein, the elementary propositions of the *Tractatus* remain independent from one another in so far as that if “a” and “b” are both elementary propositions, then one cannot ascertain the falsity of “b” from the truth or falsity of “a” (TLP 1961: 2.0211, 4.211, 5.134). As an immediate consequence of this, a molecular proposition, i.e. those that are connected by a logical connective, is neither a tautology nor a contradiction. This extends to all connectives. Anscombe believes that since the simultaneous presence of two colours at the same place in a visual field is ruled out by the logical structure of colour, elementary propositions are not to be thought of as simple observation statements—that is, they describe the arrangement of phenomena (Anscombe 1959: 25-27). Therefore, she argues that Tractarian objects cannot be understood as sense-data. Canfield puts this objection as follows. If the *Tractatus* is phenomenalistic, then a natural interpretation of elementary propositions is that they describe distinguishable portions of that which is phenomenally given (Canfield 1976: 82). Thusly, under Anscombe’s view, such statements would not be independent of one another.

However, in opposition, Wittgenstein tells us that every statement about complexes can be resolved into an expression about their constituents (TLP 1961: 2.0201). As such, Canfield argues that a contradiction only arises because our ordinary colour words—say, red, blue, and green—are not yet fully analysed terms; the grammar of these propositions has not been made clear (Canfield 1994: 37). As I understand it, the thought here is that further analysis of such terms would yield elementary propositions that maintain their independence from each other. An observation statement such as ‘there is a blue spec in a specific place at a certain time’ is not a true elementary proposition but rather a more complex expression capable of dissolution.

2. The Colour-Exclusion Problem

To develop the foundations of this solution, we must first come to terms with Wittgenstein’s view on the precise nature of contradiction. Accordingly, it must be possible to show a contradiction by implementation of a truth table or through the employment of a series (TLP 1961: 5.1, 5.101). That is to say that a contradiction must be shown through a schema such as the following:

(TTTT) (p, q) Tautology (If p then p ; and if q then q .)

(FFFF) (p, q) Contradiction (p and not p , and q and not q .)

The question remains as to whether we can demonstrate that a statement—for example, ‘this point is currently both pink and yellow’—is contradictory through the use of the schema detailed above. If such a statement is a contradiction, Wittgenstein could not have reasonably thought that an expression of the form ‘this spec is green’ represents a completely analysed proposition. For suppose that we take a proposition that asserts the existence of a colour R, at a certain time, T, in a particular place P, within our visual field. The proposition “BPT” says that the colour B is in such-and-such a place P at so-and-so time T. From this, it is immediately clear that a molecular proposition which asserts the existence of a colour R in a place P at a time T, and that also states the existence of a colour B at that same place and time, would appear to be a contradiction as opposed to being merely false.

To explain, Wittgenstein reasoned that if statements were analysable, then “we could explain this contradiction by saying that the colour R contains all degrees of R and none of B and that the colour B contains all degrees of B and none of R” (RLF 1929: 168-69). One possible interpretation of this thought is that colours are believed to admit degrees. In other words, a visually given colour will possess some degree of brightness in the same sense that a musical note will have a particular volume or pitch. Along such lines, Canfield tells us that we can rewrite “RPT”, a proposition that asserts the existence of a certain colour at a particular time in a specific place within our visual field as:

$$(r_1PT \vee r_2PT \vee \dots r_nPT) \wedge (\sim b_1PT \vee \sim b_2PT \vee \dots \sim b_nPT)$$

Equally, “BPT”, a proposition which asserts the existence of a different colour can be rewritten as:

$$(b_1PT \vee b_2PT \vee \dots b_nPT) \wedge (\sim r_1PT \vee \sim r_2PT \vee \dots \sim r_nPT)$$

Therefore, the statement that a point in a visual field is red, or some other colour, is not yet a complete description; rather, we would have to say exactly how bright it is in order to describe it completely. This is such that we attain a contradiction from the product of these two propositions:

$$((r_1PT \vee r_2PT \vee \dots r_nPT) \wedge (\sim b_1PT \vee \sim b_2PT \vee \dots \sim b_nPT) \wedge (b_1PT \vee b_2PT \vee \dots b_nPT) \wedge (\sim r_1PT \vee \sim r_2PT \vee \dots \sim r_nPT)) \rightarrow \perp$$

A further concern can be raised as to whether Wittgenstein would have understood the conjunction of the propositions “ r_1PT ” and “ b_1PT ” to be a contradiction. Two possible answers seem up for consideration. On the one hand, there is the possibility that the simultaneous coexistence of two colours within the same space represents an incompatibility. On the other, some think that a combination of colours—say, the synchronous appearance of cyan and magenta—simply forms another, i.e. blue (PR 1975: 105). Evidently, preference is given to the latter remark in so far as Wittgenstein states that what he requires is a phenomenological theory of colour as opposed to a physical understanding (PR 1975: 273). This way, it would be possible to immediately recognise a mixture of these phenomena within physical colours. Similarly, an individual would be capable of discriminating between the shades of red and blue within the colour purple in the same sense depicted in the analysis shown above (WL47 1989: 77). We can find further evidence of this in the statement that when we talk of the impression of a particular colour on a certain surface, our intention is not to speak of the colour itself, but rather the complex object created by the various shades through which they produce the colour-impression that we observe (ROC II 1977: §1). From this, we can say that a proposition such as the conjunction of “ r_1PT ” and “ b_1PT ” would describe a specific colour formed by the combination of various shades in our visual field at a particular place and time. Importantly, as an immediate consequence of this, “ r_1PT ” and “ b_1PT ” remain independent of one another in that the truth of one does not entail the truth or falsity of the other.

Furthermore, this becomes clearer when we consider the disparity between our colour words used in everyday language such as ‘orange’ and a formal proper name—say, “ b_1 ”. As a way into this, it is vital to ask: why is the conjunction of “ RPT ” and “ BPT ” a contradiction whereas the conjunction of “ r_1PT ” and “ b_1PT ” is not so? Most likely, Wittgenstein would have answered that if we attempt an actual analysis, then “we find logical forms which have very little similarity with the norms of ordinary language” (RLF 1929: 165). As such, in asking why the statement is a contradiction rather than one of our ways of saying the colour purple, we can respond that this is not how our colour words

are used in everyday life. Looking at it another way, that is to say that one has to agree on the set of grammatical rules we use in determining the meaning of a word. But this is not to say that what we are asserting is nothing more than a meaningless combination, i.e. ‘this point is both red and green’ is a senseless proposition. Rather, the point here is that an expression such as ‘the colours pink and white can’t be in the same place simultaneously’ is, for Wittgenstein, “a grammatical rule and states a *logical impossibility*” (BB 1958: 56 [my emphasis]).

We can readily extend our conclusions regarding colour to all other sensible qualities—for example, the quality of hardness will admit a level of degrees in the sense that an edge is so-and-so resistant. On this, there is the matter of whether or not Wittgenstein sought to develop a purely combinatorial theory of objects. After all, he held that all objects are alike in being able to fit into combination with any other object. However, it appears as though he intended to present a theory where objects are sorted into various categories and combined according to their internal properties (TLP 1961: 2.01231). Fogelin agrees with this description in so far as this would be out of focus if the world really did not contain different kinds of objects. Otherwise, all objects would have the same internal properties as each other (Fogelin 1987: 7). We can construct a simple counterexample in that if objects did possess identical internal properties, then we would be able to refer to that which is red as being sharp, and vice versa, without them actually having exhibited such qualities. Therefore, the colour-exclusion problem does not show that we cannot allow Tractarian objects to be sensible qualities such as colour.

3. Examples

A natural question remains as to whether or not we are now in a place where we can isolate or extract various genuine examples of objects that are simple. Because of this, one may ask: are these examples of ‘simple’ colours? The immediate answer is no, or Wittgenstein at least did not think so. In a conversation with Malcolm, he told him that it was not his business to decide whether or not something was a simple object or a complex one, ruling that such a decision was an empirical matter and not an endeavour that should be engaged with by the philosopher or the logician (Malcolm 1958: 86). The

thought here is that Wittgenstein's purpose in the *Tractatus*, and by the extension the earlier period as a whole, was merely to assert that there must be such things as simple objects; that our world is, in fact, comprised of them, and that they necessarily exist in some capacity.

Although most philosophers reading the *Tractatus* naturally consider whether Tractarian objects could be something like material objects or sense-data, Pears suggests that because Wittgenstein appears to be non-committal to either categorisation, the matter of how he thought of these object is not important to our understanding of the text (Pears 1987: 89-90). The idea being expressed here is that because he can prove the existence of objects of some kind, the question of what exactly these things are said to be could be postponed in so far as it is not philosophically significant. Given Wittgenstein's approach in both the *Tractatus* and the *Notebooks*, it is certainly a tempting suggestion in that the lack of sustained argumentation no doubt reflects this conclusion. Furthermore, Pears writes that what we should takeaway is that it did not matter what precise grouping Tractarian objects belonged to so long as they were thought of as phenomenal entities. That is, they did not imply a contrast with any reality beyond their own (Pears 1987: 277).

Many take Wittgenstein's remark regarding the division of the body into material parts to indicate that he allowed for material things, as opposed to phenomenal entities, to function as simple objects at least when named. However, this argument fails for several reasons. Foremost amongst these considerations, as McGuinness records, Wittgenstein once expressed to Russell that the natural sciences do not require matter in so far as chemistry, biology, and physics could still be considered to contain truthful statements even without it (McGuinness 1988: 106). That is to say that it is possible to give the sciences a phenomenalistic interpretation that would preserve their truth. As an immediate consequence of this, even if simple objects were allowed to be something like material points, there is nothing to say that these would have to be different in kind from phenomenal entities. In the case of physics, things such as imaginary mass points are used in various theoretical calculations, yet one could not find any actual instance such that a name could be reasonably applied to them. In any event, neither the colour-exclusion problem nor the apparent lack of examples gives us a sufficient reason to reject the interpretation under consideration.

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Is Mencius' Concept of "Righteousness" (Yi, or: 義) a Concept of Family-Resemblance?

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Abstract

David Wong has argued that Mencius' concept of righteousness (yi, 義) is a Wittgensteinian family concept, i. e., that there are what Wong calls "sprout cases" that we intuitively and innately know and based on which we recognize similarities in new cases and act accordingly. According to Wong, there are in Mencius no general rules for righteousness and moral behavior. But I will show that there are many cases in the Mencius, where contrary to Wong's claim, righteousness is determined by external rules, namely rites (li, 禮). Inner attitudes sometimes even do not matter. I will discuss five such cases. The rites explicitly spell out social conditions that determine who may or should do what, such as (1) whether a Commoner may visit a feudal lord, (2) that a Commoner should follow a certain kind of summons but not another kind, (3) that a game-keeper should not follow a summons that is wrong in a certain way, and (4) that what is right or wrong regarding certain matters of protection, charity, and payment clearly depends on social positions and certain circumstances. Thus, righteousness (義) in Mencius is often governed by explicit rules (禮) and thus not a family concept.

1. David Wong on Mencius on morality: In favor of basic cases, intuition, and analogical reasoning. There are no general principles and rules. There is only family-resemblance.

Ethics is not mathematics. Neither is ordinary life. Wittgenstein was very reserved regarding ethics, famously already in the *Tractatus*. Regarding ordinary life, in the *Philosophical Investigations* he introduced the idea of "family resemblance":

I can think of no better expression to characterize these similarities than 'family resemblances'; for the various resemblances between members of a family: build, features, colour of eyes, gait, temperament, ect. ect. overlap and criss-cross in the same way. (Wittgenstein 1953: section 67).

There is no general criterion, feature, or mark, by means of which we could see whether someone is a member of a certain family or not. An uncle might have a similar mouth but not a similar nose compared with his nephew. Compared with his sister, it might be the nose and not the mouth that looks similar. Again differently, compared with his father the most strikingly feature of similarity might be his eyes and not his mouth or nose. Compared with his son, it might be a gesture, etc. Similarities vary from person to person within the family, and they will change over time. No clear and fixed set of shared

marks can be found that would determine in general who is a member of a family and who is not. Instead, we always have to look closely in each case and situation to see whether we can discover similarities. We might find similarities that we have not thought of before.

David Wong argues that in Mencius we find arguments regarding ethics and moral education that can be better understood in terms of family resemblances.

A discussion with Christian Wenzel helped me to see how a case could be made for the normativity of Mengzian arguments by analogy, even if principles or rules are not primarily involved. He also suggested the idea that Wittgenstein's notion of 'family resemblance' could be relevant as to why general principles could not function in the top-down way and produce the kind of moral judgements we typically make. (Wong 2002: 218-9)

There are no general rules that would determine what is right and wrong, Wong says. Instead, there are basic cases that should be our guides. Wong calls them sprouts. These we intuitively recognize and based on them we see other cases as being similar, and then we act accordingly. The sprout cases will of course have certain features. But there is no way that we could make these features explicit and formulate them as general rules, so that when encountering a new situation, we could reflect on these rules and then act according to the good case and thus appropriately. Rather, it is more directly that we see similarities between the new case and a previous case. Depending on the situation, the similarities might always be new ones that have not yet been formulated. Thus, there is never a complete list of features that could serve to establish general rules. There simply are no general rule, and in fact we do not go by general rules. This is how David Wong thinks it works and how he reads Mencius.

Regarding ethics in general, Wong writes:

For all their differences, the Kantian and the utilitarian both conceive ethical reasoning to be governed from the top down by the most general and abstract principles. (Wong 2002: 187).

Finding support in Mencius, Wong argues against this top-down model:

I want to argue that in Mengzi there is a conception of ethical reflection that gives justificatory priority to the particular and that this conception is about a form of ethical reasoning that involves careful comparison between particulars. (Wong 2002: 188)

Wong cites the famous example of a king who saw an ox being led to ritual slaughter. The king spared the ox, because seeing the eyes of the ox reminded him of an innocent man being led to execution. Being asked by Mencius why he spared the ox, the king admits that he felt compassion for the ox. Mencius knows that the people under the rule of the king are suffering. He then argues with the king that he should extend the feeling of compassion to all his subjects (Wong 2002: 189). Based on such examples from Mencius, Wong argues that what we need to cultivate moral feelings is not general principles and rules but *emotion* and *analogical reasoning*. He also thinks that this is Mencius' view.

Wong argues that one does not reason from a general principle such as "One has reason to feel compassion for all sentient and suffering creatures" (Wong 2002: 200). One does not reflect on general features such as sentience and suffering. The king saw the eye of the ox and was able to recall the image of an innocent man. Mencius tells him that if he can do that, he can similarly imagine his people who are suffering. Wong says:

One does not rehearse a syllogism with the general principle as major premise in order to recognize that if one has a reason to save an ox one has reason (and even more) to save *people* from suffering. (Wong 2000: 200)

All one needs are paradigmatic cases and analogical reasoning. One "needs no general principle specifying relevance-constituting characteristics" (Wong 2002: 2002). Thus, Wong sees an application of Wittgenstein's idea of family resemblance.

Mengzian analogical reasoning would be a careful way of navigating from one case of right to another without supposing ahead of time what might be the relevant similarities. (Wong 2002: 2005)

Wong thus argues against the relevance of general rules and principles. He argues against the relevance of top-down reasoning, and in favor of bottom-up reasoning. He also thinks this is Mencius' view.

2. An alternative reading of Mencius: There are general principles and rules.

There is much to be said for this bottom-up way of reasoning that Wong argues to find in Mencius. But I think there is another feature in Mencius that works top down and that it seems to me David Wong neglects. I will give five examples from Mencius, where he explains that "righteousness" (yi, 義) consists in following certain explicit rules and "rituals" (li, 禮).

1. Wan Chang, a disciple of Mencius, asked Mencius what righteousness is. Mencius replied that according to the social etiquette at that time, Commoners had to bring gifts before they could visit feudal lords. Here is the text from Mencius 5B7:

Wan Chang said, 'May I ask on what grounds [*he yi*, 何義] does one refuse to meet feudal lords?' [Mencius replies:] 'Those who live in the capital [...] are known as *subjects of the market-place*, while those who live in the outskirts are known as *subjects in the wilds*. In both cases the reference is to Commoners. According to the rites, a Commoner does not dare present himself to a feudal lord unless he has handed in his token of allegiance'" (Mencius 2004: 119). Bloom translates "what rightness [*he yi*, 何義] is involved". (Mencius 2009: 117).

Judging from this story, righteousness here is determined by external norms of social etiquette. The point I want to make is that righteousness is determined by rites that functions as a general rule that applies to all Commoners. Contrary to Wong, there is no talk of Wittgensteinian "similarity" comparable to "various resemblances between members of a family: build, features, colour of eyes, gait, temperament, ect. ect. overlap and criss-cross in the same way" (Wittgenstein 1953: section 67).

2. The text continues: "'When a Commoner,' said Wan Chang, 'is summoned to corvée [a service and form of unpaid forced labor] he goes to serve. Why then should he refuse to go when he is summoned to an audience?' [Mencius

replies:] 'It is right [義] for him to go and serve, but it is not right [不義] for him to present himself" (Mencius 2004: 119).

Continuing from the previous story, it can be seen what righteousness is. According to Mencius' reply to his student Wan Chang, Mencius believed that obedience to the laws of the country at that time, i.e., that ordinary people must serve as soldiers, is in line with "righteousness" (義). However, it is not in line with righteousness to go to see the lord without bringing gifts. Thus, we can see that Mencius explained what righteousness is based on the laws and regulations of the country at that time and the social etiquette of communication. The regulations are general rules that apply to all Commoners and say what one should and not should do in certain situations. Again, this is not a case of family resemblance.

3. In a passage about a gamekeeper, the rules for right behavior are more complicated, but still explicit. Mencius said: "Duke Ching of Ch'i went hunting and summoned his gamekeeper with a pennon. The gamekeeper did not come. [... Wan Chang asked:] 'May I ask with what should a gamekeeper be summoned?' [Mencius replies:] 'With a leather cap. A Commoner should be summoned with a bent flag, a Gentleman with a flag with bells, and a Counsellor with a pennon. When the gamekeeper was summoned with what was appropriate only to a Counsellor, he would rather die than answer the summons.'" (Mencius 2004: 120).

The point I want to make is that there are explicit rules about how to summon someone, depending on what kind of person is summoned. The rules are rites (禮) that make righteousness (義) possible. Saying that "a Commoner should be summoned with a bent flag, a Gentleman with a flag with bells, and a Counsellor with a pennon," is expressing a general rule. This does not work via family resemblance as Wong suggests. The "proper way" of behavior is to follow explicit rules. "To wish to meet a good and wise man while not following the proper way is like wishing him to enter while shutting the door against him. Rightness is the road, and the rites are the door [夫義，路也；禮，門也]" (ibid.).

In the feudal society of ancient China, there were strict divisions of social classes. And according to different social classes, there were different ritual

requirements. Duke Ching of Ch'i (齊景公) summoned a gamekeeper with incorrect summoning rituals (using a pennon instead of a leather cap). As a result, the gamekeeper would rather die than dare to come. It can be seen from this story that Mencius believes that a righteous behavior must follow strict etiquette regulations of the social class at that time. Mencius used the metaphors "road (*lu*, 路)" and "door (*men*, 門)" to explain "righteousness (義)" and "rituals (禮)". Thus, righteousness here consists in following an external objective "road" that is determined by external social norms, i.e., the "door".

4. The following is a story from Mencius about what is right and wrong regarding protection, charity, and payment. It turns out that there are rules that determine who can grant protection to whom, and who can give charity or payment to whom and under what conditions. Who one is in this context, is determined by one's social position, i.e., whether one is a Gentleman, a lords, a ruler, or a prince. The conditions in question are whether one comes from abroad to settle or whether one has regular duties. The question of what is right or wrong in this context is a question of righteousness (義) that is determined by ritual (禮). The story is a dialogue between Wan Chang and Mencius:

Wan Chang said, 'Why is it [that] a Gentleman does not place himself under the protection of a feudal lord?' [Mencius replies:] 'He does not presume to do so [...]. According to the rites [禮], only a feudal lord who has lost his state places himself under the protection of another. It would be contrary to the rites [禮] for a Gentleman to place himself under the protection of a feudal lord.' [Wan Chang further asks:] 'But if the ruler gives him rice [...], would he accept it?' [Mencius:] 'Yes.' [Wan Chang further asks:] 'On what principle [of righteousness 義] does he accept it? [*shou zhi he yi ye*, 受之何義也]' [Mencius explains:] 'A prince naturally gives charity to those who have come from abroad to settle.' [Wan Chang asks again:] 'Why is it that one accepts charity but refuses what is bestowed to one?' [... Mencius explains:] 'A gate-keeper or a watchman accepts his wages from authorities because he has regular duties. For one who has no regular duties to accept what is bestowed on him is for him to show a lack of gravity'. (Mencius 2004: 118).

Thus, what is right is stipulated by ritual, i.e., by the external and objective social etiquette and the legal system. The etiquettes say what one has to do, depending on whether one is a Gentleman, a lord, a ruler, or a prince. Social classes are not "characterized" by Wittgensteinian "similarities."

5. In a further passage, Mencius explains that according to the social etiquette, any gift given by a "superior" must be accepted, even if it was obtained through immoral means. As long as the circumstances conform to the etiquette of communication, even Confucius would have accepted such a gift, Mencius says.

Wan Chang asked, 'In social intercourse, what, may I ask, is the correct attitude of mind?' [Mencius replies:] 'A respectful attitude of mind' [... Wan Chang further asks:] 'Why is it said, *Too insistent a refusal constitutes a lack of respect?*' [Mencius replies:] 'When a superior honours one with a gift, to accept it only after one has asked the question *Did he or did he not come by it through moral means?* is to show a lack of respect. This is why one does not refuse.' [Wan Chang asks:] 'Cannot one refuse, not in so many words, but in one's heart? Thus, while saying to oneself, *He has taken this from the people by immoral means*, one offers some other excuse for one's refusal.' [Mencius replies:] 'When the superior makes friends with one in the correct way and treats one with due ceremony, under such circumstances even Confucius would have accepted a gift'. (Mencius 2004, 116).

Thus, there are clear rules according to which one should accept a gift. Rites and rules determine righteousness. David Wong emphasizes the importance of an inner and potentially shameful mind that he calls an "inner sprout." But here we see that a state of mind caused by accepting gifts from improper sources is not the most important thing to Mencius. Instead, righteousness according to Mencius is closely related to rules of external propriety.

Conclusion

I would argue that in Mencius, righteousness (yi, 義) is not understood in terms of family resemblance and inner intuitive "sprout cases," but according to rituals, i.e., in terms of explicit rules. Extending basic intuitions by analogical

reasoning, as David Wong explains it, is indeed something that can be found in Mencius, and it indeed plays a role in matters of morality. But this is not the only aspect regarding morality in Mencius. This aspect should not make us believe that in Mencius no top-down principles and rules are supposed to determine moral behavior. In fact, I believe that in Mencius it is mainly explicit top-down rituals that are supposed to determine righteousness and moral behavior. Understanding the rituals is not based recognizing "similarities" as Wittgenstein had them in mind when introducing the idea of "family resemblance." Thus, I believe there is less room for family resemblance and analogical reasoning than David Wong suggests. It is mainly explicit top-down rituals that are supposed to determine righteousness, moral behavior, and how to rule a country.

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Acknowledgement

I thank Christian Helmut Wenzel for his help in writing this essay.

A Note on Existence and Negative Existentials in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*

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Abstract

Wittgenstein's argument for substance is typically taken to be an attempt to show that some things must exist necessarily, making existence itself a formal concept. After briefly reflecting on the self-undermining character of this argument within the Tractarian framework, I note that readers of the Ogden-Ramsey and Pears-McGuinness translations may sense an ambiguity in Wittgenstein's use of "existence" that does not arise in the German original. These translations mistakenly translate both "existieren" and "bestehen" to "to exist", even though *bestehen* is not a formal concept. I then discuss the status of negative existentials in the *Tractatus*, pointing out that 3.24 seems to suggest that they can never be true. I compare 3.24 with a similar remark in Whitehead and Russell's *Principia Mathematica* about definite descriptions, which seems to suggest that there cannot be true negative existentials with definite descriptions. Upon reflection, it is clear that both scope distinctions and separate treatment of the verb "to exist" mean that there can be true negative existentials with definite descriptions for Whitehead and Russell. I show that more or less the same holds for Wittgenstein, contrary to what 3.24 seems to suggest. Finally, I emphasise an important difference between Russell's and Wittgenstein's analysis, namely that Russell's is external, whereas Wittgenstein's is internal. This makes Wittgenstein's analysis truly reductive, but, as I argue in the last part of the paper, also entails that he struggles to accommodate general existential propositions and their negations, such as "unicorns do not exist", whereas Russell can accommodate these straightforwardly.

1. Existence and "To Exist" in the *Tractatus*

What was Wittgenstein's theory of existence in the *Tractatus*? A non-specialist might, from the depths of their memory, produce something along these lines: according to the *Tractatus*, existence is a formal concept because Tractarian objects exist necessarily. Although interpretationally sound, there is something odd about this statement. Famously, many of the propositions in the *Tractatus* are, by their own light, nonsense. Here we have a smaller, local version of such a self-undermining construction, concerning existence. The *Tractatus* argument for substance, at least according to the standard interpretation, is meant to show that some things exist necessarily. But the moment it is accepted that these things, whatever they are, exist necessarily, we cannot even say that they exist, let alone that they exist necessarily, at least given Wittgenstein's requirement of a true/false polarity for sense (Proops 2011: 221–222). What, then, has Wittgenstein even tried to establish with his difficult argument for substance?

It is worth noting that Wittgenstein himself doesn't put the argument for substance in terms of existence in the *Tractatus*. Neither does he say that existence is a formal concept. So the familiar way of understanding the conclusion of the argument for substance that I have just described is a departure from Wittgenstein's own words in the *Tractatus*. (Although both before (TB 1979: 60) and after (PB 1975: 72) the *Tractatus* he does mention existence in this context.) Whether this departure leads to unnecessary confusions will depend, of course, on how he does in fact use the verb "to exist" and its cognates.

So in what context does Wittgenstein mention existence in the *Tractatus*? Readers of the Ogden-Ramsey and McGuinness-Pears translations may be forgiven for mistakenly believing that Wittgenstein uses existence to distinguish between the *Sachverhalte* that obtain and those that don't. For in both translations, "to exist" is not only used as a translation for the German verb "*existieren*", which is to be expected, but also for the German verb "*bestehen*" and its cognates. So we find 2, "*Was der Fall ist, die Tatsache, ist das Bestehen von Sachverhalten*", translated as:

Ogden-Ramsey

What is the case, the fact, is the existence of atomic facts. (TLP 1955: 2)

Pears-McGuinness

What is the case—a fact—is the existence of states of affairs. (TLP 1972: 2)

The same mistake is made again and again throughout the translations of 2.04–2.11 and also in 4.1, 4.2–3, 5.131, 5.135. In these propositions, "*bestehen*" is attached to "*Sachverhalte*" and is consistently translated with the verb "to exist".

That this is a mistake is especially clear when we do indeed take the argument for substance to show that existence is a formal concept. For then a keen reader of the English translations cited might sense an important ambiguity in the verb "to exist" that does not correspond to any ambiguity in the original German text. Although it is impossible, according to the familiar understanding of the argument for substance, that an object doesn't exist, any *Sachverhalt* that exists might not have existed. (The awkwardness of comparing the existence of objects to the existence of *Sachverhalte* in this way shows the need for different verbs.) *Bestehen* is a material concept at the level

of *Sachverhalte* and *existieren* is a formal concept at the level of objects. It would be better, then, to translate “*bestehen*” as “to subsist”, as Pears and McGuinness do in 2.024, 2.027 and 2.0271 only (here the Ogden-Ramsey also uses “to exist”). Or perhaps “to obtain” is more natural, which I used in the context of *Sachverhalte* in the previous paragraph (and Michael Beaney uses in his forthcoming translation of the *Tractatus*). The best choice will of course depend on how we decide to translate “*Sachverhalt*”, but I won't discuss that difficulty here.

(Incidentally, translations of the *Tractatus* into Dutch introduce the same ambiguity, but in this case because the only natural translation of the verb “*existieren*” is “*bestaan*”. This Dutch verb is so obviously the etymological sibling of “*bestehen*” that this also gets translated as “*bestaan*”.)

2. Complexes and Definite Descriptions

When does Wittgenstein use the verb “*existieren*” in the *Tractatus*, if not in the context of the argument for substance? In its most important use in the *Tractatus*, it doesn't operate at the level of objects, but at the level of complexes:

Der Satz, in welchem von einem Komplex die Rede ist, wird, wenn dieser nicht existiert, nicht unsinnig, sondern einfach falsch sein. (TLP 1921: 3.24)

Taken at face value, this seems to entail that there cannot be true negative existentials in which a complex is mentioned. If “*c*” stands for a complex, then “*c* does not exist” simply couldn't be true: if it were true, then it would be a proposition in which a complex that doesn't exist is mentioned and so by 3.24 it must in fact be false. So if we accept 3.24 at face value, existence would be a formal concept even at the level of complexes: “*c* exists” must always be true and “*c* does not exist” always false. That would of course entail that these are actually nonsense, leaving us with a similar self-sabotaging conclusion concerning existence as we got from the argument for substance.

What if we don't want to accept 3.24 at face value? After all, we do seem to have the true/false polarity for existence at the level of complexes, as illustrated by true negative existentials. How can these be accommodated in the Tractarian picture?

I suggest we compare Wittgenstein with Whitehead and Russell on this point. The contraposition of the part of 3.24 that I cited is this: given a proposition in which there is mention of a complex, if it is true, then the mentioned complex exists. We find an analogous statement about definite descriptions in the first volume of *Principia Mathematica*:

the existence of the (grammatical) subject can be analytically inferred from any true proposition having this grammatical subject $(\exists x)(\phi x)$. (Whitehead and Russell 1927: 175)

If we take *this* at face value, then “ $(\exists x)(\phi x)$ does not exist” must always be false. After all, if it were true, then we would seem to have a true proposition with $(\exists x)(\phi x)$ as its grammatical subject, and so “ $(\exists x)(\phi x)$ exists” would, according to Whitehead and Russell, also be true. That can't be right, so we conclude that “ $(\exists x)(\phi x)$ does not exist” was false to begin with.

We must not take Whitehead and Russell's remark at face value. As they write a few pages later, there can be true propositions with $(\exists x)(\phi x)$ as grammatical subject even when $(\exists x)(\phi x)$ does not exist, as long as the definite description has secondary occurrence (1927: 182). When the definite description has secondary occurrence in “the present king of France is not bald”, it clearly doesn't entail “the present king of France exists”. But more importantly for our purposes, they treat existentials separately: “ $(\exists x)(\phi x)$ exists” is “there is exactly one x such that ϕx ”. If we introduce a negation to get “ $(\exists x)(\phi x)$ does not exist,” no question of scope arises. The sentence will simply express that it is not the case that there is exactly one x such that ϕx , and this is obviously true for many choices of ϕ . So negative existentials also fall outside the purview of the remark just cited and can be true.

3. Existence of Complexes

The question now is whether a similar story can be told for Wittgenstein's 3.24. I think it can. In the "Notes on Logic", we have a statement closely related to 3.24 (and 2.0201).

Every proposition which seems to be about a complex can be analysed into a proposition about its constituents and about the proposition which describes the complex perfectly; i.e., that proposition which is equivalent to saying the complex exists. (NL 1979: 93)

Later, in the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein gives an example of such an analysis. He there asks whether "the broom is in the corner" really means that "the broomsick is there [in the corner], and so is the brush, and the broomstick is fixed in the brush" (PI 2009: §60). The proposition "which describes the complex perfectly" corresponds to the last conjunct. Symbolically, if aRb symbolises "the broomstick is fixed in the brush" and we write $[aRb]$ for the complex corresponding to the broom, then $\phi([aRb])$ is analysed as $(\phi'a \text{ AND } \phi'b) \text{ AND } aRb$. (Here ϕ' is a propositional function appropriately related to ϕ . In the case of "the brush is in the corner" this is likely to be just ϕ , since it makes sense to say of the parts of the brush that they are in the corner. But in other cases, it doesn't make sense to say of the parts of a complex what the original proposition says of the complex itself (Potter 2009: 44).)

It follows that $\phi([aRb])$ may be false in two ways: because $\neg aRb$ or because $\neg\phi'a \text{ OR } \neg\phi'b$. This is the indefiniteness inherent in propositions about complexes as also mentioned in 3.24 (Anscombe 1971: 34). And when we introduce a negation into $\phi([aRb])$, the issue of scope arises again (Proops 2011: 220). Is $\neg\phi([aRb])$ to be understood as $(\neg\phi'a \text{ AND } \neg\phi'b) \text{ AND } aRb$ ("the broomstick is fixed in the brush, but neither is in the corner") or as $\neg((\phi'a \text{ AND } \phi'b) \text{ AND } aRb)$ ("it is not the case that: the broomstick is fixed in the brush and both are in the corner")? On the second reading, "the broom is not in the corner" might be false simply because the broomstick isn't fixed in the brush. As long as this is an acceptable reading, then, contrary to 3.24, $\neg\phi([aRb])$ may be true even when it is a proposition which mentions a complex that doesn't exist (namely when $\neg aRb$).

What now about “the broom exists”? This seems to say that the parts of the broom—the broomstick and the brush—are connected in the right way. That is to say, the proposition that the complex $[aRb]$ exists is equivalent to the proposition aRb , the difference between them being that only the first proposition mentions the complex. So “the broom does not exist” says that the parts of the broom are not connected in the right way, that is, $\neg aRb$. (Note, though, that there is not a complex $[\neg aRb]$: negative complexes are incomprehensible. So we cannot somehow say “[$\neg aRb$] exists” as an alternative to “[aRb] does not exist”.)

As for Whitehead and Russell, so for Wittgenstein: “the broom does not exist” can be true in only one way, there is no scope distinction to be considered. And “the broom does not exist” certainly can be true: one need only dismantle the broom to make aRb false. So at the level of complexes, existence is not a formal concept, contrary to what 3.24 seemed to suggest. This conclusion is also contrary to another part of 3.24, which I haven’t yet cited, namely “that a propositional element signifies a complex can be seen from an indeterminateness in the proposition in which it occurs”. For in “the broom does not exist”, there is no indefiniteness: it can be true in only one way (when $\neg aRb$) and false in only one way (when aRb).

4. Internal and External Analysis

There is an important disanalogy between Russell’s analysis of “the broom is in the corner” and Wittgenstein’s. Russell thinks that this sentence expresses that there is exactly one entity such that it is a broom, and *it* is in the corner. For this to be true, there must be complexes in the domain of quantification. The definite description describes the broom, the complex, according to *its* properties, and something is then predicated of *it*. This makes the analysis *external*: it is the properties of the (supposed) complex that occur in the analysed proposition. Wittgenstein’s analysis is *internal* (Potter 2020: 278). In the analysed proposition, neither the complex itself, nor its properties, play a role. Instead, the complex is described in terms of its constituents and something is predicated of *them*. So in the analysed proposition, the initial complex disappears *and* there is no quantification over complexes. All that remains are the constituents of the complex. Wittgenstein’s analysis is thus, as

Michael Potter writes, “genuinely reductive in a sense in which Russell’s was not” (2009: 44).

That Wittgenstein’s internal analysis is reductive has consequences. For Russell, “the golden mountain does not exist” is perfectly meaningful and in fact true: it states that there is not exactly one golden mountain. For Wittgenstein, however, “the golden mountain does not exist” must, at least in most actual context, be nonsense. There is no internal structure to appeal to, there are no parts of the supposed complex of which we can say: *these* are not connected so as to form a golden mountain. On the Tractarian theory, “to exist” can only be used together with some definite possible complex. This possible complex might not actually exist, but it has to be definite in the sense of having a specified internal structure, it must consist in a definite way of definite constituents. In other words, “the broom does not exist” only makes sense when it can be followed with: “because *that* broomstick and *that* brush are not fitted together”. Perhaps a follow-up of this kind can be given for “the golden mountain does not exist” if there actually had been a golden mountain, but its top half was somehow removed. But until someone actually has a concrete plan to create a golden mountain so that we can talk about its parts, even if they haven’t been assembled yet, we can’t make sense of “the golden mountain does not exist”.

Unlike Russell, Wittgenstein also does not seem to have room for “unicorns do not exist”. Here it is even more obvious that there is no definite complex which analysis can decompose. Sentences of this form rather express that there are no complexes of a particular kind. In other words, “unicorns do not exist” expresses something about *all* Tractarian objects, namely that none of them are arranged such as to form a unicorn. Whereas, in accordance with Wittgenstein’s rejection of such propositions, “the golden mountain does not exist” arguably does not picture anything when no definite constitution is given, “unicorns exist” does seem to picture something, and, arguably, so does “unicorns do not exist”. But what they picture is somehow not definite, but general: they are really quantificational propositions.

Can these general pictures be accommodated in the *Tractatus* without betraying the reductive internal analysis it espouses, without quantifying over complexes? I take it that a natural attempt would go as follows. Let $Ux_1\dots x_n$ say

that x_1 through x_n form a unicorn, so that any complex of the form $[Ux_1...x_n]$ is a unicorn. Then “unicorns exist” expresses, upon analysis, that there are objects x_1 through x_n such that $Ux_1...x_n$, and “unicorns do not exist” expresses, upon analysis, that there are no objects x_1 through x_n such that $Ux_1...x_n$. Here we have quantified only over objects, and with Wittgenstein’s substitutional account of quantification such a proposition will reduce to a long disjunction involving only names. Similarly, “brooms exist” may be rendered, in light of our earlier symbolisation key, as: $\exists x \exists y xRy$.

So far, so good, it seems. But there is an awkward complication. In the case of “the broom exists”, Wittgenstein assumed there to be a definite constitution and, in particular, two constituents. But clearly a broom may also consist of three parts, for instance if it has a separable handle. Since “brooms exist” is about brooms as complexes generally, its analysis cannot be $\exists x \exists y xRy$: this supposed analysis may be false even though “brooms exist” is true, namely when there is a broom consisting of three parts. That is to say, any analysis of “brooms exist” must recognise that brooms may also consist of *three* parts. And of course also of *four* parts, and so on. We are still working with Wittgenstein’s initial simplifying assumptions, treating the broomstick and brush as simple, but the point is fully general. Even if for any given broom, there is only one complete decomposition into Tractarian objects, for another broom the decomposition is unlikely to be the same structurally. In particular, the number of Tractarian objects that constitute the second broom is unlikely to be the same as the number of Tractarian objects that constitute the first broom. We certainly have no reason to think that all brooms ultimately consist of the same number of Tractarian objects. Now, who is to say how many constituents a unicorn, or a golden mountain, may have? If Wittgenstein is to accommodate “unicorns do not exist” and similar sentences, then it seems he is committed to there being answers to such questions. The analysed proposition for “brooms exist” must incorporate all the possible internal structures of a broom, and the analysed proposition for “unicorns do not exist” must incorporate all the possible internal structures of a unicorn.

This is not a problem for Russell, who quantifies over complexes instead of simples. There will be many brooms and Russell does not have to identify a single internal structure for all of them. Here is a broom, a complex with a

certain internal structure, and there is another broom, a complex with a different internal structure. What connects them is that they are both brooms, that is, what connects them are their *external* properties, not their internal constitutions.

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Acknowledgement

I would like to thank Benjamin Marschal, Patrick Pan and Michael Potter for their feedback on an earlier draft of this paper. The research for this paper was funded by a Bauer Scholarship from Gonville and Caius College, University of Cambridge.

The Subterfuge of Ethereal Objects: Some Remarks on Russellian Fixed Points in Wittgenstein's *Blue Book*

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Abstract

The last third of Wittgenstein's *Blue Book* is devoted to the topic of personal experience and a critical discussion of some of the philosophical difficulties it raises. At the beginning of this discussion Wittgenstein remarks that he deliberately delayed treatment of the topic because of the revisions it may appear to require of the approach that Wittgenstein had taken earlier in the *Book* in considering the linguistic origins of philosophical problems surrounding mental phenomena. In my talk I identify what Wittgenstein believes to be the main source of this apparent threat to his approach and examine the principal way in which his response to the threat is intended to defuse it. Wittgenstein's primary concern in this response is, I suggest, not to reject a particular strain of empiricism but to resist a certain dogmatic framing of it. To unpack the relevant remarks in the *Blue Book* I draw on unpublished notes of lectures given by Wittgenstein immediately before he began to dictate the *Book* and on writings by Bertrand Russell that give expression to some of the ideas that Wittgenstein had in mind when lecturing on mental phenomena in the academic year of 1933-34.

Nearly two-thirds into his *Blue Book* (henceforth BLB), after an extended discussion of mental phenomena, Wittgenstein stops to take stock. Summing up the gist of the preceding investigation, he states its goal in uncharacteristically general terms: his examination of various examples of uses of words such as "thinking", "meaning", and "wishing" was intended to remove certain preconceptions that are rooted in the "established forms of expression" (BBB 1958: 43) and that typically impede the investigation of mental phenomena. After some further remarks on lexical meaning, Wittgenstein abruptly turns to the topic of personal experience. This topic had been broached much earlier in the book, but Wittgenstein only now discloses the reason for deferring its discussion:

The reason I postponed talking about personal experience was that thinking about this topic raises a host of philosophical difficulties which threaten to break up all our commonsense notions about what we should commonly call the objects of our experience. And if we were struck by these problems it might seem to us that all we have said about signs and about the various objects we mentioned in our examples may have to go into the melting-pot. (BBB 1958: 44)

The postponement and the reason that Wittgenstein cites to explain it raise the following questions: What are these problems and what does Wittgenstein mean when he speaks of being struck by them? What precisely is the risk they pose, or appear to pose, for the approach he had taken before? And finally: How does Wittgenstein respond to this apparent threat?

None of these questions is addressed directly in the remarks following Wittgenstein's explanation of the postponement. As is so often the case, a little unpacking and some assembly are required. My attempt today to unpack the relevant passages and outline partial answers comes in two parts: First, I'll identify what I take to be the chief concern motivating Wittgenstein's deferral of the topic of personal experience until the last third of the book. I then consider Wittgenstein's response to the concern as he presents it in a compressed reminder about some previous remarks of his on the notion of ethereal objects and the role they play in philosophy. To accomplish the task of the first part, I propose to read several passages in BLB against the backdrop of Wittgenstein's long-standing engagement with the writings of Bertrand Russell. To unpack the reminder about ethereal objects I draw on records of remarks that Wittgenstein made in class before he began to dictate the lectures from which BLB emerged and that he would later fail to include in the revised compilation of the dictated lecture notes.

Before I begin, let me mention only a few basic points regarding the origins of BLB to which I will refer later. The book derives from a series of lectures that Wittgenstein dictated to some of his students in the academic year of 1933-34 at Cambridge University. Originally, Wittgenstein had intended to teach two lecture courses that year, a biweekly course entitled "Philosophy" and a weekly course, cross-listed with the Faculty of Mathematics, entitled "Philosophy for Mathematicians". A few weeks into the first term, however, Wittgenstein cancelled classes for the weekly course, reportedly because of the large number of those attending the lectures. Shortly thereafter, on November 8, he began to dictate lecture notes to a small group of students selected for this very purpose and he continued to do so with only a few breaks until June 1934. Relevant for our purposes, when Wittgenstein began with the dictations in November 1933, he rehashed some, but not all, of the themes and ideas that he had presented in his "Philosophy" class in the weeks before November 8. After numerous revisions, the final text was eventually duplicated in two

installments under his supervision, bound in blue covers and disseminated among students, friends and family. Apart from the odd heading or cover sheet later added, neither the original BLB copies nor the copies of later generations, which were produced without Wittgenstein's involvement, readily betray their descent from a compilation of lecture notes. Wittgenstein's own working copy of BLB, however, which was recently rediscovered and is described in detail by Jonathan Smith (Smith 2013), bears not only the marks of revision but also retains numerical references to the original lectures. In what follows I use the numbering of the dictated lectures as it appears in Wittgenstein's working copy.

Let us now turn to the topic of personal experience, as it was first mentioned briefly under the rubric of "private experience" in the ninth lecture of BLB (henceforth L9), dictated on December 8. In the first month of dictations, Wittgenstein had spent a considerable amount of time discussing a common but, by his lights, misleading characterization of the activity of thinking. At one point during this discussion, he had proposed to his students that they think of thinking not as some obscure activity of the mind but, if they wished to think of thinking as an activity at all, to think of it as an activity of operating with signs. By way of illustration, he had offered the example of the activity performed by our hands when we think with a pencil on a piece of paper. Now, in L9, Wittgenstein notes the following challenge facing his proposal:

There is an objection to saying that thinking is some such thing as an activity of the hand. Thinking, one wants to say, is part of our 'private experience'. It is not material, but an event in private consciousness. [...] I shall talk about this at a later point, [...] (BBB 1958: 16)

Wittgenstein does not work out the objection in any detail here but swiftly moves on to a different topic. Yet even in its inchoate state, the thrust of the objection is clear: as an explication, Wittgenstein's proposal fails to capture what might be considered a key trait of thinking, namely that thinking, conceived as something that a person experiences, is removed from common observation; that it is, in a certain sense of the word, "private".

I will not develop the sense of "private" at issue here but only note that the failure of Wittgenstein's proposal to accommodate a certain notion of privacy

should not come as a surprise. The explication is, after all, an application of what in BLB Wittgenstein had earlier called a "method", the use of which he repeatedly recommends to his students. (BBB 1958: 5) In making models of the mind they should, he urges, replace references to mental images with references to actual painted or sculpted images, i.e., with references to "outward object[s]" that are "seen". Similarly, any allusion to some obscure "working of the imagination" should be replaced by references to specific "acts of looking at real objects". (BBB 1958: 4f.)

Time constraints do not allow me to address the various applications made of this method in BLB and the utility attributed to it for the resolution of philosophical problems. For our purposes, it suffices to single out one feature integral to the method: its application yields descriptions of scenarios in which signs are ordinary signs, like inscriptions on a piece of paper, and in which objects are actual objects, such as apples and people.

It is this feature of the method that lies at the core of the concern that Wittgenstein articulates when he returns to the topic of personal experience in L28. Recall, from the passage quoted in the beginning, that in explaining his reason for postponing addressing the topic Wittgenstein speaks of the danger of everything that he had said earlier about signs and objects in his examples having to "go into the melting-pot". For Wittgenstein, this danger holds no real risk. It is but an apparent danger, assumed to exist by those who are "struck" by the problems posed by the topic of personal experience.

What is meant by being "struck" here becomes apparent in the opening remarks of L29, where Wittgenstein singles out one of these problems and then briefly discusses the path one might be tempted to take towards its solution. The problem is the question of how best to characterize the relationship between the ordinary objects surrounding us and the personal experiences we have of them. Making no attempt to challenge the assumption that the question is, as it stands, meaningful, Wittgenstein at once moves on to an apparent answer, which is based on the idea that personal experiences are the material of which reality consists. The idea of personal experiences as the building material of reality is then traced along some route, which I will not discuss today, to yet another tempting idea, namely the idea that, for philosophical purposes, the language we ordinarily use is "too coarse" and that

"a more subtle one" is needed to "clear up [...] matters philosophically". (BBB 1958: 45)

So this is what Wittgenstein means by being "struck" by a problem posed by the topic of personal experience: to endorse the idea that, for philosophical purposes, ordinary language is inadequate and a certain other kind of language is needed. Wittgenstein's discussion of this idea in BLB reflects, I take it, his critical engagement with ideas on mental phenomena and their scientific explanation that Bertrand Russell had set out in his *The Analysis of Mind* (henceforth AM) and other writings. For Russell, in AM, objects, commonly so called, are not really objects but "logical constructions" built up from ultimate constituents of the world, among which Russell counts what he calls "sensations" and "images", sensation-like entities subject to special kinds of laws. Signs, too, are not really signs but certain groupings of these ultimate constituents, with their meaningful use ultimately hinging on some sort of association of sensations and images. In AM, Russell neither identifies such constructions in terms of their ultimate constituents nor does he contend that they are ever made fully explicit in ordinary or scientific discourse:

In language there is no direct way of designating one of the ultimate brief existents that go to make up the collections we call things or persons. If we want to speak of such existents—which hardly happens except in philosophy—we have to do it by means of some elaborate phrase, such as "the visual sensation which occupied the centre of my field of vision at noon on January 1, 1919." (Russell 1921: 193)

Only in a language logically perfected for philosophical purposes would the constructions be articulated, and every constituent bear its own name. Nevertheless, the schematic scenarios of language use that Russell considers in his analyses of mental phenomena are intimately bound up with references to sensations and images. And this is no coincidence: as Russell sees it, sensations and images must play the pivotal role in any present theory of the mind, and no ultimate scientific account of the world can regard ordinary objects as anything but logical constructions. For Russell, these points are fixed; that is, Russell views them as starting points for all present and future theorizing about mind and matter.

It is this aspect of Russell's conception of a logically perfected language which matters to him in AM, and to which Wittgenstein responds in his remarks on the subterfuge of the idea of aethereal objects at the beginning of L30. There, Wittgenstein envisages a subject describing her visual experiences in an experimental setting. When contrasted with a regular description of, say, a garden of tulips, her description may appear, Wittgenstein notes, to treat of a world that is distinct from the physical world, a mental or "aethereal" world. By way of explaining how this appearance arises Wittgenstein reminds his students of an earlier discussion, saying "[...] we already know the idea of 'aethereal objects' as a subterfuge" (BBB 1958: 47). The reminder alludes to Wittgenstein's first lecture of the academic year, which he had given before the dictation sessions for BLB began, and to his discussion then of a particular misconception about language according to which the meaning of a sign is something somehow corresponding to it, a correlate of the word. According to Wittgenstein, this widely held misconception first arises as a confusion, when, after having explained the meaning of a name by pointing to its bearer, we reflect on our semantic achievement and in doing so mistake the bearer of the name for its meaning. Extending the scope of the confusion to cases where no name-bearing objects are readily available to serve as correlates of the words, we simply posit objects existing elsewhere. Thus we arrive at the misguided notion that for a sign to have any meaning at all there must be something somewhere somehow corresponding to it, an ethereal object.

In reminding his students of this misconception about language and applying it to the case of descriptions of visual experiences in L30, Wittgenstein does not deny that there may exist images or sensations somehow corresponding to such descriptions or parts thereof. The subterfuge that he associates with the idea of ethereal objects in the context of his criticism of the idea of a more subtle language that is distinct from our ordinary language is the supposition that entities like sensations or images must exist for the descriptions of visual experiences to be meaningful. But without assurance of the existence of such entities, the call to heed them loses its force.

From Wittgenstein's point of view, the matter is settled, and in the remaining lectures of BLB he devotes his full attention to issues relating to various notions of privacy, freely making use again of what he had earlier called a "method". Whether the remarks that Wittgenstein made in defense of this

method during the dictation of BLB were intended to form part of a broader criticism of the conception of language that Russell laid out in AM and in other writings is still, I think, an undecided question. To answer it, more needs to be said about some of the preconceived ideas concerning language and the analysis of mental phenomena that Wittgenstein subjects to scrutiny in other lectures in BLB and about their possible sources in Russell's writings. But this is a topic for another day.

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Varieties of Surprise in the *Tractatus*

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Abstract

I connect Wittgenstein's later reflections on the different roles of the surprising in mathematics to some of his comments on logic and philosophy in the *Tractatus*. My point of departure is the second appendix to book I of the *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*, where Wittgenstein distinguishes between two roles that the surprising might play in mathematics. Surprise of the first kind is essential to a fruitful engagement with mathematics; it vanishes once the solution to the problem is thoroughly understood. The second form stems from erroneously thinking that mathematicians investigate "depths" which we have "no inkling of," as well as from confusing calculations and proofs with experiments. I argue that several passages from the *Tractatus* discussing logic, such as 6.1251 and 6.1261, are best understood as referring to the second sense of surprise from RFM. I thereby employ Wittgenstein's later remarks on the surprising in mathematics to elucidate the Tractarian distinction between the *sinnvolle Sätze* of natural science and the *sinnlose Sätze* of logic. Then I argue that we can utilize the discussion of the first role of surprise in RFM to shed light on the Tractarian distinction between significant propositions and Wittgenstein's own elucidatory propositions (discussed in the 6.5s).

I. RFM: Two Roles of the Surprising

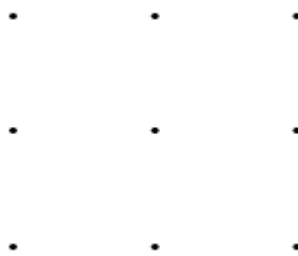
Appendix II from Part I of the revised edition of Wittgenstein's *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics* (henceforth RFM) begins with the following passages:

The surprising may play two completely different parts in mathematics. One may see the value of a mathematical train of thought in its bringing to light something that surprises us: - because it is of great interest, great importance, to see how such and such a kind of representation of it makes a situation surprising, or astonishing, even paradoxical. But different from this is a conception, dominant at the present day, which values the surprising, the astonishing, because it shews the depths to which mathematical investigation penetrates; - as we might measure the value of a telescope by its shewing us things we'd have had no *inkling* of without this instrument. The mathematician says as it were: 'Do you see, this is surely important, this you would have never known without me.' As if, by means of these considerations, as by means of a kind of higher experiment, astonishing, nay the most astonishing facts were brought to light.

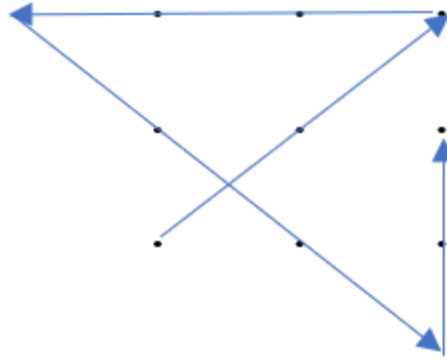
[...] If you are surprised, then you have not understood it yet. For surprise is not legitimate here, as it is with the issue of an experiment. *There* [...] it is permissible to yield to its charm; but not when the surprise comes to you at the end of a chain of inference. For here it is only a sign that unclarity or some misunderstanding still reigns (RFM 1978: 111)

When we engage with mathematics, we are often surprised by some elements we thus acknowledge as surprising. As noted by Peter Simons, Wittgenstein's use of the latter term suggests that his interest was not limited to the merely psychological state of surprise (Simons 2015: 160). Yet, the text seems to be crucially concerned with some of the ways in which we experience mathematics (Floyd 2012: 231). I shall refer to these as forms of surprise. Because the distinction at stake has been amply elucidated by the literature, e.g. in (Mühlhölzer 2002), I will limit myself to a short overview of it.

We can illustrate the first form by considering, following Wittgenstein's invitation (RFM 1978: 112), the case of a mathematical puzzle, such as the one in which we are asked to connect nine dots, arranged in a 3 x 3 lattice, using only four consecutive straight lines.



When faced with this request, we may try to draw a spiral, or attempt other similar educated strategies that maximize the number of dots covered while minimizing overlapping lines. None of these attempts will work. After being shown the solution (Figure 2), it might strike us as surprising, and we might protest not having been given a crucial bit of information: namely, that lines can reach outside the grid. The puzzle is not a difficult one after one understands what counts as a line. It is as if *after* seeing the solution one can do something with a line that one could not do *before*.



While this elementary puzzle might seem distant from “grown up” mathematics, I believe that it highlights an important, if not essential, role of the surprising in the practice of mathematics. The experience of working through surprising elements not only is an important component of what makes problems interesting or worth pursuing; it also is a mark of genuine mathematical progress through insight. Puzzles, as Wittgenstein suggests, “are framed because they surprise: this is their whole sense” (RFM 1978: 112). While any given bit of mathematics is surprising only to some people, being surprised by a new insight has the potential to contribute to everyone’s mathematical development. What is crucial, however, is that surprise eventually disappear: that what used to puzzle us does not do so anymore. More is true: we are now incapable of “unseeing” the solution, thus coming to feel a form of *compulsion* that the theorem *has* to be true, or that the puzzle *must* be framed in this way. When we ask ourselves what we were previously surprised *at*, we find ourselves incapable of pointing to anything specific (RFM 1978: 59-60, 63); we realize that there is no determinate *thing* in the problem that is surprising in itself. What happened is that we have come to a new understanding of the *statement* of the problem itself. This leads Wittgenstein to suggest that “the *sense* of the result is not to be read off from [the result] by itself, but from the proof” (RFM 1978: 162), similarly to how the sense of “line” can only be read off the solution to the previous puzzle. I read this as an invitation to appreciate how understanding a mathematical statement and its proof are more closely related processes than one might think.

The second form of surprise is manifest in our tendency to marvel at a mathematical result as if it introduced us to a hidden truth that was previously unforeseeable. Wittgenstein had in mind, for instance, some of the reactions to recent developments in mathematical logic, such as Gödel’s incompleteness

theorem. One is tempted to read these results as “introduc[ing] us to the mysteries of the mathematical world” (RFM 1978: 137). This leads one to think of mathematics as a tool reaching beyond human knowledge. Unlike the first kind of surprise, this one fosters its own persistence and dissuades us from achieving full clarity on the topic. Filled with a “special feeling of dizziness” (RFM 1978: 286), we are seduced by the idea that the proposition we are dealing with has a “deep content” (RFM 1978: 286), which we will not understand unless we come to see something that we previously had *no inkling of*. This form of surprise, contrary to the previous one, signals that *we have not yet understood* the mathematical problem. I read Wittgenstein as suggesting that overcoming this form of surprise involves a proper appreciation of the kind of questions that mathematics poses. In particular, it requires distinguishing between mathematical problems and problems posed in natural science, whose solutions might require discovering new facts which might take us by surprise. Mathematical proofs and calculations, on the other hand, differ from scientific experiments in their being (in principle) foreseeable. Thus, overlooking the difference between the grammatical structures of mathematical and empirical statements is one of the ways we might be led into the second form of surprise.

II. Logic and Surprise in the *Tractatus*

In what follows, I want to suggest some ways in which we may trace *both* forms of surprise we found in RFM back to some of Wittgenstein’s comments on logic in the *Tractatus*. I believe that much of the following could be applied to his early views of mathematics as well, perhaps following an account of the relation between mathematics and logic in the TLP as in (Kremer 2002); however, space limitations prohibit me from discussing Tractarian mathematics. Because the *Tractatus* distinguished logic from mathematics, the passages I am quoting concern a different subject matter from that of RFM. I nevertheless read in the TLP an incipient concern with questions regarding the notion of surprise similar to those that shaped the mature views found in RFM. My hope is that, by recognizing these strands within Wittgenstein’s thought, we might come to a better understanding of both his earlier and his later works.

I suggest that the second form of surprise we encountered in RFM has much in common with the one mentioned in TLP 6.1251, which asserts that “there can *never* be surprises in logic.” To see this, recall how, in the *Tractatus*, the propositions of logic (tautologies and contradictions) lack *sense* (*Sinn*), which is why Wittgenstein calls them *sinnlose Sätze*. Unlike significant propositions (*sinnvolle Sätze*), they do not depict possible states of affairs. Rather, tautologies demonstrate the logical properties of significant propositions by combining them into propositions that say nothing (6.12, 6.121). The ‘experience’ needed to understand tautologies is not that of a determinate state of affairs, but merely the experience “that something is; that, however, is not an experience” (5.552). Logic is thus *prior* to any (significant) experience, such as that of surprise. Unlike the significant propositions commonly employed in the natural sciences, tautologies cannot depict or predict (possibly unforeseeable) objects or events. No future experience can possibly lead us to conclude that a given tautology turned out to be false. By choosing the appropriate logical notation, we could in fact dispense with logical propositions (6.122). In these remarks, Wittgenstein is criticizing the very notion of a “logical experience” of “logical objects,” proposed by Russell in his 1913 manuscript *Theory of Knowledge* (Russell 1984: 97). More generally, Wittgenstein denies any conception of logic that makes it appear “substantial” (6.111), similarly to how in RFM he criticizes conceptions of mathematics that make it appear irretrievably mysterious. Hence, as in RFM with mathematics, the discussion of surprise in the TLP is meant to stress the *foreseeability* of logical and mathematical results, thereby distinguishing them from the propositions of the natural sciences.

Thus, when the *Tractatus* talks of the absence of surprise in logic, we should hear the *second* sense of surprise from RFM. The activities that involve senseless propositions, such as applying operations and mechanically recognizing tautologies (6.1262) are substantially different from the “real life” scenarios which we might characterize through significant propositions, such as seeing or experiencing something for the first time (6.211). In focusing on this aspect, both early and late Wittgenstein are concerned with elucidating what *sort* of activities logic and mathematics are; in particular, in how they bear a markedly distinct form from that of engaging with the empirical sciences (6.111). A persistent attitude of astonishment in the face of a

mathematical result is more likely a sign that we are not clear about its nature, or that we have unwarranted expectations about its purpose. This is unlikely to help us with the practice of mathematics. The *Tractatus* makes a more fundamental point: as long as we are engaging with this form of surprise, we have failed to so much as enter the domain of the logical as such. This is the sense in which there *can never* be surprises in logic.

I now want to consider Wittgenstein's brief discussion of the *process* by which one recognizes a tautology as such (6.126-6.1265) and use it to suggest a way in which we can read the *first* form of surprise as entering, albeit tangentially, the Tractarian discussions of logic. The recognition of a tautology is referred to as a "calculation" of the logical properties of the symbol, yielding a "proof" of a logical proposition. It amounts to "successively applying certain operations" to an initial tautology generating further ones that are said to follow from the premise (6.126). Hence, the steps of a logical proof all lack sense. Thus, unlike in the case of significant propositions, "in logic every proposition is the form of a proof" (6.1264), and it is "possible to construe logic in such a way that every proposition is its own proof" (6.1265). Wittgenstein stresses how the process by which we recognize a tautology is *not* essential to logic (6.126): it is a "mere mechanical expedient" we use to deal with complicated cases (6.1262). Nevertheless, the equivalence of process and result in logic should be reminiscent of our earlier discussion of the internal connection between understanding a mathematical result and understanding its proof. In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein is concerned with the specific character of the relationship between logical propositions and their proofs, and how this relationship is markedly different from that between a hypothesis about a state of affairs and the experiment needed to verify it (6.2331, 6.1263). In doing so, he is brought to reflect on the (inessential) process by which tautologies are derived or used to infer a significant proposition from another, i.e. their *operational* character. Determining whether a string of signs is a tautology, or an equation, requires going through a sequence of steps. This process might hold some surprises for us, in the way that the *first* form of surprise did in RFM. While the TLP does *not* dwell on the details of the possibility of surprise in the procedure, precisely because Wittgenstein did not (yet) deem it pertinent to logic as such, it is significant that the work does single out the "complicated cases" in which we cannot determine at a glance whether a

propositional sign belongs to logic. I conjecture that Wittgenstein's early concern with distinguishing logic and mathematics from the empirical sciences played a role in his later thinking of the two under the aspect of "doing" rather than that of "finding" (RFM 1978: 362), and hence in his increasing interest in the experiential elements that characterize mathematical practice, such as surprise. In other words, I read in the TLP the bud of an incipient concern with the relationship between the experience of symbolic manipulation and more traditionally "fundamental" concerns about the nature of logic and mathematics. This is one way in which we might trace Wittgenstein's interest in "vanishing" surprise back to his early works.

III. Surprise in Philosophy

There is another and less obvious locus in the text that I would like to connect to the first form of surprise from RFM. One aspect I attempted to emphasize in section I is how the vanishing of the feeling of surprise is, for Wittgenstein, a characteristic mark of having understood a mathematical proposition in virtue of having recognized that it belongs to mathematics. In other words, assigning a sentence to its proper logical place is an essential component of the process of understanding the sentence itself. This is similar to why the *Tractatus* stresses that tautologies are not significant propositions: their job is not that of "getting to the facts." Hence, recognizing the senselessness of tautologies is itself a mark of success in the practice of logic, similarly to how, in RFM, the vanishing of surprise is a mark of successful engagement with mathematics. I believe that a similar idea holds of the *Tractatus*' conception of what it means for a reader to understand its own (philosophical) propositions. The work famously states that "Philosophy aims at the clarification of thoughts" (4.112), a sentence that Wittgenstein attempted to explain in a letter to Ogden by writing that "the *result* [of philosophy] must be that the prop[osition]s *now have become clear* that they ARE clear" (CCO 1973: 49). Since the work (6.53, 6.54) characterizes the propositions of philosophy as "nonsensical" (*unsinnig*), the "thoughts" of 4.112 as well as the "propositions" of the letter to Ogden are most likely those that have sense (those that are significant). Hence, part of the task of understanding the philosophical propositions of the *Tractatus* is to recognize them in their nonsensicality, similarly to how understanding a tautology requires recognizing its senselessness. In both cases, it is crucial to

appreciate that the proposition one is working with is *not* significant, because it does not perform the job of, for instance, the propositions of natural science.

As in the case of working out whether a sentence is a tautology, the process by which one comes to recognize a proposition as nonsensical needs not be a simple one. It might involve “a long period of doubt” (6.521), a convoluted transition away from the initial puzzlement and surprise. My concern here is not to dwell on the multifarious forms this process might bear, nor to attempt a phenomenological analysis of it; rather, my intent is to suggest that we may read this transition as structurally akin to the one through which we come to understand the solution to a mathematical puzzle. Working ourselves out of this feeling of puzzlement and surprise requires realizing that there was no determinate element of the mathematical problem that was surprising in itself; similarly, “letting go” of Wittgenstein’s nonsensical remarks requires realizing that there was nothing determinate we wanted to say in the first place. In other words, we may draw a parallel between the way the *Tractatus* calls for the problems of philosophy to “vanish” (6.521) and the vanishing of surprise in our practice of mathematics as described in RFM. What is at stake, in both works, is a proper appreciation of the specific natures of necessity that mathematics and philosophy, respectively, deal with. By drawing this connection, I hope not only to indicate how RFM and TLP might mutually illuminate each other, but also to suggest that Wittgenstein’s discussion of mathematical practice might help us better understand the development of his own conception of philosophy throughout his works.

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Acknowledgement

I thank Michael Kremer and Juliet Floyd for their helpful comments on earlier versions of this paper. I am also thankful to an anonymous reviewer for their extensive feedback and suggestions.

Basteln in der Digitalisierung: Der Bausatz Wittgensteins Welt – selbst hergestellt als angemessene „Beleuchtung“ des *Tractatus*

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Abstract

Als der *Tractatus* erschien, richtete er sich nicht zuletzt gegen die übertriebenen Hoffnungen der Zeit an Logik und Wissenschaft, als deren Erbe sich der Computer entwickelte. 100 Jahre später leben wir in einer digitalisierten Welt, ohne die übertriebenen Hoffnungen losgeworden zu sein, die sich nun an die Informationstechnologie richten. Weil Möglichkeiten und Herausforderungen der Digitalisierung auch heute nur ansatzweise ausgelotet sind, hat Wittgensteins frühe Schrift als Kritik des Informationszeitalters nichts an Aktualität verloren. Um diesen Anspruch zu belegen, stelle ich meinen Bausatz *Wittgensteins Welt – selbst hergestellt* medientheoretisch und kulturwissenschaftlich als analoge Antwort auf Probleme der digitalisierten Welt vor. Die sperrig und hybrid gestaltete Analogizität des Bastelns ist geeignet, zu einem verantwortungsvolleren Umgang mit Information beizutragen. Vor diesem Hintergrund lässt sich erstens der *Tractatus* als frühe Kritik des Informationszeitalters und Kultivierung der Anwendungsdimension von Kommunikation aktualisieren. Zweitens erhält auch Wittgensteins Spätwerk eine neue Beleuchtung, wenn dessen Aspekte des Bastelns ins Licht der Digitalisierungskritik, neuer Formate der Kommunikation und damit der Etablierung neuer Verantwortungsstrukturen gesetzt werden.

Basteln in der Digitalisierung: Der Bausatz Wittgensteins Welt – selbst hergestellt als angemessene „Beleuchtung“ des *Tractatus*

Vor zwei Jahren aber hatte ich Veranlassung, mein erstes Buch (die „Logisch-Philosophische Abhandlung“) wieder zu lesen und seine Gedanken zu erklären. Da schien es mir plötzlich, dass ich jene alten Gedanken und die neuen zusammen veröffentlichen sollte: dass diese nur durch den Gegensatz und auf dem Hintergrund meiner älteren Denkweise ihre rechte Beleuchtung erhalten könnten. (PU 1993, 232)

Als der *Tractatus* erschien, richtete er sich nicht zuletzt gegen die übertriebenen Hoffnungen der Zeit an Logik und Wissenschaft, als deren Erbe sich der Computer entwickelte. 100 Jahre später leben wir in einer digitalisierten Welt, ohne die übertriebenen Hoffnungen losgeworden zu sein, die sich nun an die Informationstechnologie richten. Weil Möglichkeiten und Herausforderungen der Digitalisierung auch heute nur ansatzweise ausgelotet sind, hat Wittgensteins frühe Schrift als Kritik des Informationszeitalters nichts an Aktualität verloren. Um diesen Anspruch zu belegen, soll hier Wittgensteins „ältere Denkweise“ eine angemessene „Beleuchtung“ erhalten – in Abwandlung von dessen Idee einer gemeinsamen Veröffentlichung von

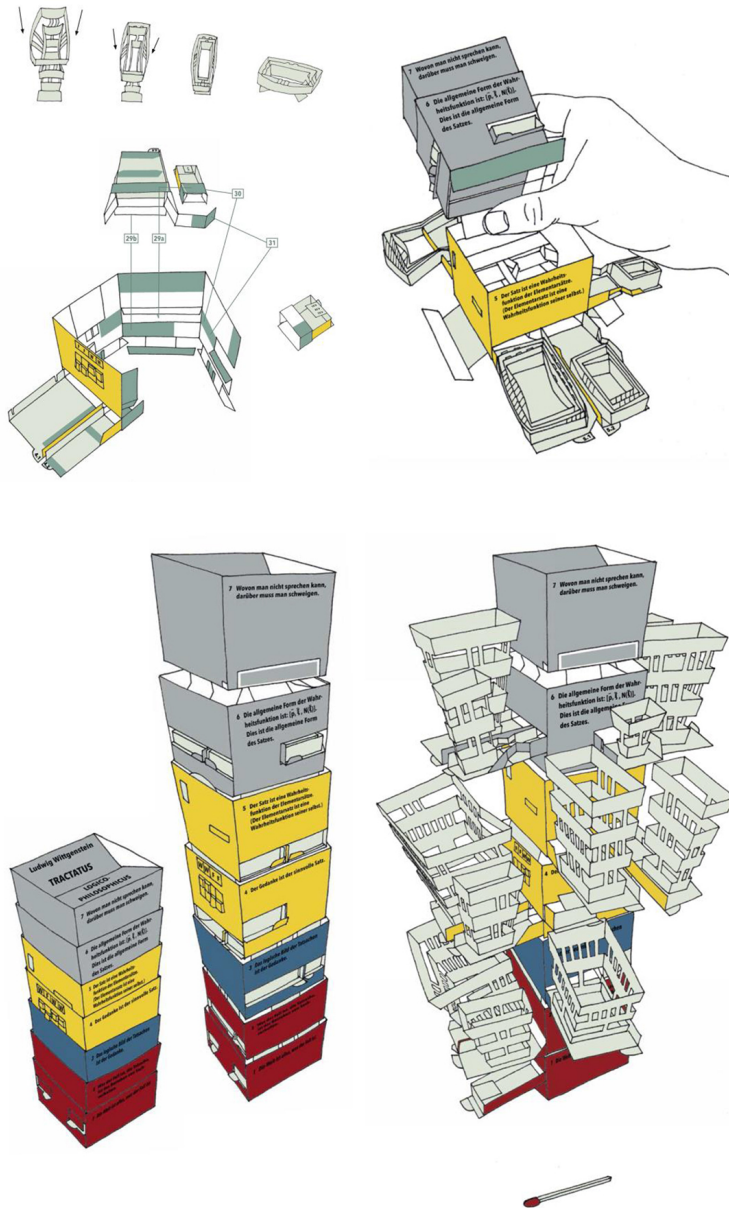
Früh- und Spätwerk zur „rechten“ Erhellung des letzteren. Das geschieht, indem ich meinen Bausatz *Wittgensteins Welt – selbst hergestellt* medientheoretisch und kulturwissenschaftlich als analoge Antwort auf Probleme der digitalisierten Welt vorstelle. Dabei zeigt sich der Bausatz auch als eine Art der gleichzeitigen Veröffentlichung von Wittgensteins Früh- und Spätwerks – was schließlich auch das von ihm beabsichtigte Licht auf letzteres wirft.

Wittgensteins Welt – selbst hergestellt ermöglicht die Umsetzung des *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* in ein dreidimensionales Modell – „zum Basteln und Begreifen“, wie der Untertitel erläutert. Der als Buch gebundene Bausatz enthält 19 Bastelbögen, die anhand einer illustrierten Anleitung zusammengebaut werden können, ergänzt von einführenden Texten und Begriffserläuterungen. Schritt für Schritt lässt sich auf diese Weise nicht nur der Aufbau des *Tractatus* nachbilden, sondern auch die ontologischen Ebenen schematisieren, die er durchschreitet: Ausgehend von der „Welt“, wie sie Wittgenstein fasst, in ihrer atomistisch gegliederten logischen Struktur (als rote Kuben); darauf aufbauend die „Gedanken“ als logisch ebenso gegliederte Bilder der Welt (als blauer Kubus); anschließend die „Sprache“ mit ihren logisch wieder ebenso gegliederten Bildern der Gedanken (als gelbe Kuben); sowie abschließend das „Unsagbare“ als logisch nicht zu gliedernde Verwirrung von Sprache und Denken (als graue Kuben). Mit dem Zusammenbauen aller Kuben verbindet man die Hauptsätze 1 bis 7 und hält schließlich den „Tractatus-Turm“ in den Händen, aus dessen ausziehbaren Schubladen sich alle Nebensätze als darin versenkte Türmchen entfalten lassen und dann die klare Grundstruktur gleichsam entkernen und wolkenhaft umhüllen (vgl. Depner 2019).

Digitalisierung als Verengung von Kommunikation

Unter den zahlreichen medialen Formaten von Kommunikation zeichnet sich das Format der Information dadurch aus, dass es die Kontingenz der Anwendungsdimension auf diskrete, unterschwellige Weise ausschließt (vgl. Derrida 1988). Es wird ein Sender-Empfänger-Modell etabliert, in welchem Wissen als Information verbindlich, der Verfasser als Autor verantwortlich und der Leser als Rezipient auf ein eher passivisches als aktivisches Verstehen

verpflichtet ist. Erreicht wird dadurch eine Entlastung des Rezipienten sowie die Verbindlichkeit von Wissen. Durch die Festlegung der Rollen von Autor und Rezipient etablieren sich normativ belegte Verantwortungsstrukturen (vgl. Depner 2022).



Dieses ausgezeichnete Format der Kommunikation zeigt sich spätestens in der digitalisierten Welt dadurch stark herausgefordert, dass die diskrete Entlastung des Lesers Verantwortungslosigkeit begünstigt. Medienwissenschaftler wie Bernhard Pörksen beschreiben (in ihrer eigenen

Begrifflichkeit, die ich hier zu meinen Zwecken umschreibe, wobei ich in mehreren längeren Passagen auf meine Artikel zur Gestaltung meiner Bausätze zurückgreife, vor allem Depner 2022), wie der Anstieg von Information durch digitale Produktion und global ungebremste Distribution das etablierte Sender-Empfänger-Modell implodieren lässt (vgl. Pörksen 2021, 50). Während Information eine ubiquitäre Dominanz erlangt, einen Zustand der „situationsunabhängigen Sichtbarkeit, permanenter ortloser Präsenz und unabweisbarer Evidenz“ (ebd. 16), nivelliert das Übermaß an Informationen deren Verbindlichkeit, indem beinahe beliebige widersprüchliche Informationen verfügbar sind (vgl. ebd. 41). Entstehungskontexte werden zunehmend als inszeniert empfunden (vgl. ebd. 31f), Rezeptionskontexte vervielfältigen sich und prallen als „Clash der Codes“ global ungehemmt aufeinander (ebd. 16).

Die Kontingenz der Anwendungsdimension, gegen die das Format „Information“ eigentlich immunisieren will, wandert auf diese Weise gleichsam in die quantitativ aufgeblähte Information ein und höhlt sie qualitativ aus. Unvermutet überfordert und mit bislang ungekannten Möglichkeiten der globalen Verteilung von Information ausgestattet, wird der an Entlastung gewöhnte Rezipient selbst zum Autor – allerdings ohne besondere Kompetenz und Verantwortlichkeit (vgl. ebd. 68 und 87f). Der medial bedingte Wandel im Umgang mit Information in der Öffentlichkeit führt zur Irritation über ihren Status. Das postfaktische Zeitalter hat begonnen, oder genauer gesagt: Die Angst davor nimmt zu, und zwar berechtigterweise: „Die Idee letzter Gewissheit oder auch nur die Idee eines einigermaßen stabilen Realitätskonsens zerfällt und zerbröselt öffentlich, für alle sichtbar und in unabweisbarer Deutlichkeit.“ (Ebd. 49)

Verbindlichkeit und Verantwortung als Fixpunkte von individueller und gesellschaftlicher Orientierung werden nun immer dringender benötigt. Unter den gegebenen medialen Umständen hilft es jedoch gerade nicht, auf mehr Verbindlichkeit durch Information zu setzen, denn mehr vom Gleichen verschärft nur das Problem, wie gegenwärtig sichtbar ist: Es werden immer mehr Expertenmeinungen (bessere Informationen) nachgefragt, die dann noch routinierter angezweifelt werden. Es werden immer mehr Bücher gedruckt, die jeweils immer weniger gelesen werden. Es entsteht eine Spirale zunehmender Gereiztheit. (Vgl. ebd. Titel)

Statt einseitiger Konzentration auf Information wäre, wie es Pörksen mit seiner „Utopie der redaktionellen Gesellschaft“ vorschlägt, bei der Kommunikation von Wissen die Anwendungsdimension nicht weiter auszuschließen, sondern – anders als bisher bzw. auf andere Weise – zu kultivieren (ebd. 194-210). Dafür reicht es nicht, bildungsoptimistisch allein auf der Seite des Individuums anzusetzen und Kompetenzen zu fördern, sondern nötig ist auch eine Modifizierung medialer Formate des Wissens und damit eine Etablierung neuer Verantwortungsstrukturen (vgl. ebd. 196 und 217-221).

Vor diesem medientheoretischen Hintergrund kann der *Tractatus* als frühe Kritik des Informationszeitalters und Vorschlag eigener Antworten gelesen werden. In seiner Schrift bringt Wittgenstein auf Information verengte Kommunikation mit ihrer diskret in den Hintergrund gerückten Anwendungsdimension in einen scharfen Kontrast. Zwar geht er von der übertriebenen Annahme aus, dass nur propositionale Tatsachenbeschreibungen Sinn haben – womit echte kommunikative Akte auf Informationen limitiert würden. Doch kann das informative „Sagen“ nicht ohne „Zeigen“ auskommen. Gerade die Logik kann die Kontingenz der Anwendungsdimension nicht konsistent ausschließen, weil das Zeigen begrifflich unverfügbar ist: „Was gezeigt werden kann, kann nicht gesagt werden.“ (TLP 4.1212)

Jenseits solcher *informativer* Aussagen über das Zeigen kann sich die Dimension des Zeigens nur *bemerkbar machen*. Sie tut das etwa im auffälligen Gliederungssystem, mit dem sich der *Tractatus* von gewöhnlichen philosophischen Formaten abhebt (vgl. Tetens 2009, 7). Die Folge der sieben Hauptsätze und ihre Entfaltung in Nebensätze erster bis fünfter Ordnung setzt das Prinzip der Verengung von Kommunikation auf Information auf extreme Weise um, indem die inhaltlichen Zusammenhänge zwischen den Sätzen auf Zahlen reduziert sind und die Relevanz der Sätze hierarchisch geordnet wird. Doch gerade im Format dieser extremen Verengung kommt die Anwendungsdimension zur Geltung. Das Gliederungssystem, das auf die Link-Struktur des Internets vorausweist, erweist sich nämlich in der Lektüre weniger als entlastend, sondern vielmehr als herausfordernd, weil es neben einer gewöhnlichen, inhaltlich ausgerichteten, linearen Lektüre zusätzlich eine formale Lektüre entlang der verschiedenen Ordnungsstufen der

Nebensätze ermöglicht und damit ein zirkuläres, suchendes Lesen nahelegt. Der *Tractatus* ermutigt den Rezipienten, selbständig zu lesen und so zum Autor zu werden.

Der Bausatz *Wittgensteins Welt – selbst hergestellt* rückt bereits mit seiner Anschaulichkeit die vielfältigen Formate von Kommunikation und damit die Anwendungsdimension in den Vordergrund – denn während das Format des Aussagesatzes beim Verstehen diskret im Hintergrund steht, erfordert das Format des Bausatzes Entscheidungen über die Bedeutung seiner spezifischen Konturen und Formen. Das ungewöhnliche Gliederungssystem des *Tractatus* wird mittels einer exakten, feingliedrigen Gestaltung umgesetzt, die nach der vollständigen Entfaltung eine fragile Netz-Struktur entstehen lässt. Im Herausziehen und Schließen der Schubladen, im Aus- und Einklappen der Türmchen wird der Rezipient zu einem Nutzer, und zwar zu einem, der zum sorgfältigen und verantwortungsbewussten Umgang mit Wissen angehalten wird. Denn er benötigt buchstäblich Fingerspitzengefühl, Geschick und Geduld, in einem Ausmaß, das über umstands- und gedankenloses Lesen, Verlinken oder das schnelle Absetzen eines Posts oder Tweets körperlich spürbar hinausgeht. In diesem Einsatz von Materialität liegt eine Kultivierung der Anwendungsdimension: Übungen im nicht-willkürlichen Umgang mit Kontingenz und das Sammeln von Erfahrungen der Verlässlichkeit jenseits der Begrifflichkeit.

Basteln als analoge Kultivierung der Anwendungsdimension

Als eigentlicher Garant der Verlässlichkeit des (logischen) Schließens zeigt sich schon im *Tractatus* die Materialität des Papiers: Logik besteht im materialen Operieren mit Symbolen, und zwar in einem unbegrifflichen, dabei aber nicht beliebigen, weil regelhaften Umgang mit Wissen. Was im *Tractatus* graphisch vorgeführt wird (vgl. TLP 6.1203 und 6.1262), was die Informationstechnologie später mithilfe von Relais und Prozessoren ausführt, das wird in *Wittgensteins Welt* mit Schieberegler und einer Drehscheibe aus Papier mechanisch sichtbar gemacht. In seinem Spätwerk wird Wittgenstein auf das zumeist diskret übersehene sorgfältige Operieren mit Materialität bei geistigen

Vorgängen explizit hinweisen, etwa im *Blauen Buch*: „Wenn wir über den Ort sprechen, wo das Denken stattfindet, haben wir ein Recht zu sagen, dass dieser Ort das Papier ist [...].“ (BBB 23)

Basteln betont den Anwendungs-Aspekt der Herstellung von Wissen, indem Papier nicht einfach als Hintergrund einer Schreibfläche, sondern als Zentrum einer haptischen Aktivität verwendet wird: Wittgenstein selbst bastelte in seinem Spätwerk buchstäblich an seinen philosophischen Gedanken, indem er lose gruppierte Notate mittels Schere und Klebstoff immer wieder neu kombinierte, erweiterte, kürzte. Das Basteln von Philosophie erweitert das etablierte Repertoire philosophischer Formate der Kommunikation nicht nur, es kann zudem – wie bei *Wittgensteins Welt* – eine kritische, ironische Geste sein, die über bloß intellektuelle Welterklärung auf die Anwendungsdimension hinausweist. An das erhellende Potential von Witz und Polemik glaubte auch Wittgenstein, der der Meinung war, es könnte ein ernsthaftes und gutes philosophisches Werk geschrieben werden, das ausschließlich aus Witzen besteht (vgl. Buchholz 2006, 114), und überzeugt war: „Nur wenn man noch viel verrückter denkt als die Philosophen, kann man ihre Probleme lösen.“ (VB 557)

Wittgensteins Mentor Bertrand Russell war nicht überzeugt von dessen Spätphilosophie, die pragmatisch auf den kultivierenden Umgang mit der Kontingenz von Sprachgewohnheiten abzielte. Für ihn war das nicht „serious philosophy“, sondern „an idle tea-table amusement“, als sei darin jeder Anspruch auf Verlässlichkeit aufgegeben (Russell 1959, 217). Tatsächlich ist die Kulturleistung einer geistreichen Unterhaltung beim Teetrinken so wenig eindeutig von unverbindlichem und verantwortungslosem Geplauder zu unterscheiden wie bastelndes Begreifen von einer gedankenlosen Bastelei. Eine umstandslose Öffnung der Anwendungsdimension kann tatsächlich – wie es in der Digitalisierung durch die Fragmentierung von Information geschieht – die Rezipientin mit leicht konsumierbaren Informationen unterfordern und sie als Autorin (die nachdenken sollte, bevor sie spricht) überfordern. Am schmalen Grad zwischen umstandsloser Öffnung der Anwendungsdimension und ihrer Kultivierung kann man scheitern. Das spricht nicht gegen Versuche, ihn auf verschiedene Weise zu beschreiten.

Mit seiner Gestaltung betont und steigert *Wittgensteins Welt* die schon oben dargestellte Sperrigkeit des Materials, indem der Bastelprozess komplex gehalten und nicht als freies Spielen angelegt ist, so dass er zum vorgegebenen und überprüfbareren Ergebnis des „Tractatus-Turms“ führt. Dessen Bedeutung wird allerdings in der Vielfalt seiner Details, Andeutungen und Bezüge nicht explizit erklärt. Ebenso wenig erlaubt es seine Gestaltung, den Bausatz auf eine bestimmte Funktion zu reduzieren. Als Hybrid aus Didaktik, Kunst und Unterhaltung verbindet er Begriff- und Bildlichkeit auf eine assoziationsreichere Art als eine gewöhnliche didaktische oder funktionale Infografik, ist dabei aber doch didaktischer, funktionaler und auch unterhaltsamer als es auratische, kanonische Kunstwerke in der Regel sind (Depner 2016, 223-236). In dieser Offenheit und Interpretationsbedürftigkeit radikalisiert der Bausatz den Gestus der Spätphilosophie, in der Wittgenstein sich allein auf die Anordnung von „Bildern“ als ein „Album“ (vgl. PU 231f) verlässt und darüber hinaus ein *Sich-Ausschweigen* über Grundsätzliches praktiziert (vgl. WWK 183), das übertriebene Erwartungen an Informationen nicht bedient.

Gleichzeitig radikalisiert die Gestaltung von *Wittgensteins Welt* auch das Schweige-Gebot, auf das das Frühwerk hinausläuft. Im letzten Kubus ist ein Streichholz verborgen, das an einer Reibefläche entzündet werden kann, die unter dem Schlusssatz 7 „Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darüber muss man schweigen“ angebracht wird. Der bastelnde Rezipient wird im Bausatz zwar ausreichend darüber informiert, inwiefern der *Tractatus* seiner eigenen Konzeption zufolge aus „Unsinn“ besteht (der Informationen „sagt“, wo „gezeigt“ werden müsste), und dass hinter der „Überwindung“ seiner Sätze (wie eine Leiter, die man wegwirft) die ethisch-didaktischen Intention steht, die „richtige Sicht der Welt“ (vgl. TLP 6.54) sichtbar werden zu lassen. Anders als der Leser des *Tractatus* wird der Bastler des Bausatzes jedoch nicht zu einer Tat aufgefordert oder sogar verlockt, deren Ausführung unkonkret bleibt. Er wird implizit vor eine ganz konkrete Wahl gestellt: Soll er das Modell anzünden oder nicht?

Durch solche unausweichlichen Entscheidungen wird beim Basteln die Rolle der Rezipientin im Umgang mit der Anwendungsdimension von Kommunikation weiter kultiviert. Unumgängliche Entscheidungen mit deutlich erheblichen Konsequenzen unterbrechen die reibungslose Produktion

und Distribution von Information in der digitalisierten Welt. In der Entschleunigung der Wissensübertragung, im Betasten, im Kleben, im Treffen von Entscheidungen wird die Rezipientin sichtbar aus ihrer diskreten Verantwortungslosigkeit entlassen und zu einem sorgfältigen Umgang mit Wissen angehalten: Ihr wird unmissverständlich Verantwortlichkeit zugestanden, somit latent von ihr gefordert.

Insofern ist das Motto des Bausatzes „Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, das muss man basteln“ kein bloßes Wort Wortspiel und auch keine reine Anmaßung. Natürlich lässt sich nicht nur durch Basteln allein die Anwendungsdimension von Information kultivieren. Und selbstverständlich lässt sich verantwortungsvolles Lesen auch in der digitalen Welt praktizieren: Nicht alle User von Computer und Internet sitzen der übertriebenen Hoffnung auf, aktives Handeln und verantwortliches Entscheiden durch vermehrten Konsum von Informationen als Fixpunkten gesellschaftlicher Orientierung ersetzen zu können. Und doch ist durch die Implosion des etablierten Sender-Empfänger-Modells und angesichts erodierender Verantwortungsstrukturen die Kommunikation in der digitalisierten Welt gefährdet. Die sperrig und hybrid gestaltete Analogizität des Bastelns kann zu einem verantwortungsvolleren Umgang mit Information beitragen. Vor diesem Hintergrund lässt sich der *Tractatus* als frühe Kritik des Informationszeitalters und Kultivierung der Anwendungsdimension aktualisieren. Auch Wittgensteins Spätwerk erhält eine neue Beleuchtung, wenn dessen Aspekte des Bastelns ins Licht der Digitalisierungskritik, neuer Formate der Kommunikation und damit der Etablierung neuer Verantwortungsstrukturen gesetzt werden.

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The Purpose, the Pleasure, and the *Tractatus* Nonscientificus

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Abstract

The paper addresses Frege's comment about the manuscript of the *Tractatus* to the effect that the way Wittgenstein explained its purpose in their 1919 correspondence (the explanation which amounts to what he says at the beginning of the preface of the *Tractatus*), it turns out the *Tractatus* is more an artistic than a scientific achievement—in it, as Frege concludes, “that which is said therein steps back behind how it is said” (Frege, September 1919). I consider how, on the one hand, Frege's remark relates to his previously established views about differences between the ‘scientific’ and the ‘artistic’ and, on the other, how it relates to some of Wittgenstein's views expressed in the book (and elsewhere) in the same period. I suggest that although Frege and Wittgenstein come to an agreement from evidently different positions and attach different thoughts to the conclusion to which they arrive, they nevertheless do agree at one level about the character of the *Tractatus*. This agreement, I further suggest, is possibly another case of the late Frege's impact on Wittgenstein's subsequent thought.

To a mind concerned with the beauties of language, what is trivial to the logician may seem to be just what is important. (Frege 1977: 10)

1

Frege's initial reaction to the manuscript of the *Tractatus* immediately struck Wittgenstein as disappointing. Unlike Russell's, it was thoroughly unfavourable. “I find it difficult to understand.” – Frege wrote to Wittgenstein – “For the most part you put your sentences down one beside the other without justification, or at least without sufficiently detailed justification. I thus often do not know whether I ought to agree, for their sense is not sufficiently clear to me” (Frege 2011: 51). Several critical points accompanied this general dismissal, and all this contrasted with Russell's initial judgements; his growing enthusiasm for the manuscript could only reinforce the frustration.

Wittgenstein must have written Frege something about it since, in his reply, Frege (2011: 57) expresses hope for reaching their mutual agreement. Ironically, this marked the beginning of the last stage of a decade-long exchange, building up to Wittgenstein's tempered criticism of “Der Gedanke” and then the abrupt termination of their correspondence and personal contact for good (Frege 2011: 65/67; Dožudić 2022). In this paper, I address Frege's earlier complaint that Wittgenstein's manuscript is not primarily scientific. The conclusion follows from Frege's independently established views about

the ‘(un)scientific’ combined with how Wittgenstein characterised his manuscript in its preface and elsewhere. But although at first Frege’s complaint might seem like nothing but disagreement, there is a sense in which it comes as an agreement and a point of his influence on Wittgenstein.

Wittgenstein replied to Frege’s initial objections with two now-destroyed letters. All we know about the content of these letters come from Frege, whose 16/9/19 letter reveals not only some of the points Wittgenstein considered most pressing to explain but also which of the explanations Frege considered most stimulating to address in reply (Dožudić 2021a: 534-536). Concerning the content of Wittgenstein’s first letter, Frege says it “set so much in motion in [him] that if [he] followed up on every stimulating point [he] would have to write a book rather than a letter” (Frege 2011: 57). Yet, of all the allegedly stimulating points Wittgenstein made in that letter, Frege addressed only the two which strictly concern the character of the book, starting with the remark:

What you write me about the purpose of your book strikes me as strange. According to you, that purpose can only be achieved if others have already thought the thoughts expressed in it. The pleasure of reading your book can therefore no longer arise through the already known content, but, rather, only through the form, in which is revealed something of the individuality of the author. Thereby the book becomes an artistic rather than a scientific achievement; that which is said therein steps back behind how it is said. (Frege 2011: 57)

There is no way of knowing what word-to-word Wittgenstein wrote in his letter about the point Frege paraphrased. Still, from the paraphrase, it is clear Wittgenstein repeated or elaborated the opening lines of the *Tractatus* preface:

Perhaps this book will be understood only by someone who has himself already had the thoughts that are expressed in it – or at least similar thoughts. – So it is not a textbook. –Its purpose would be achieved if it gave pleasure to one person who read and understood it. (TLP: p. 3)

After several meetings with Wittgenstein, Ramsey provided a recap of this point, too:

His idea of his book is not that anyone by reading it will understand his ideas, but that some day someone will think them out again for himself, and will derive real pleasure from finding in this book their exact expressions. (McGuinness 2012: 139).

I do not think it is a coincidence that Frege and Ramsey picked out the same point from their exchanges with Wittgenstein. In both cases, Wittgenstein must have given it a prominent place in his explanations to the extent that Frege and Ramsey acknowledged it as vital to him. And I suspect Wittgenstein insisted on that point in both cases for the same reason: Frege and Ramsey were scientifically-minded logicians who approached the *Tractatus* accordingly. Thus, Wittgenstein felt the need to train them in the right direction. That is why we find the point in his first reply to Frege and why Ramsey gave it special attention in his report after two whole afternoons of Wittgenstein's explanations. But whereas Ramsey was favourable towards the idea, Frege had more reservations. He disregarded the preface, and even after Wittgenstein brought his attention to the idea contained there, he referred only to Wittgenstein's letter. He probably found the preface too obscure to attend to it serious attention at first and addressed another point directly from it only later – one with which he could relate (Frege 2011: 61; 2013: XXVI).

2

From the opening lines of the preface of the *Tractatus*, one can excerpt two claims: (1) The book's purpose is to give pleasure to one who reads it with understanding. (2) One can understand the book only if one has already thought the thoughts expressed in it (or similar thoughts). When combined, a corollary of (1) and (2) is that the particular pleasure cannot come from the thoughts one has thought – what Frege calls the “known content.” If thoughts are already in one's mind, they by themselves cannot produce a new pleasure in that same mind. But then, what is the source of such pleasure for someone who reads Wittgenstein's book with understanding and has already thought the thoughts expressed in it? Something must be added to them. For Frege, the only source of pleasure in reading the book, in this case, could be its *form*, which provides the needed ingredient.

What *form* is for Frege is no mystery. It is a verbal expression (a word, phrase, sentence, or their composition) consisting of visual or auditory signs that affect our senses, enabling us somehow to grasp the expressed sense or thought (Frege 1977: 4-5/10/13; 1979: 129/139). Thoughts being what is said (expressed), the expression (of thought) is *how* they are said, thus the epilogue, “that which is said therein steps back behind how it is said”. But expressions – forms – do more than that. From *Begriffsschrift* onward, Frege insisted that the fine-grained content stemming from *how* something is said – say, from a particular choice or arrangement of words – often transcends the thought and varies with a particular expression, although the expressed thought remains the same (e.g., Frege 1972: §3; 1977: 8-10; 1979: 139-141). Such content does not affect the thought or its truth value and is thus irrelevant to logic (or science in general). But if the presentation of thoughts – their expression – matters for fulfilling the book’s purpose, not their truth, then, according to Frege, it does not differ from a literary work, a novel or a poem. Hence, it is primarily an artistic achievement. Wittgenstein’s idea about the value of his book additionally supports this (TLP: pp. 3-4)

There is a different route to the same conclusion: For Frege, a scientific treatise would be either a novel work (that brings new content/thoughts) or a textbook (that supplies its readers with new knowledge of already discovered content/thoughts). But from Wittgenstein’s preface, it is clear he does not intend his manuscript to bring new content (so even if it does, that is of no importance), and it could be understood provided its reader already thought the thoughts expressed in it. Thus, it is not *intended* as a novel work or textbook, so Frege says it cannot be a scientific treatise.

The conclusion about the artistic/unscientific character of the *Tractatus* came so naturally to Frege because Wittgenstein’s explanation fitted so nicely into the framework of his understanding of literary works (as opposed to scientific ones) suggested across his writings way before he encountered Wittgenstein’s manuscript. In connection to Wittgenstein’s first letter, Frege explicitly brings his attention to a part of “Der Gedanke” in which he separates levels of sentential content – a significant segment of his understanding of literary works (Frege 2011: 59; 1977: 8-10). And the way he presents the matter in

“Logic” (1897) sounds more like something he wrote as a direct reaction to Wittgenstein’s ideas than something written two decades earlier (Frege 1979: 139-140).

Frege’s conclusion about the character of the manuscript gets supported by Wittgenstein’s emphasises in the preface, which suggest that in his book, he cares mainly for the *expression* of thoughts: He attaches particular importance to *reading* the book with understanding, *expression* of thoughts, method of *formulating* philosophical problems, the logic of *our language*, what can be *said clearly*, drawing *a limit to the expression* of thoughts, and drawing *the limit in language*. Finally, he connects the book’s value with how well the thoughts are *expressed* within it and, at the same time, insists that the “unassailable and definitive” truth of these thoughts does not contribute to the book’s value. Only demonstrating “how little has been done when these problems have been solved” does. All this stands in clear opposition to Frege’s perspective, nicely reflected in his almost-apology to readers of “Der Gedanke” for being “compelled to occupy [himself] with language although it is not [his] proper concern here” (Frege 1977: 13 n.4). This is not to say Frege was not concerned with language; he was (e.g., Frege 1972; 2013). But studying language is a preparatory matter for him. Once settled, the proper subject enters, studying thoughts and their truth. Wittgenstein did the opposite.

Wittgenstein’s shift from the consideration of thoughts to the consideration of their expression reflected in his letter alarmed Frege to question the character of his manuscript. However, Wittgenstein’s tendency to focus on the expression rather than the content should not have been a novelty to Frege. Already in 1912, Wittgenstein informs Russell about his discussion with Frege concerning ‘their’ theory of *symbolism* (Wittgenstein 2012a: 36). Then, the following year, Frege wrote Wittgenstein a letter accusing him “of ‘attaching too much value to signs’” (Frege 1976: 265; also Floyd 2011: 95). Thus, Wittgenstein, earlier on, familiarised Frege with his views, whose tendency eventually found its way into the *Tractatus* to provoke Frege’s 1919 conclusion to the effect that Wittgenstein (still) attaches “too much value to signs” and preoccupies himself with the “mere auxiliary means” (Frege 2013: 4); now, with an exciting twist. Wittgenstein, Frege must have thought, learned little from their earlier encounters.

3

If Frege had any doubts as to how to characterise the treatise based on Wittgenstein's explanation of its purpose, Wittgenstein's explanation of the case/fact distinction that followed could only affirm Frege's suspicions about its character, and in his letter, he addresses the two as a single train of thoughts. Wittgenstein, by this point, "thoroughly exhausted from giving what are purely and simply explanations" (Wittgenstein 2012c: 193), never addressed Frege's complaint. Perhaps for a good reason. Of all the comments Frege made concerning the manuscript, Wittgenstein could hardly regard this one as disclosing a drawback either of his manuscript or the comment itself. Indeed, the way Frege formulates it, Wittgenstein could no longer say Frege "doesn't understand a word of it all" (Wittgenstein 2012b: 98). By itself, Frege's formulation was something to which Wittgenstein could readily assent even though routes they arrived at it and the accompanying evaluations were disparate.

Disparate thoughts aside, what supports the suggested agreement on Wittgenstein's part? Several points come to mind:

(a) In a letter to Ficker, Wittgenstein says his "work is strictly philosophical and, at the same time, literary" (Wittgenstein 1979: 94). This sounds much like an adaptation of Frege's conclusion that his work is more artistic than scientific.

(b) In the following letter to Ficker, Wittgenstein presents the manuscript saying that "the point of the book is ethical", recommending him to read first "the [*preface*] and the *conclusion* since these express the point most directly" (Wittgenstein 1979: 94-95). In the same letter, Wittgenstein says that "[i]n reality, [the book's content] isn't strange to [him/Ficker]" (Wittgenstein 1979: 94), thus suggesting Ficker himself already thought the (similar) thoughts. Combine these two points with his identification of ethics and aesthetics (TLP: 6.421), and Frege's remark gets supported.

(c) Frege's conclusion that the manuscript is primarily an artistic achievement is compatible with Wittgenstein's account of the impossibility of propositions of ethics (TLP: 6.4-6.423) combined with his identification of ethics and

aesthetics (TLP: 6.421) and insistence on the nonsensicality of propositions of the *Tractatus* (TLP: 6.53.-6.54).

(For an additional point, see Bremer (2021: 178).) In the light of (a)/(b)/(c), it could be suggested that Frege's remark about the unscientific character of the manuscript made Wittgenstein clearly see it or at least start explicitly promoting it first as literary as much as philosophical and then as ethical. – He did it for the first time shortly after Frege's 'artistic' remark. If so, it is yet another case of the late Frege's impact on Wittgenstein (Geach 1977: viii; Floyd 2011: 97ff).

In connection with this, two more things are worth noting. Firstly, after Frege's 'artistic' remark and his unwillingness to recommend the manuscript for publication in the *Beiträge zur Philosophie des deutschen Idealismus*, it "occurred" to Wittgenstein that, instead of a scientific journal, the publisher of a *Halbmonatsschrift für Kunst u. Kultur – Der Brenner* – "might be inclined to take the poor thing into [his] protection" (Wittgenstein 1979: 93). (See also Monk's point mentioned in Floyd (2011: 103).)

Secondly, the compatibility of Wittgenstein's perception of the manuscript with Frege's characterisation might be reflected in Wittgenstein's unwillingness to support its publication financially. As he explains it to Ficker, he considers "it to be indecent to force a work upon the world [...] the world must accept it in the normal manner" (Wittgenstein 1979: 93). This would surely be a strange justification if a scientific treatise were in question. (Indeed, the scientifically-minded Frege could (or would) not afford himself the luxury, as the publishing history of his *Grundgesetze* shows.)

The thought behind Wittgenstein's attitude towards the possibility of the financial support would run as follows: The book's purpose is not pedagogical ("it is not a textbook"). The book's purpose is not to communicate new truths. Its purpose is to provide a particular pleasure. Given its purpose, it would be indecent to force it on anybody – as with any other pleasure-providing artistic achievement (a poem, painting, or piece of music). One has to be willing to attain the pleasure, and the way to do that is to be in a particular cognitive

state independently of Wittgenstein's book. Upon reading it, only then will one "derive real pleasure from finding in this book their exact expressions" (McGuinness 2012: 139).

Finally, if not taken as strictly metaphorical, Wittgenstein's 1930 remark that the *Tractatus* "contains alongside good and genuine also Kitsch" (quoted in Floyd 2011: 91), as an aesthetical judgement, is also suggestive.

4

"I had supposed in my remarks" – Frege continues his 'artistic' comment – "that you wanted to communicate a new content". An ironic excuse, if not an apology, for mistreating the manuscript as primarily scientific. What started as an objection was heading towards an agreement, evident a section later when he complimented Wittgenstein's (alleged) embracing of *his* sense/idea distinction (Frege 2011: 59; Dožudić 2021b: 267-272). Granting the primarily 'artistic' character of Wittgenstein's treatise makes objections Frege offered up to this point idle. If the manuscript is not primarily intended as a scientific treatise that asserts new or unfamiliar thoughts, there is no problem or substantial disagreement here. There could be none – Frege's standards exclude it in principle (1977: 362-363; 1979: 132-133; 2013: XVIII-XIV), but at the cost of the *Tractatus* becoming a "logically irrelevant side-show" (Frege 2013: XXII).

From the perspective of someone who has "come to know [Wittgenstein] as a thinker to be taken rather seriously" (Frege 2011: 61) and hoped that Wittgenstein "will some day advance what [he/Frege believed he has] discovered in the domain of logic" (Frege 2011: 57), coming to such an agreement must have left Frege with a bitter aftertaste. The feeling of a disappointment thus cuts both ways. Given how he continued to treat Wittgenstein's manuscript in the following two letters (2011: 61/65/67), Frege had a hard time coming to terms with this change of perspective or even taking it seriously. Wittgenstein's hope to publish it in a *scientific* journal and a request to Frege to help him achieve it backed Frege's attitude and gave legitimacy to his final reflection on *Satz 1* of the *Tractatus* (Frege 2011: 65-67; Dožudić 2021b: 273-277).

Frege's turn from the professed agreement about the character of the treatise and inability to consider it afterwards in a different light was undoubtedly part of why Wittgenstein, disappointed, abruptly quit the correspondence. By March 1920, it should have been clear to Frege Wittgenstein was now far from his companion in searching for the truth "partly on different paths" (Frege 2011: 57). After Wittgenstein's attack on "Der Gedanke" and acknowledgement of "a deep and true core in idealism" (Frege 2011: 67), they were not taking somewhat distant paths – the distance between them was "as wide as the sky" (Frege 2013: XXV). The same goes the other way around. Frege's final questions dispatched to Wittgenstein and Wittgenstein's subsequent silence show that better than anything.

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Propositions as Pictures in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*: A Sketch of a New Interpretation

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Abstract

Although there is a great deal concerning the *Tractatus* that is controversial, the following line of interpretation is not controversial: Wittgenstein's picture theory of representation applies primarily to elementary propositions, and only derivatively to non-elementary propositions. Despite the broad consensus on this matter, I challenge this interpretation of the picture theory. I first gather some of the evidence showing that Wittgenstein consistently treated the picture theory as applying to all propositions, rather than specifically or especially to elementary propositions. I then begin to sketch a proposal for how the picture theory can be understood in light of this fact.

1. Introduction

As is well known, Wittgenstein's inspiration for the picture theory seems to have been a model of a car accident that was used in a Paris court room. On 29th September 1914, Wittgenstein recorded in his notebook, "In the proposition a world is as it were put together experimentally. (As when in the law-court in Paris a motor-car accident is represented by means of dolls, etc.)" (TB 1998, 7; see Sterrett (2017), p.116, for a reproduction of the image that Wittgenstein himself might have seen). The standard way to interpret this remark is to think of the courtroom model as capturing, albeit somewhat crudely, the pictorial nature of an elementary proposition. According to the *Tractatus*, an elementary proposition is a nexus of names with each name going proxy for a simple object. The way in which the names are related to one another in the elementary proposition represents the way in which the named objects are related to one another in a state of affairs. In the standard interpretation of the courtroom model, the elements of the model (the dolls) function as names, and the ways they are related to one another in the model represents the actual spatial relationships among their real-world counterparts. In this way, the courtroom model is taken to demonstrate how an elementary proposition is a picture (*Bild*) of a possible situation.

The reason that this can only be a crude approximation of the pictorial nature of an elementary proposition is because of the further features of elementary propositions that are fleshed out in the *Tractatus* (TLP 1989). In particular, the names in elementary propositions stand for objects which "make up the

substance of the world”, entities which “cannot be composite” (2.021). Furthermore, the elementary propositions themselves are logically independent of each other (2.061, 4.21). Hence the vehicles and pedestrians represented by the dolls in the courtroom model are not Tractarian objects, and the claims that the model is used to make about how the accident occurred are not the kinds of logically independent claims asserted by elementary propositions. Nevertheless, so the thought goes, the courtroom model manages to convey some of the central features of the pictorial nature of elementary propositions.

What about other propositions? According to the *Tractatus*, non-elementary propositions are truth-functions of elementary propositions (5). Famously, Wittgenstein described his claim that the logical constants do not go proxy for anything as his “fundamental thought” (4.0312). The question thus arises: if non-elementary propositions are truth-functionally complex, and the logical constants do not go proxy for anything, how, then, do non-elementary propositions function as pictures?

It is easy enough to see how the pictorial nature of elementary propositions can be carried over to a *conjunction* of elementary propositions. The conjunction simply represents all of the objects named in the conjoined propositions as related to one another in the ways they are represented as being in those conjoined propositions. However, it seems that we can only appeal to a derivative and not particularly illuminating sense of how other truth-functionally complex propositions are pictures of possible situations. A disjunction, we might think, represents objects as related to one another in *at least one* of the ways that one of the disjoined propositions represents them; a negation represents objects as *not* related to one another in the way that the negated proposition represents them; a conditional represents that, *if* objects are related to one another as they are represented in the antecedent, *then* some further objects are related to one another as they are represented in the consequent. With regard to more complex truth-functional structure, perhaps all we can do is gesture in a vague way to the fact that logical analysis bottoms out in elementary propositions.

Despite its limitations, there is a broad consensus around the idea that the picture theory applies primarily to elementary propositions, and only in a

derivative way to non-elementary propositions, in the way just outlined. Nevertheless there are some straightforward reasons to challenge such an account. The first is that Wittgenstein's initial development of the idea of the picture theory in the *Notebooks* preceded the account of elementary propositions that is worked out in the *Tractatus*. The second is that in many of Wittgenstein's canonical statements to the effect that propositions are pictures, the claim is put forward in complete generality—there is no prioritization of elementary propositions. Finally, there is the difficulty, indicated above, of understanding how non-elementary propositions function as pictures.

The goal of this paper is to begin to present some of the textual evidence that indicates that the picture theory applies in the same way to all propositions, rather than primarily to elementary propositions, and to begin to sketch a proposal for how the picture theory can be understood with this in mind. Instead of regarding the courtroom model as a crude approximation of the pictorial nature of an elementary proposition, I suggest that we should rather see it as illustrating the essentially pictorial nature of any proposition.

2. Some textual evidence

Let us begin with the remarks surrounding the appeal to the courtroom model in the *Notebooks*:

"The general concept of the proposition carries with it a quite general concept of the co-ordination of proposition and situation: The solution to all my questions must be *extremely* simple.

In the proposition a world is as it were put together experimentally. (As when in the law-court in Paris a motor-car accident is represented by means of dolls, etc.)

This must yield the nature of truth straight away (if I were not blind).

Let us think of hieroglyphic writing in which each word represents its meaning. Let us think also of the fact that *actual* pictures of situations can be *right* and *wrong*." (TB 1998, 7)

The basic idea behind Wittgenstein's appeal to the courtroom model can be put as follows. The proposition, like the model, is a proposal that can be assessed as to its correctness, and the elements of the proposition, like the dolls in the model, can be rearranged to represent that things might be otherwise. For present purposes, the most immediate point to note is that there is nothing in Wittgenstein's remarks here that gestures at the particular significance of an elementary proposition; rather, he is explicitly talking about the "general concept" of the proposition. The references to hieroglyphic writing and "*actual pictures*" reinforce the idea that the relevant notion of picturing applies to all propositions. Indeed, in the following remarks (on the same day) Wittgenstein sketches a picture of two people fencing and writes, "It must be possible to demonstrate everything essential by considering this case."

In the ensuing days Wittgenstein repeatedly gives voice to the idea that all propositions are pictorial in the relevant sense. On 2nd and 3rd October he writes "We can say straight away: instead of this proposition has such and such a sense, this proposition represents such and such a situation" and "The proposition *only says something in so far as it is a picture!*" (TB 1998, 8). Given that versions of these remarks occur in the *Tractatus* at 4.031 and 4.03 respectively, Wittgenstein appears to have latched onto core elements of the picture theory before he has worked out the details of Tractarian elementary propositions. Indeed, there is no indication that anything depends on the idea that ordinary propositions are truth-functions of elementary propositions.

Wittgenstein is also linking the conception of a proposition as a picture to the fact that, in contrast with a name, a proposition is logically articulated. Where the function of a name is to stand for an object, the function of a proposition is to represent that such and such is the case. Hence "a *name* is *not* a picture of the thing named!"; a simple sign "can be neither true nor false" (Wittgenstein 1998, 8). In sum, some of the central ideas that can be extracted from Wittgenstein's earliest construal of propositions as pictures are the following. Propositions involve elements that can be rearranged to represent possible situations; they can be correct or incorrect; and their function of representing how things are depends on their being logically articulated.

All of these ideas are still present in the *Tractatus*. Here, the picture theory is introduced in the 2.1s, beginning with 2.1 itself: "We picture facts to

ourselves". At 2.13 and 2.14 we are told that "objects have the elements of the picture corresponding to them" and that what constitutes a picture is that "its elements are related to one another in a determinate way". The idea of *pictorial form* is then introduced, "the possibility that things are related to one another in the same way as the elements of the picture" (2.151). Here we have in view the possibility of rearranging the elements of a picture in order to represent a range of possible situations. Hence, on a first pass at least, we are recovering the same operative features that are present in the *Notebooks*.

In the section of the *Tractatus* where Wittgenstein applies the picture theory to propositions—the 4.0 sequence—we find again that there is no particular emphasis on elementary propositions. The sequence begins at 4.01 with the declaration, "A proposition is a picture of reality. A proposition is a model of reality as we imagine it." The immediately following remark then leaves little room to doubt that this is intended to apply to propositions in complete generality: "At first sight a proposition—one set out on the printed page, for example—does not seem to be a picture of the reality with which it is concerned. But neither do written notes seem at first sight to be a picture of a piece of music, nor our phonetic notation (the alphabet) to be a picture of our speech. And yet these sign-languages prove to be pictures, even in the ordinary sense, of what they represent." (4.011) Wittgenstein is evidently asserting that ordinary sentences, such as the ones set out on a printed page, are pictures "even in the ordinary sense".

Given all this, it may seem surprising that a consensus has formed around the idea that the picture theory applies primarily to elementary propositions. The explanation for such a consensus stems from features of the *Tractatus* that are not present in the *Notebooks*. In particular, 2.11 asserts that "A picture presents a situation in logical space, the existence and non-existence of states of affairs." This is what links the picture theory in the *Tractatus* to the notion of logically independent states of affairs (2.061-2.062). Indeed, when 2.13 states that "objects have the elements of the picture corresponding to them," this is naturally interpreted with reference to the Tractarian notion of simple objects presented in the 2.0s; objects which "make up the substance of the world" (2.021). As noted above, if the elements of a picture are supposed to correspond to Tractarian simple objects, then the items used in the model of the car accident would not count as pictorial elements. Here, then, we have

textual evidence that seems to speak in favor of the idea that the picture theory applies especially to elementary propositions.

On the interpretation that I will sketch below, the picture theory does still apply to elementary propositions. Furthermore, given the central Tractarian claim that all propositions with sense are truth-functions of elementary propositions, there will be no problem in accepting the idea that a picture “presents a situation in logical space, the existence and non-existence of states of affairs” (2.11). The novel feature of my interpretation is simply that the picture theory does not apply *primarily* to the elementary propositions. The main obstacle for such a proposal stems from the difficulty in seeing how truth-functionally complex propositions could count as pictures in Wittgenstein’s sense, especially bearing in mind the “fundamental thought” that the logical constants do not go proxy for anything. Hence in what follows I hope to provide some indication of how this obstacle can be overcome.

3. A sketch of a new interpretation

Let us examine the apparent difficulty with regarding non-elementary propositions as pictures more closely. A simple proposition which lacks any overt truth-functional complexity—such as “the cat sat on the mat” or what have you—appears to make a specific claim about the world. Although a conjunction of such propositions makes a number of such claims, the other logical constants seem to function in a notably different way. For example, because a disjunction asserts that *at least one* situation obtains, this evidently fails to be a *specific* claim analogous to the claim made by a simple proposition. In general, an arbitrary truth-function functions similarly to a disjunction: ruling out some possibilities but leaving open, to some degree, what in fact obtains. It is largely for this reason that it is difficult to see how truth-functionally complex propositions can be understood as pictures.

However, here we should note that, according to the *Tractatus*, an apparently simple proposition such as “the cat sat on the mat” really masks a great deal of truth-functional complexity. This can be seen from the fact that it has many logical relationships with other propositions: it implies that there was a mat and that it was placed somewhere such that the cat could sit on it; it denies that the cat was standing outside in the garden, and so on. On the Tractarian

account, this multitude of logical relationships—this “place in logical space” (3.4)—is what will be revealed by logical analysis.

With this in mind we can recognize that an apparently innocent proposition such as “the cat sat on the mat” does not make such a specific claim about the world after all. Indeed, perhaps it is best understood as a long disjunction of the various specific ways that the cat could be sitting on the mat such as to make the proposition true. The point generalizes easily: an ordinary proposition will typically assert that at least one of a range of more specific situations obtains.

The crucial implication of this idea for interpreting the picture theory is to recognize that the generic case, including the kind of case Wittgenstein had in mind when referring to the Paris courtroom model, was always a truth-functionally complex proposition. Furthermore, if an ordinary picture is already truth-functionally complex in this way, then there is no special problem of how to interpret the picture theory so that it can accommodate truth-functional complexity. Recall the central components of the picture theory that we identified as already present in the *Notebooks*: propositions involve elements that can be rearranged to represent possible situations; they can be correct or incorrect; and their function of representing how things are depends on their being logically articulated. My proposal is simply that all of this applies just as immediately to truth-functionally complex propositions as it does to elementary propositions.

This proposal depends on interpreting the elements of a picture more broadly than as names in elementary propositions. Indeed, the proposal is that Wittgenstein's original courtroom model should be thought of in comparison with an ordinary sentence: the various ways of arranging the dolls to represent different situations corresponds to the various ways of arranging ordinary words to form different sentences. Hence it will be important to note that such an interpretation is supported by many of the remarks in the *Tractatus*, particularly when Wittgenstein identifies the constituents of propositions as *words* at 4.026, contrasting the meanings of words (which “must be explained to us”) with the meaning of a proposition (with which “we make ourselves understood”). Indeed, when Wittgenstein writes that a proposition “must use old expressions to communicate a new sense” (4.03), he

is talking about the construction of unfamiliar sentences from familiar words. This then leads into a canonical statement of the picture theory: “A proposition communicates a situation to us, and so it must be *essentially* connected with the situation. And the connection is precisely that it is its logical picture.”

It will be evident that more needs to be said to fully flesh out this proposal for how to interpret the picture theory and to defend it from possible objections. Hence my goal here has simply been to draw attention to some of the textual evidence in favor of such an interpretation, and to recommend that we pursue it.

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Acknowledgement

An earlier version of this work was presented as part of a symposium on “Representation and Logic in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*” at the meeting of the *Society for the Study of the History of Analytical Philosophy* in July 2021. My thanks to the members of the audience, and my particular thanks to the other symposium participants Sophia Arbeiter, Mahmoud Jalloh and Sanford Shieh, for their input on this project.

Die philosophische Rezeption von Ludwig Wittgenstein in Rumänien und seiner Schrift *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*

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Abstract

„Wittgenstein war in Rumänien vor 1990 fast unbekannt“, sagt Mircea Flonta (geb. 1932) in seinem Buch (Flonta 2008: 7) über den österreichischen Philosophen und dessen Schrift *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*, die ihm im frühen 20. Jahrhundert zur Berühmtheit verhalf. Der rumänische Exeget vergleicht die heutige Annäherung in Rumänien an Wittgenstein – „als Bezugssystem im Horizont des Denkens“ (Flonta 2008: 8) – etwa mit der Phase vor einem Jahrhundert, als die Klassiker der Philosophie in Rumänien gepflegt wurden und Büchertitel wie z. B. *Kants Leben und Werk* legitim waren. Doch wie wurde Wittgenstein in Rumänien vor und nach 1989, dem Wendejahr, das den Zusammenbruch des Kommunismus und die politische Öffnung des Landes hin zu den liberalen, europäischen Werten markiert, aufgenommen? Der erste und zweite Abschnitt dieser Studie widmen sich dieser allgemeinen Frage und heben die Begegnung einzelner rumänischer Autoren bis zur heutigen Generation mit Wittgensteins bedeutender Erstschrift hervor. Eine Antwort auf die im dritten Abschnitt formulierte allgemeine Frage schlägt eine Erklärung für das vor 1989 kaum existierende Interesse für den Verfasser des *Tractatus* vor und formuliert eine Schlussfolgerung mit Bezug auf dessen mögliche zukünftige Rezeption in dem seit 2007 der Europäischen Union beigetretenen Rumänien.

1. Wittgenstein gestern

In einem Text, den der rumänische Philosoph Constantin Noica am 26. Oktober 1943 auf Radio Bukarest verlesen hat (Noica 2019: 170), äußert sich dieser folgendermaßen:

Philosophisches Denken ist das Denken eines Verhältnisses: des Verhältnisses zwischen Mensch und Welt. Aber was ist das für ein Verhältnis? Es ist ein Gleichgewichtsverhältnis. Was für ein Gleichgewicht? Eines von Wärme und Freundschaft. Und wo führt die Erfahrung der Freundschaft hin? Sie führt zur Vertrautheit, zum Wissen aus einer Innenperspektive. (Aus dem Rumänischen übersetzt von der Verfasserin)

Ausgehend von diesem Gleichgewichtsverhältnis von Wärme und Freundschaft, welches das philosophische Denken in der Auffassung Noicas darstellt, wäre zu erwarten gewesen, Ludwig Wittgenstein als Philosophen in der umfangreichen *Geschichte der modernen Philosophie*, die die Rumänische Gesellschaft für Philosophie in der Zwischenkriegszeit in Bukarest in fünf

Bänden in den Jahren 1937-1941 veröffentlicht hat, erwähnt vorzufinden. Diese Geschichte – die erste ihrer Art in Rumänien – wurde zum größten Teil von rumänischen Autoren verfasst, wobei viele von ihnen auch später, nach dem Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs, als Rumänien unter sowjetischem Einfluss (Baciu 1990) zu einem neuen politischen Regime übergang, mit einer gewissen Kontinuität auf dem Gebiet der Philosophie, Logik und Kultur fortwirken konnten (zum Beispiel Constantin Noica, Anton Dumitriu, Petru Comarnescu und andere). In dieser voluminösen *Geschichte der modernen Philosophie* wurde Wittgenstein jedoch nicht erwähnt. Sein geeigneter Platz wäre hier vermutlich in Thomas Greenwoods Aufsatz „Englische Philosophen“ (Greenwood 1941: 349–360) gewesen, im Anschluss an die philosophischen Überlegungen des Autors zu G. Moore, B. Russell und A. N. Whitehead, umso mehr, da zu dieser Zeit Wittgenstein tatsächlich in Cambridge als Professor lehrte und zudem seit 1939 britischer Staatsbürger war. Auch wurde einige Jahre zuvor, 1933, in einer deutsch-englischen Ausgabe seine Abhandlung *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*, erstmals 1921 veröffentlicht, erneut aufgelegt. Thomas Greenwood, der anscheinend kein anderer als der Herausgeber der 1923 gegründeten und auch heute noch existierenden britischen Zeitschrift *The Philosopher* war, konnte in dieser seiner Rolle nicht nicht von Wittgenstein gewusst haben. Was vage, durch eine Art Implikation, an Wittgenstein erinnern dürfte, ist die im Beitrag von Greenwood einmalige Erwähnung der Wiener Schule, die jedoch in der Ökonomie der in rumänischer Sprache herausgegebenen *Geschichte der modernen Philosophie* eigentlich kaum breitere Behandlung fand.

Sollte damals in Osteuropa wirklich so wenig über den Philosophen Wittgenstein bekannt gewesen sein? Und hatte der englische Autor gute Gründe, Wittgenstein in seinem Beitrag nicht zu erwähnen?

Nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg wurde Wittgenstein in Rumänien zuerst in einzelnen Artikeln (sogar in russischer Sprache, z.B. von Sorin Vieru) und in Rezensionen zur Philosophie der Logik referiert, später dann aber auch in – wenn auch nur wenigen – Büchern zur Sprachphilosophie. Der *Tractatus* wurde im Laufe der ersten Jahrzehnte nach dem Krieg von den zentralen Universitätsbibliotheken des Landes hauptsächlich in deutscher und englischer Sprache angeschafft. Es scheint, dass sich hauptsächlich Logiker wie Anton Dumitriu, Sorin Vieru, Alexandru Surdu oder Constantin Noica in den

60er und 70er Jahren des 20. Jahrhunderts während des kommunistischen Regimes auf Wittgenstein in größerem Umfang bezogen hatten.

Zu dieser Zeit äußerte sich vermehrt beispielsweise Constantin Noica zu Wittgenstein. In seinem *Ideenjournal* nahm er wiederholt auf Satz 7 des *Tractatus* Bezug und bemerkte Folgendes dazu: „Denn es ist wahr, was ein Wittgenstein sagt, mit einer durchaus bedeutungsvolleren Tiefe des Geistes als die Neopositivisten, die sich darauf berufen; es ist wahr, dass ‚worüber wir nicht sprechen können, darüber müssen wir schweigen‘“. (Noica 1991: 247) Worauf genau Noica damit hinauswill, erfährt die Leserschaft zwar nicht, Noica setzt hier aber sein Fragen fort und eröffnet auf diese Weise ein ausgedehntes Reflexionsfeld, das bis zu Heideggers Seinsphilosophie reicht: „Aber wie kommt es, dass diese Dinge, über die wir schweigen müssen, durch uns und in uns sprechen? Welcher Logos wäre dieser unsrige, der auf die Verschlüsselung eines Logos in uns und in den Dingen stieße, aber den Versuch, ihn zu entschlüsseln, verbieten würde?“ (Noica 1991: 247) (Aus dem Rumänischen übersetzt von der Verfasserin)

Überzeugt von Wittgensteins philosophischer Bedeutung für die Moderne hebt Noica auf lobende Art und Weise in einem 1981 geführten Dialog mit dem damals jungen Philosophen Gabriel Liiceanu Folgendes hervor:

Neben allen Hintikkas scheint mir Wittgenstein heute ein Gott zu sein: Er hat alle großen Probleme angegriffen und es mit einem Gefühl von Verantwortung getan, welches die heutigen Menschen nicht mehr haben. Wittgenstein stellt einen Höhepunkt des Vorsokratismus in einer Welt dar, die alexandrinisch und mandarinisch ist. (Liiceanu 1991: 236) (Aus dem Rumänischen übersetzt von der Verfasserin)

Als Bollwerk geistigen Widerstands wird Wittgenstein angesehen, wenn Noica – Hegels Interpret im rumänischen Kommunismus – mit Bezug auf eine gegenwärtige Zeit moralischer Befangenheit im Modus der Kritik fortfährt: "Die heutige Welt ist eine schreckliche Welt; und vielleicht können nur diejenigen sie noch retten, die wussten, wie man den Monotheismus im Zustand der Diaspora bewahrt. Nur sie können der verheerenden Kultur der

Angelsachsen entgegenwirken und die Kultur in den guten Monotheismus des Geistes verwandeln.“ (Liiceanu 1991: 236) (Aus dem Rumänischen übersetzt von der Verfasserin)

Macht Noica hier auf die Auseinandersetzung zwischen Kontinentalphilosophie und analytischer Philosophie aufmerksam? Und ist es vielleicht diese im Hintergrund laufende Auseinandersetzung, der Wittgenstein zum „Opfer“ fiel, als Thomas Greenwood sich nicht zu dessen Aufnahme in seinen Beitrag über die englischen Philosophen entschied?

1989, dem Jahr der rumänischen Revolution (Cox 2011; Roth 2016), erschienen die ersten drei Sätze des *Tractatus* in rumänischer Sprache (Wittgenstein 1989: 530–540). Im gleichen Jahr wird auf Wittgenstein in einer Schrift, die sich mit der Aktualität der Beziehung zwischen Denken und Sprache befasst, Bezug genommen (Surdu 1989). Darin schlägt der Autor nicht zuletzt aufgrund seiner kritischen Auseinandersetzung mit Wittgensteins *Tractatus* eine Theorie der sogenannten präjudikativen Formen vor.

Nach 1989 begann mit der politischen Öffnung des Landes und der Möglichkeit der Verleihung von Forschungsstipendien und Studienaufenthalten für Studierende und Lehrende an renommierten Universitäten auf der ganzen Welt sowie durch leichteren Zugang zu einer reichen internationalen Sekundärliteratur in entsprechenden Fachbibliotheken das Interesse an Wittgenstein allmählich zu wachsen und sich zu intensivieren.

2. Wittgenstein heute

In den 90er Jahren wurde ein Großteil von Wittgensteins Arbeiten übersetzt. Schon 1991 erschien in der Übersetzung von Alexandru Surdu der *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* erstmals komplett in rumänischer Sprache. Im Mai 2001 fand anlässlich des 50. Todestages von Wittgenstein an der Universität Bukarest ein Symposium mit dem Titel „Wittgensteins Philosophie im 20. Jahrhundert“ statt, an dem viele junge rumänische Universitätslehrende teilgenommen hatten. Dieses akademische Treffen führte 2002 zur Veröffentlichung des gleichnamigen Bandes, der die Bedeutung von Wittgensteins Denken in der philosophischen Forschung und in der heutigen Ideendebatte hervorhob.

Ebenfalls 2001 wurde Wittgensteins *Logisch-philosophische Abhandlung* unter der Feder von Mircea Flonta und Mircea Dumitru, beide Professoren an der Universität Bukarest, neu ins Rumänische übersetzt, mit einer zweiten Auflage 2012. In diesem Jahr erschienen auch die *Briefe über den Tractatus* (Wittgenstein 2012), eine Auswahl von übersetzten Texten Wittgensteins mit einleitenden Anmerkungen zum Zweck besseren Verständnisses des *Tractatus*. Die letzte Übersetzung aus dem Wittgenstein'schen Werk ins Rumänische stammt aus dem Jahr 2018 und befasst sich mit dem sogenannten *Braunen Buch*.

Wie wird der *Tractatus* charakterisiert? Augenscheinlich fasziniert von der Persönlichkeit des österreichischen Philosophen stellt Mircea Flonta in der „Historischen Notiz“, die er der rumänischen Übersetzung des *Tractatus* vorausgehen lässt, u.a. mit Hilfe von Wittgensteins Briefwechsel (Wittgenstein 1980) in wesentlichen Zügen den biografischen und intellektuellen Parcours des Autors nach. Flonta spricht von Wittgensteins „bestimmter Denkweise“ und betont häufig dessen „frühzeitige moralische Ernsthaftigkeit“ (Flonta 2008: 17). So schreibt er: „Es war nicht der intellektuelle Ehrgeiz, der Wunsch, ein Werk zurückzulassen, der Wittgenstein zum Schreiben veranlasste, sondern vor allem die Notwendigkeit, Klarstellungen zu erreichen, die für ihn von unmittelbarer Bedeutung waren.“ (Flonta 2008: 14) (Aus dem Rumänischen übersetzt von der Verfasserin)

Sich der Schwierigkeit dieser Schrift vollkommen bewusst, richtet sich der Übersetzer in der Präambel des Buches mit einem zweiten erläuternden Text, der eine Art Leseschlüssel des *Tractatus* enthält, an ein breites Publikum und kommt somit auch einem weniger informierten Lesepublikum entgegen. So weist Flonta in diesem Text mit dem Titel „Zugunsten des Lesers“ auf die wichtigen Grundelemente bei der Lektüre und dem Verstehen von Wittgensteins Erstlingsschrift hin. In diesem Zusammenhang geht er insbesondere auf die Fallstricke ein, die sich aus der neuen Bedeutung bestimmter vom Autor verwendeter Begriffe ergeben. Begriffe wie *Name*, *Objekt*, *Satz*, *logische Form* werden in diesem Sinne erwähnt und erklärt. Der Autor belässt es aber nicht dabei und bezieht sich auch auf die argumentative Struktur des *Tractatus*, wobei er über die Bedeutung nachdenkt, die

Wittgenstein mit seinem „künstlerischen Temperament“ (Flonta 2008: 33) der Dezimalnummerierung seiner Arbeit und der Wechselbeziehung zwischen den einzelnen Sätzen beimisst.

Auch nach der Veröffentlichung der Übersetzung des *Tractatus* ins Rumänische bleibt Mircea Flontas Interesse an Wittgenstein lebendig, sodass er einige Jahre später für das rumänische Publikum ein Buch mit dem Titel *Der einsame Denker: Kritik und Praxis der Philosophie bei Ludwig Wittgenstein* (Flonta 2008) veröffentlicht, das auch eine Analyse von Wittgensteins später Philosophie mit deren Höhepunkt, den posthum publizierten *Philosophische(n) Untersuchungen*, enthält. Ohne eine endgültige Position in Bezug auf die Kontinuität oder Diskontinuität von Wittgensteins philosophischem Werk zu formulieren, gibt sich Flonta damit zufrieden, die wichtigen Ansichten und Argumente der Vertreter beider Lager kurz darzulegen. Die Gegenüberstellung der beiden philosophischen Etappen in Wittgensteins intellektueller Biographie, der sogenannten 1. und 2. Philosophie, gibt dem Verfasser die Möglichkeit einer erneuten und vertieften Auseinandersetzung mit dem *Tractatus*.

Was besonders auffällt, ist die sorgfältige und leidenschaftliche Untersuchung, die Flonta, man könnte fast sagen, im Geiste des von Noica beschriebenen philosophischen Denkens – hier nun der einen ausgewogenen freundschaftlichen Beziehung zwischen Wittgenstein und Russell – durchführt und sich dementsprechend viel Platz für seine diesbezüglichen Überlegungen einräumt. Warum verstand zum Beispiel der Logiker Russell, ein so brillanter Geist, Wittgenstein letzten Endes nicht und verkannte die wahre Bedeutung der im *Tractatus* formulierten zentralen Unterscheidung – der Unterscheidung zwischen dem, was *gesagt* werden kann und dem, was *gezeigt* wird? Eines der von Flonta in dieser Hinsicht angeführten Argumente ist, dass Russell „eine gewisse Veranlagung fehlte, die für eine gute Lektüre der Wittgenstein’schen Studie notwendig ist“ (Flonta 2008: 334). So berücksichtigte Russell nicht die Tatsache, dass Wittgenstein von dem Moment an, als er Cambridge verließ und bis zum Herbst des Jahres 1918, als er das Manuskript des *Tractatus* fertig stellte, sich weiterentwickelt hatte.

3. Eine Erklärung und eine Schlussfolgerung

Flonta ist der Ansicht, dass es gerade Wittgensteins philosophischer Stil war, der sich einer angemessenen Rezeption im rumänischen Kulturraum widersetzte. In diesem Zusammenhang können weitere Argumente ins Spiel gebracht werden: Weder die Veröffentlichung von Wittgensteins Abhandlung im Jahr 1921, noch deren Neuveröffentlichung im Jahr 1933 in England, noch die Beziehung zu Bertrand Russell reichten aus, um Wittgensteins Philosophie in der Zwischenkriegszeit in der allerersten rumänischen *Geschichte der modernen Philosophie* gebührend zu berücksichtigen. Dies überrascht umso mehr, als Greenwood, der Verfasser des ebendort veröffentlichten Aufsatzes mit dem Titel „Englische Philosophen“, dem angelsächsischen Raum entstammte und daher sehr gut mit den damaligen philosophischen Strömungen in England vertraut gewesen sein musste. Man könnte daher sagen, dass ein Ausgangspunkt für Wittgensteins lang andauernde Nichtrezeption in Rumänien in dieser fehlenden wissenschaftlichen Erwähnung des österreichischen Autors und britischen Staatsbürgers zu finden ist.

Aber hatte Wittgenstein während des kommunistischen Regimes in Rumänien eine größere Resonanz? Es kann die These avanciert werden, dass Wittgenstein erst nach seinem Tod 1951 in Rumänien wahrgenommen zu werden begann und dabei zunächst auch stärker mit dem Empirismus und dem logischen Positivismus in Verbindung gebracht wurde. Von den rumänischen Logikern wurde er vorerst als Sprachlogiker wahrgenommen. Der Klausenburger Professor Andrei Marga erkannte in Wittgenstein 1987 den Initiator des Programms des logischen Positivismus, „dessen definierende Note die Abgrenzung der Wissenschaft von anderen Wissensformen war, um einen kognitiven Bereich rigoroser Objektivität für Organisationen im sozialen Leben zu identifizieren.“ (Marga 1987: 293)

Aus der intellektuellen Begegnung mit Wittgenstein, der sich den Fragen „frontal“ und „völlig unabhängig“ (Flonta 2001: 12) näherte, sowie aus jener mit dessen *Tractatus* dürfe, so Flonta, Folgendes behauptet werden:

Als Aussagen über die Logik der Welt und der Sprache und über das ‚was höher ist‘, können die Sätze des *Tractatus* nur *Unsinn* sein. Dies zu behaupten bedeutet natürlich nicht, dass sie nichts mitteilten oder dass sie

falsch und irreführend wären. Es ist keine Kleinigkeit zu wissen, wie man das, was *gesagt werden kann*, von dem, was *sich zeigt*, trennt, um zu verstehen, warum genau das, was nicht gesagt werden kann, die größte Bedeutung hat, und dies am Ende eines Ansatzes, der durch seine nüchterne Strenge beeindruckt. (Flonta 2001: 71) (Aus dem Rumänischen übersetzt von der Verfasserin)

Inzwischen gibt es viele Doktorand:innen und Forscher:innen, die Wittgensteins Schriften lesen und ihn in bestimmten Situationen erwähnen (Afloroaei 2013). Sie sprechen beispielsweise über Sinn und Bedeutung, über Sprachspiel und Lebensform, Referenz und Bezeichnung, Gebrauch oder Verwendung von Ausdrücken usw., darüber hinaus über einige Themen aus Wittgensteins Schriften über ästhetische, ethische, soziale oder religiöse Fragen, oder über Themen aus seinen Notizbüchern.

Vor diesem Hintergrund einer realen Wittgenstein'schen Renaissance, die nach 1989 in Rumänien durch Übersetzungen, einführende Texte und Kommentare des Werkes des Philosophen, aber auch durch Bücher über ihn entstand, ist es möglich, dass auch in Zukunft Denkerinnen und Denker von dieser Art des Philosophierens angezogen und – warum nicht – Wittgenstein neu entdecken werden.

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Peirces Icon, Wittgensteins Bildtheorie, und das Symbol als Regularität

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Abstract

Wieviel Peirce steckt in Wittgensteins *Tractatus*? In Studien zu Parallelen zwischen Wittgenstein und seinem ideengeschichtlichen Vorgänger Peirce wird der *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* (TLP) eher ausgespart. Sollte Peirces Philosophie erst den späteren Wittgenstein beeinflusst haben? Eine gezielte Suche ergibt anderes: Laut *Tractatus* kann im Satz „der Gedanke so ausgedrückt sein, dass den Gegenständen des Gedankens Elemente des Satzzeichens entsprechen.“ (3.2; siehe auch 3.21 sowie 2.12 – 2.14 und 2.161 – 2.172). Der Satz ist dann „ein Bild“ oder „Modell der Wirklichkeit, so wie wir sie uns denken“ (4.01). Und laut Peirce dient das Arrangement der Wörter im Satz als Icon „in order to show the Forms of the synthesis of the elements of thought.“ (Peirce 1906: 513) Weitere Übereinstimmungen zwischen dem *Tractatus* und Peirce betreffen die Idee der grafischen Repräsentation logischer Wahrheitsbedingungen (vgl. 6.1203 TLP und Peirces Existential Graphs) sowie das Fortschreiten von Ausdruck zu Ausdruck durch eine Abfolge von Substitutionen (6.24 TLP) und die enge Beziehung zwischen Übersetzbarkeit, Gesetzmäßigkeit, und Symbol. Man vergleiche 3.343, 3.344 und 5.514 TLP mit Peirce: „And the regularity is the symbol. Reality, therefore, can only be regarded as the limit of the endless series of symbols.“ (Peirce 1976 [1904]: 261). Diskutiert wird ein entscheidender Unterschied zwischen bildlicher und propositionaler Repräsentation: Nur letztere kann wahr oder falsch sein.

1. Peirce und Wittgenstein. Anstelle einer Einleitung

Studien zu erstaunlichen Parallelen zwischen Peirce und Wittgenstein beziehen sich vor allem auf *post-tractarian* Wittgenstein. Nubiola (1996) erwähnt einige dieser Arbeiten, will aber primär rekonstruieren, wie Informationen über Peirce bzw. dessen Ideen oder Schriften den Weg zu Wittgenstein gefunden haben könnten. Wobei insbesondere Frank Ramsey als Mittler in Betracht gezogen wird (vgl. auch Misak 2016). Könnte da auch Charles Ogden irgendwie eine Rolle gespielt haben? Er hat gemeinsam mit Ramsey als *Tractatus*-Übersetzer fungiert und war – wann? – Verfasser eines Kommentars zu Peirces Philosophie, welcher dann offenbar dem Appendix (D, §6) des kurz nach dem *Tractatus* erscheinenden Bandes von Ogden und Richards (1985 [1923]) nur mehr beizufügen war. Dieser ausführliche Kommentar enthält bereits vieles von dem, was es zur Erklärung von Entsprechungen zwischen Peirce und dem *Tractatus* bräuchte; etwa lange Auszüge aus Schriften von Peirce (insbesondere Peirce 1906), inclusive Erläuterungen zu den *Existential Graphs*.

Ich zitiere zwei Details aus dem Appendix in Ogden und Richards (1985): Ein Diagramm ist für Peirce, trotz Symbol-artiger Merkmale, in der Hauptsache ein „Icon of the forms of relations in the constitution of its Object.“ (p. 281). Und eine Proposition ist für ihn ausdrücklich “not the German *Satz*, but ‘that which is related to any assertion, whether mental and self-addressed or outwardly expressed, just as any possibility is related to its actualization.’” (p. 283).

Diagramm und Proposition sind zusammengesetzte Zeichen. Im Diagramm werden von dessen Komponenten – bildliche und sprachliche Elemente – unterschiedliche semiotische Funktionen realisiert (vgl. Fenk 2000). Peirce zufolge können vergleichbare Zusammensetzungen auch eine Proposition bilden (siehe Abschnitt 4).

In Studien zu Parallelen zwischen Peirce und Wittgenstein spielt der *Tractatus*, wie schon erwähnt, keine nennenswerte Rolle. Finden sich Erklärungen dafür in Publikationen, welche Peirce positiv, den *Tractatus* hingegen negativ kommentieren? Mit Ogden und Richards (1923) folgt dem *Tractatus* (1922) sehr schnell eine Reaktion dieser Art: TLP 3.21 kritisieren sie als „unplausible Schlussfolgerung“ (Seite 253), und bezugnehmend auf TLP 6.2 und 6.24 kritisieren sie einen von Wittgenstein unnötigerweise eingeführten Mystizismus (Seite 89; vgl. auch Seite 255). Auf die beiden Paragraphen 6.2 und 6.24 werde ich in Abschnitt 3 zurückkommen.

Aber auch spätere Autoren sollten Peirce positiv und den *Tractatus* negativ zitieren: Dass Wittgensteins Bildtheorie schwer mit dem Radikalen Konstruktivismus vereinbar ist, liegt auf der Hand. Für von Glasersfeld wurde das klar angesichts von 2.223 TLP, wonach wir ein Bild mit der Wirklichkeit vergleichen müssten, um zu erkennen, ob es wahr oder falsch ist. Ein solcher Vergleich sei aber nicht möglich; da sieht er sich einer Meinung mit jenen „mutigen“ Skeptikern, „die seit Bestehen der abendländischen Zivilisation immer wieder behauptet hatten, dass es unmöglich ist, unser Bild der Wirklichkeit mit einer Wirklichkeit ‚draußen‘ zu vergleichen.“ (von Glasersfeld 1987: 139). Zu Peirce hingegen äußert er sich durchwegs positiv – trotz dessen Realismus-nahem Konzept des *Icons*: “Each *Icon* partakes of some more or less overt character of its object“ (Peirce1906: 496).

Peirce gilt nicht nur als „father of pragmatism“; er war auch Fallibilismus-Pionier. Im Wissen um massivste Widerstände gegenüber diesem Ansatz warnt er vor einem Konservativismus, der in der Wissenschaft fehl am Platz sei. Erfolgreiche Forschung sei radikal darin, Konsequenzen bis ins Extreme auszuloten und im (gedanklichen) Experiment zu erproben: „Indeed, it is precisely among men animated by the spirit of science that the doctrine of fallibilism will find supporters.“ (CP 1.148). [CP = Collected Papers of Charles S. Peirce]

Karl Popper, als Falsifikationist auch Fallibilist, wird sehr spät auf Peirce aufmerksam und verweist von da an respektvoll auf diesen frühen Fallibilisten. Umso bemerkenswerter seine Kritik an Wittgensteins „surprisingly naïve picture theory, or projection theory, of truth“. Im Tractatus werde die Proposition oder der Satz als Bild bzw. als Projektion eines Sachverhalts verstanden; so, als könne der Satz dieselbe Struktur oder Form haben wie der beschriebene Sachverhalt (Popper 2007: 302). In einer Fußnote zu seiner Kritik verweist er auf diverse TLP-Sätze, u.a. auf 2.223 (wie auch von Glaserfeld) oder 3.11, und ganz speziell auf 4.0141. Dort erklärt Wittgenstein die innere Ähnlichkeit scheinbar unterschiedlicher Gebilde durch das Gesetz der Projektion und illustriert dieses Gesetz am Beispiel der Tonaufzeichnung als „Übersetzung der Notensprache in die Sprache der Grammophonplatte“. Für Popper ein unzulässiges Beispiel, weil man bei dieser Tonaufzeichnung, anders als bei dem von einem Satz beschriebenen Sachverhalt, tatsächlich von einer Projektion sprechen könne. Interessanterweise kreiert Wittgenstein hier auch auffällige Metaphern („Notensprache“; „Sprache der Grammophonplatte“), welche einerseits eine Vergleichbarkeit mit *Sprache* in einem eher wörtlichen Sinne suggerieren und andererseits den unmittelbar folgenden Paragraphen 4.015 vorbereiten, welcher die Möglichkeit aller Gleichnisse – und damit auch die Zulässigkeit seines Gleichnisses in 4.0141? – sowie die ganze „Bildhaftigkeit unserer Ausdrucksweise“ mit der „Logik der Abbildung“ begründet.

Spinks (1991) sieht zwei Pole in Peirces „Scholastic Realism: an epistemological logic which recognizes the power of the sign and yet expects that there is some immediate and dynamic relation between the world of objects and the world of signs.“ Zwei aufeinander bezogene Argumentationsstränge orten auch Kloesel und Pape (1986: 15): Auf der semiotischen Ebene vertrete Peirce eine

Korrespondenztheorie der Wahrheit. „Ähnlich wie beim frühen Wittgenstein ermöglicht der Abbildcharakter der Proposition ihre Korrespondenz. In der Metaphysik der Kontinuität dagegen ist Wahrheit der Grenzbegriff im Prozess der Interpretation“. Der erste Satz war der einzige mir bekannte Literaturhinweis auf inhaltliche Ähnlichkeiten zwischen Peirce und Wittgensteins Tractatus. Ich beginne daher (in Abschnitt 2) mit einem Vergleich zwischen Wittgensteins Bildtheorie und Peirces Konzept der *Ikonizität* und illustriere dann Übereinstimmungen auch in Verästelungen dieser Ansätze.

2. Der Satz als Bild der Wirklichkeit und die Bildhaftigkeit unserer Ausdrucksweise

Mit dem Tractatus beschreitet Wittgenstein in der seit eh und je kontrovers geführten Diskussion um das Verhältnis von „Sprache und Welt“ (4.014) neue Wege: Formal durch sein Notationssystem mit apodiktischer Argumentation ohne Zitationen im üblichen Sinne. Und inhaltlich durch eine eigenwillige Bild-Theorie, die man als Bedeutungstheorie und/oder Wahrheitstheorie sehen kann. Aber sie ist nicht *radikal* neu. Auf der Suche nach verwandten älteren Ideen wird man bei Peirce rasch fündig:

- Nach Peirce (1906: 513) reichen Symbole samt Indices nicht aus zur Bildung einer Proposition. Darüber hinaus müsse das Arrangement der Wörter im Satz als *Icon* dienen: „The chief need for the Icons is in order to show the Forms of the synthesis of the elements of thought.“
- Entsprechungen in Wittgensteins TLP: „Im Satze kann der Gedanke so ausgedrückt sein, dass den Gegenständen des Gedankens Elemente des Satzzeichens entsprechen.“ (3.2). „Der Konfiguration der einfachen Zeichen im Satzzeichen entspricht die Konfiguration der Gegenstände in der Sachlage.“ (3.21). Und: „Der Satz ist ein Bild der Wirklichkeit.“ Beziehungsweise „ein Modell der Wirklichkeit, so wie wir sie uns denken.“ (4.01).

Besonderes Augenmerk in den obigen TLP-Zitaten verdient auch (i) die Verwendung von „Satzzeichen“ und (ii) der Satz über den Satz als „Bild der Wirklichkeit“:

ad (i): „Satzzeichen“ denotiert gewöhnlich *Interpunktio(en)*. Peirce hatte ständig neue Ausdrücke für seine triadischen Unterscheidungen auf verschiedenen taxonomischen Ebenen geprägt. Unter anderem den vom Lateinischen „dicere“ ausgehenden Neologismus „Dicizeichen“ (*dicisign*) für bestimmte Arten von Sätzen (Kloesel und Pape 1990: 431, Fußnote 116). Wittgenstein könnte auf den Gedanken verfallen sein, den bereits existierenden Ausdruck „Satzzeichen“ probeweise umzudeuten – in das „Satz-Zeichen“, den „Satz als Zeichen“, beziehungsweise das „propositional sign“, wie es in den Übersetzungen heißt.

ad (ii): „Bild“ wäre von den Tractatus-Kritikern, sagt Stegmüller, immer in einem „naturalistischen Sinne“ gedeutet worden. Was diese Kritiker hätte vermuten lassen, dass Wittgensteins Dictum vom Satz als „Bild der Wirklichkeit“ nur metaphorisch gemeint sein könne. Er schlägt vor, dieses Dictum im Gegenteil „in einem streng wörtlichen Sinne“ zu verstehen, und das „Satzzeichen“ als logische Struktur des Satzes (Stegmüller 1969: 545).

Allerdings könnte man Wittgensteins Dictum von der „Bildhaftigkeit unserer Ausdrucksweise“ auch sehr direkt als „Metaphorik unserer Ausdrucksweise“ lesen. Für Wittgenstein ist der Gedanke der „sinnvolle Satz“ (Satz 4 im TLP) und der Satz ein „logisches Bild“ der Sachlage (4.03 TLP). In einer weniger metaphorischen Sprache meint „logisches Bild“ aber nicht den Satz, sondern eine Spezies von Diagrammen, welche dafür bekannt ist, räumliche Metaphern – wie die Pfad-, die Inklusions- und die Subsumptionsmetapher – ins Bild zu setzen (vgl. Fenk 2000). Jedenfalls meint Peirces *Icon* neben perzeptueller Ähnlichkeit auch *formale* Ähnlichkeit: „For Reasoning, nay, Logic generally, hinges entirely on Forms. You, Reader, will not need to be told that a regularly stated Syllogism is a Diagram; /... / No pure Icons represent anything but Forms; no pure Forms are represented by anything but Icons.“ (Peirce 1906: 513)

Den Terminus des „Hypoicons“ für kulturelle Manifestationen des Icons hatte Peirce nur für erstaunlich kurze Zeit propagiert (Stjernfelt 2019). Er umfasst neben den *images* und *diagrams* auch die Metaphern; und zwar als jene Hypoicons, „which represent the representative character of a representamen by representing a parallelism in something else“ (CP 2.277). „Hence, every assertion must contain an icon or set of icons, or else must contain signs whose

meaning is only explicable by icons.” (CP 2.278). Die Rolle der Metapher beschäftigte Peirce auch im Zusammenhang mit der Metaphysik und mit der Sprache des Logikers (Kloesel und Pape 1986: 136f; 210).

All das könnte mit der „Bildhaftigkeit unserer Ausdrucksweise“ (4.015 TLP) gemeint sein: Ausdrucksweisen für Relationen, die man als Diagramme auffassen kann, und daher auch als Bilder. Und weil auch Syllogismen Diagramme sind, sind auch sie Bilder. Und die Metaphern? Sind auch Bilder; „Sprachbilder“ eben, *bildhaft* ausgedrückt. Logische Begriffe müssten metaphorisch „*eingekleidet*“ werden, heißt es bei Peirce (Kloesel und Pape 1990: 340). Und in 4.002 TLP „*verkleidet*“ die Sprache den Gedanken.

3. Gesetzmäßigkeit und Übersetzbarkeit als Essenz des *Symbols*

Peirces Pionierleistungen als Mathematiker (vgl. Kauffman 2001) betreffen Gebiete, welche auch der TLP behandelt: Erstens die von Bertrand Russell im TLP-Vorwort erwähnte Konstruktion von Wahrheitsfunktionen durch simultane Negation. (Wobei Russell aber einen 1913 erschienenen Artikel von Henry M. Sheffer als Pionierarbeit nennt.) Und zweitens Rekursion als fortgesetzte „Anwendung einer Operation auf ihr eigenes Resultat“ (5.2521 TLP).

Die unten zusammengestellten Zitate aus Peirce und dem TLP betreffen aber die Bildung von Serien von Ausdrücken durch Übersetzungen (Peirce 1904: 261) und/oder Ersetzungen (6.24 sowie 3.343 und 3.344 TLP). Von beiden Autoren wird den Grenzbegriffen solcher Sukzessionen besondere Bedeutung beigemessen, und beide betonen die enge Beziehung zwischen Symbol und „Regularität“ (Peirce 1904) bzw. „Gesetzmäßigkeit“ (6.3 TLP).

Peirce in einem seiner Manuskripte: “The object of representation can be nothing but a representation of which the first representation is the interpretant. But an endless series of representations, each representing the one behind it, may be conceived to have an absolute object at its limit.” (CP 1.339) Später erklärt er: “The reality only exists as an element of the regularity. And the regularity is the symbol. Reality, therefore, can only be regarded as the limit of the endless series of symbols.” (Peirce 1976 [1904]: 261). Und schließlich bringt er auch den Terminus “Übersetzung” ins Spiel: “The

meaning of a proposition is itself a proposition. Indeed it is no other than the proposition of which it is the meaning: it is a translation of it." (Peirce 1905: 173). Definition als Übersetzung?

Einer ungewöhnlichen Verwendung des Terminus „Übersetzung“ sind wir auch schon in Wittgensteins Gleichnis mit der Grammophonplatte begegnet (4.0141); wiewohl Wittgenstein häufiger von „ersetzen“ spricht. Die folgenden Formulierungen entsprechen jenen von Peirce, sind aber eher auf die Sprache der Mathematik gemünzt (6.24 TLP), deren Gleichungen er in 6.2 als Scheinsätze (*pseudo-propositions*) qualifiziert. Diese „Gleichungen drücken die Ersetzbarkeit zweier Ausdrücke aus, und wir schreiten von einer Anzahl von Gleichungen zu neuen Gleichungen vor, indem wir, den Gleichungen entsprechend, Ausdrücke durch andere ersetzen.“ Und:

„3.343 Definitionen sind Regeln der Übersetzung von einer Sprache in eine andere. Jede richtige Zeichensprache muß sich in jede andere nach solchen Regeln übersetzen lassen: *Dies* ist, was sie alle gemeinsam haben.

3.344 Das, was am Symbol bezeichnet, ist das Gemeinsame aller jener Symbole, durch die das erste den Regeln der logischen Syntax zufolge ersetzt werden kann.“

5.514: „Diese Regeln sind den Symbolen äquivalent und in ihnen spiegelt sich ihr Sinn wider.“

Die Erforschung der Logik bedeute also „die Erforschung *aller Gesetzmäßigkeit* .“ (6.3)

4. Peirce zum Begriff der *Proposition*

In Papes (1983: 82f) Übersetzung von Peirces Syllabus entsprechen alle Propositionen der Definition des Dicizeichens bzw. der Quasi-Proposition. Das Porträt eines Mannes mit dessen darunter geschriebenem Namen sei, durch die Kombination eines *Hypoicons* mit einem „informativen Index“, „strenggenommen eine Proposition, obwohl seine Syntax nicht die der Rede ist“. Ein noch besseres Beispiel wäre das Foto. Zwar übermittle der Foto-Abzug selbst keinerlei Information. Doch „die Tatsache, daß es sich wirklich um einen Ausschnitt der Strahlen handelt, die von einem anderweitig bekannten Objekt

reflektiert wurden, macht es zu einem Dicizeichen. Jedes Dicizeichen ist – und dies wird im System der *Existential Graphs* entsprechend berücksichtigt – eine weitergehende Bestimmung eines bereits bekannten Zeichens desselben Objekts.“ (Pape 1983: 83). Von hier aus braucht es, angesichts der Funktion dieser *Existential Graphs* in der Darstellung logischer Wahrheitsbedingungen, nur mehr einen kleinen Schritt zu einer Bild- oder Projektions-Theorie der Wahrheit!

In einer solchen Theorie ist übrigens Peirces Foto ein näher liegendes Beispiel als Wittgensteins Grammophonplatte. Aber man muss auch Peirce nicht in allem folgen:

Warum soll der Foto-Abzug selbst keinerlei Information enthalten? In Peirces Trichotomie des Zeichens (Symbol, Index, Icon) wird dem Index eine ausschließlich hinweisende Funktion zugeschrieben: „A pure index simply forces attention to the object with which it reacts [...] but conveys no information.“ (Peirce 1976 [1904]: 242). Aber der „pure Index“ erweist sich als ein höchst artifizielles Konstrukt (vgl. Fenk 1997).

Ein anderer Einwand: Sobald die *Proposition* als kognitive Bedeutungseinheit sprachliche Form annimmt, entspricht diese einer Prädikat-Argument-Struktur (vgl. Fenk-Oczlon 1983: 30f). Und sonst, oder vorher? Wenn die an die Betrachtung des Fotos anknüpfende Interpretation als hinreichend für ein „Dicizeichen“ akzeptiert wird, akzeptiert man unweigerlich auch einen inflationären Gebrauch dieses Terminus: Alles aus unserer Wahrnehmungswelt kann irgendwie zum Dicizeichen bzw. zur Proposition werden!

Anders bei Peirces Beispiel „legend under a portrait“. Da fungiert räumliche Nähe als künstlicher Index, der eine *bestimmte* Interpretation nahelegt: „Das hier ist ein ‚Selbstporträt von X aus dem Jahr Y‘“. Diese Proposition kann eine explizite Erklärung des Museumsführers sein, eventuell begleitet von einer Zeigegeste als weiterem Index. Oder aber eine sinngemäß entsprechende, unausgesprochene, sprachnahe Interpretation eines Museumsbesuchers.

Und diese Proposition kann, z.B. wegen vertauschter Etiketten, falsch sein. Während das Gemälde selbst zwar eine Fälschung, aber weder wahr noch falsch sein kann.

5. Schlussfolgerungen

aus den obigen Vergleichen:

- Eine Proposition, und nur eine Proposition, kann „wahr“ (zutreffend) oder falsch sein – unabhängig davon, ob sie geäußert oder nur gedacht wird, und unabhängig davon, ob dem bloßen Gedanken der Status eines Zeichens zuerkannt wird.
- Wogegen ein Bild für sich allein, ohne Anknüpfung ans sprachliche System, weder wahr noch falsch sein kann, weil es keine Aussage trifft und nichts behauptet (vgl. Fenk 1987).
- Was am Bild falsch sein kann, ist die Relation zwischen bildlicher Darstellung und sprachlichen oder sprachbasierten Komponenten, wie den Bezeichnungen und Zahlenwerten in geographischen Karten und anderen Diagrammen.
- Von solch anderen Diagrammen – Cartesischen Diagrammen, Venn-Diagrammen, Graphen – werden hauptsächlich Ergebnisse symbolmanipulierender Operationen „abgebildet“. Nebst Syllogismen dürfte Peirce (CP 4.536) vor allem solche Diagramme meinen, wenn er „diagrammatic reasoning“ als einzig fruchtbare Form von Reasoning bezeichnet.

Apropos Reasoning: Der *Symbols and Search*-Ansatz von Newell und Simon (1976), ein Klassiker der theoretischen AI-Forschung, beschreibt *Problemlösen* als Generieren und fortschreitendes Modifizieren von Symbolstrukturen. Ein spätes Echo Peircescher Philosophie?

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Antitranszendentalismus in Tolstois und Wittgensteins Ethik

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Abstract

Leo Tolstois Einfluss auf Ludwig Wittgenstein wird anerkannt, in seinen Ausmaßen jedoch oft verkannt. Wittgenstein selbst verdeutlicht die Bedeutung von Tolstois *Kurze Darlegung des Evangeliums* für ihn in wiederholten Eintragungen in seinen Tagebüchern während der Zeit des Ersten Weltkrieges. In diesem Werk stellt Tolstoi heraus, dass das wahre Christentum für ihn keine göttliche Offenbarung ist, sondern „die aller strengste, reinste und ganzeste metaphysische und ethische Lehre,“ (Tolstoi 2016, 25), die es vermag, die wesentlichen Fragen im Leben eines Menschen zu beantworten. Nicht in irgendeinem Jenseits (in Transzendenz) ist das Glück und der Sinn des Lebens zu suchen, sondern im Diesseits, da nur auf Erden die Menschen unter Menschen existieren und somit Gottes Wille erfüllen können, einander Brüder und Schwestern zu sein. Diesem antitranszendentalen Denkansatz fühlt sich auch Wittgenstein in seinen Gedanken zu Ethik (und auch Logik) verbunden. Dem Parallelismus im Denken von Tolstoi und Wittgenstein in Bezug auf Religion und Ethik soll im Folgenden nachgegangen werden.

Einleitung

Die Einflüsse auf Ludwig Wittgensteins Denken sind ein interessanter und gut untersuchter Gegenstand in der aktuellen Forschung. Die Einflüsse von Personen wie dem Mathematiker und Logiker Gottlob Frege oder den Philosophen Bertrand Russell sind unbestreitbar. Der russische Schriftsteller und Denker Leo Tolstoi trägt in seiner ganz eigenen Weise ebenfalls zu Wittgensteins Vermächtnis bei. Sein Einfluss wird anerkannt, aber in seinen Ausmaßen oft verkannt. Im Folgenden wollen wir aufzeigen, wie Tolstois antitranszendente Religionsauffassung und die damit einhergehende antitranszendente Sicht auf das Leben selbst, den frühen Wittgenstein in seinem eignen Herantreten an das Leben und die Welt beeinflusst hat.

1. Wittgenstein und Tolstoi

Zunächst gilt es kurz die Verbindungen zwischen den beiden Denkern aufzuzeigen:

In der Ausnahmesituation des 1. Weltkrieges findet Wittgenstein Tolstois *Kurze Darlegung des Evangeliums* und beginnt dieses Werk mehrfach zu lesen und stellenweise auswendig wiederzugeben. Er verdeutlicht die Bedeutung dieses Werkes für ihn in wiederholten Eintragungen in den Tagebüchern, die

er zu dieser Zeit verfasste. (Weiberg 2011, 137) Daraus erfahren wir, dass er das Buch wie einen Glücksbringer immer bei sich trug, sodass er bald von seinen Mitsoldaten als Der-mit-dem-Evangelium bekannt wurde. Ebenfalls äußert Wittgenstein in einem Brief an Ficker: „Wenn Sie es nicht kennen [Tolstois *Kurze Darlegung des Evangeliums*], so können Sie sich auch nicht denken, wie es auf den Menschen wirken kann.“ (Brief an Ficker, 24.7.15) Jahre später erinnert sich Wittgenstein an diese Zeit zurück und meint, dass dieses Buch ihn wortwörtlich am Leben gehalten hätte. So schreibt er in sein persönliches Tagebuch während des Krieges: „Immer wieder sage ich mir im Geiste die Worte Tolstois vor: ‚Der Mensch ist *ohnmächtig* im Fleische, aber *frei* durch den Geist.‘ Möge der Geist in mir sein!“ (TB 12.09.1914) Ausführlicher ist Wittgensteins geistige Verfassung in der Zeit des Ersten Weltkrieges in Ilse Somavillas Aufsatz „Spuren Tolstois in Wittgensteins Tagebüchern von 1914-1916“ dargelegt. Während seines gesamten Lebens liest Wittgenstein Tolstois Werke. So, neben *der Kurzen Darlegung des Evangeliums* auch *Hadschi Murat* oder *Auferstehung*. (McGuinness 1988, 184)

2. Tolstoi, Leben und Religion

Bevor wir uns ansehen, wie der frühe Wittgenstein Tolstois Auffassungen vom Leben, Tod und Religion verinnerlicht und weiterdenkt, sollen eben diese unter dem Fokus des Antitranszendentalismus untersucht werden.

1886 veröffentlichte Tolstoi die Erzählung *Der Tod des Ivan Iljitsch*. Der gleichnamige Hauptcharakter des Buches liegt im Sterben. Er versucht Sinn in seinem Leben und in der Art und Weise, in der er es geführt hat, zu finden. Die problematische Frage des „Warum?“ bleibt ihm dabei unbeantwortet. Die Angst, die er vor dem Tod hatte, ist im Anblick des Todes irrelevant. Das, was ihn wirklich beschäftigt, sind alles Dinge aus seinem Leben, die er mit dem Tod verliert: Karriere, Familie, ... Tolstoi kommt zu dem Schluss, dass die Angst vor dem Tod eine unbegründete sei. Was man erlebt und worauf man seine Gedanken verwenden sollte, ist das Leben. Den Tod erlebt man nicht – er ist das Ende des Lebens.

Diese Fokussierung auf das Gegenwärtige, das Leben im Jetzt, schlägt sich auch in Tolstois Religionsauffassung nieder. Seine Zuwendung zum Christentum ist bei ihm Resultat einer Lebenskrise. Später schreibt er:

[A]ls ich im Alter von 50 Jahren mich und die Weisen in meinem Kreise danach gefragt, was es mit mir auf sich und mein Leben zu bedeuten habe, und die Antwort erhalten [habe]: ‚Du bist eine zufällige Verkettung von Teilchen, dem Leben wohnt keine Bedeutung inne, das Leben ist an sich ein Übel‘ – daß [hat mich ...] damals zur Verzweiflung gebracht [...] und [ich wollte] mich töten [...] (Tolstoi 2016, 13)

Seine Auseinandersetzung mit dem Christentum mündet 1883 in seinem Werk *Zusammenfassung und Übersetzung der vier Evangelien*, welches in der Kurzform *Kurze Darlegung des Evangeliums* mehr Menschen zugänglich gemacht wurde. Sein Ziel dabei ist die Offenlegung des wahren Geistes der christlichen Lehre und so trennt er zunächst klar den eigentlichen christlichen Glauben von der Kirche und dem Christentum als Institution. Das wahre Christentum selbst ist für ihn keine göttliche Offenbarung, sondern

die aller strengste, reinste und ganzeste metaphysische und ethische Lehre. Über die hinaus der menschliche Verstand sich bis heute nicht erhoben hat, und in deren Kreise sich, ohne sich dessen bewußt zu sein, alle höchste menschliche Tätigkeit bewegt, sei sie nun eine politische, wissenschaftliche, poetische oder philosophische. (Tolstoi 2016, 25)

Das wahre Christentum ist für Tolstoi eine ethische, unmittelbar verständliche Lehre, die Antworten zu geben vermag auf die wesentlichen Fragen im Leben eines Menschen.

Religion ist für ihn keine dogmatische Überlieferung, sondern beschreibt das Verhältnis des einzelnen Menschen zu sich selbst und in Beziehung zu anderen, zu Gott und zum Universum. „Tolstoy insists that every person has a relationship to the universe and therefore a religion. Religion concerns the fundamental form of our engagement in, and orientation to, the world.“ (Thomas 1997, 371) Der religiöse Glaube beschreibt demnach die Orientierung des Einzelnen zu allem und nimmt Einfluss auf alle Lebensbereiche des Menschen und auf die Auffassung vom Leben selbst. Zu diesem Punkt kommen wir am Ende des Aufsatzes erneut zurück.

Tolstoi nach, ist das allen Menschen gemeinsame Leben, das wahre Leben, das, welches in der Gegenwart stattfindet. Gottes Wille, in dieser Art und Weise verstanden, soll gefolgt werden; die Befriedigung des eigenen Willens führt

hingegen *nicht* zu einem guten Leben. Der Mensch, bestehend aus Fleisch und Geist, soll sich Tolstoi zufolge, für den Geist entscheiden, den dieser ist die Verbindung mit Gott. Nicht in irgendeinem Jenseits (in Transzendenz) ist das Glück und der Sinn des Lebens also zu suchen, sondern im Diesseits, da nur auf Erden die Menschen unter Menschen existieren und somit Gottes Wille erfüllen können, einander Brüder und Schwestern zu sein. Tolstoi ist demnach überzeugt, dass das eigentlich Erstrebenswerte, „das Reich Gottes,“ nicht in einem überirdischen Reich zu suchen sei, sondern auf der Welt, im irdischen Hier und Jetzt. Alles, was der Mensch für ein gutes Leben zu tun hat, ist dieses auf den Willen Gottes auszurichten.

Die Bauern und einfachen Menschen leben Tolstois Ansicht nach diese Einsicht bereits aus und stellen sich deshalb die quälende Frage nach dem „Warum?“ erst gar nicht: „Der einfachste Mensch kennt die moralische Wahrheit, die eine ist; er kann diese nur nicht artikulieren. Die Aufgaben der Intelligents (der *Philosophes*) besteht darin, die schon erahnte Wahrheit klar auszusprechen.“ (Milkov 2004, 312) Wichtig ist es demnach nicht, an bestimmte transzendente Wahrheiten zu glauben, sondern so natürlich zu leben, dass sich die Frage nach Sinn und Bedeutung des Lebens gar nicht erst stellt. Kurz: „What he [Tolstoi] learns is not that the meaning of life is such and such, but how to live in a way that these questions no longer arise.“ (Thompson 1997, 103) Im wahren Christentum hat Tolstoi demnach die „Antworten auf die Fragen nach der Bedeutung meines Lebens und des Lebens der Anderen“ (Tolstoi 2016, 14) gefunden.

3. Tolstoi und Wittgenstein zu Religion und Ethik

Gut erforscht ist der Einfluss von Tolstoi auf Wittgenstein in Bezug auf Lebensfragen. So wird betont: „Tolstoy’s religious writings clearly had an enormous influence on Wittgenstein during the time that he was writing the *Tractatus*.“ (Thompson 1997, 97) Dieser Einfluss bezieht sich jedoch nicht auf Wittgensteins Logik, sondern auf den Anstoß, die Ermutigung, sich mit Ethik und Religion in seinem Werk auseinanderzusetzen und diese auch mit seiner Logik in Verbindung zu bringen.

Um Verbindungen beider Denker aufzuzeigen, soll zunächst das Bild von Gott als das eines Vaters aufgegriffen werden. Für Tolstoi ist „[d]er Mensch [...] ein

Sohn des unendlichen Ursprungs, ist der Sohn dieses Vaters nicht durch das Fleisch, sondern durch den Geist.“ (Tolstoi 2016, 6) Und so schreibt auch Wittgenstein in seinem Tagebuch von 1916: „Den Sinn des Lebens, d.i. den Sinn der Welt, können wir Gott nennen. Und das Gleichnis von Gott als einem Vater daran knüpfen. Das Gebet ist der Gedanke an den Sinn des Lebens.“ (TB 11.6.16) Die Begriffe Gott und Welt verschmelzen miteinander. Die Personifikation des Gottes als irgendeine Art Entität lehnt Wittgenstein ab und auch das Wort „Herr“ sagt ihm in diesem Sinne nichts: „Wie Du das Wort ‚Gott‘ verwendest, zeigt nicht, wen Du meinst – sondern, was Du meinst.“ (VB 521) Und eben dieses „Was“ zeigt sich im Leben der gläubigen Person selbst. Religion wird so als Lebenslehre aufgefasst: „Was Wittgenstein an der *Kurzen Darlegung des Evangeliums* faszinierend fand, war, dass sie als ‚Lehre des Lebens‘ dienen kann.“ (Milkov 2003, 190)

Auch die Anforderungen, die Tolstoi an seine Lebenslehre und Religionsauffassung setzt, finden bei Wittgenstein Anklang und Zustimmung: „Einheitlichkeit, Klarheit, Einfachheit und Ganzheit der Lehre.“ (Tolstoi 2016, 10) Tolstoi und der frühe Wittgenstein waren der gleichen Auffassung, was der Intellektuelle, der Philosoph zu leisten hat: Tolstoi hebt hervor, dass auch die als weise und schlaue betitelten Menschen nicht mehr in Bezug auf Lebensfragen wissen, als das Volk, die einfachen Menschen. „Die Lehre eines großen Menschen ist darum nur groß, weil sie verständlich und klar ausspricht, was die anderen weder verständlich noch klar ausgesprochen haben.“ (Tolstoi 2016, 19) Kurz gesagt: „Tolstoy sees philosophy as an activity of clarification.“ (Thompson 1997, 106) Hier wird die Verbindung zum frühen Wittgenstein offensichtlich.

Dazu weitere Erläuterungen: Wittgenstein ist in seiner Methodik antitranszendental, da er wie Tolstoi, alle überflüssigen Elemente sowohl in der Ethik als auch in der Logik ausklammert. In der Tat ist Logik „keine Lehre“ (TLP 6.13) – wir können „auch ohne die logischen Sätze auskommen“ (TLP 6.122). Gleichermaßen „kann es auch keine Sätze der Ethik geben.“ (TLP 6.42) Logik, wie auch Ethik, ist transzendental (TLP 6.13 und 6.421). Nur in diesem Sinne liegen sie außerhalb der Welt. Logik und Ethik lassen sich daher nicht aussprechen. (TLP 6.421)

Wittgenstein ist beim Lesen von Tolstois Ausführungen beeindruckt, da er feststellt, dass der russische Denker seinen eigenen Ansichten nahesteht. Tolstoi geht in der Literatur, Religion und Lebensauffassung in die gleiche Richtung wie Wittgenstein beim Schreiben seines *Tractatus* in Bezug auf Logik und Ethik. Die antitranszendente Herangehensweise ist beiden Denkern gemeinsam.

Der nächste Abschnitt fokussiert sich daher auf diesen Ansatz Tolstois und Wittgensteins in Bezug zur Einstellung zur Zeitlichkeit des Lebens. Tolstois Gedanken dazu: „Das wahre Leben liegt nicht allein außerhalb der Zeit, als ein Leben im Gegenwärtigen, sondern ist auch ein Leben außerhalb der Persönlichkeit, als ein allen Menschen gemeinsames Leben.“ (Tolstoi 2016, 7) Dies wird von Wittgenstein aufgegriffen: Sowohl Wittgenstein als auch Tolstoi gehen davon aus, dass der Tod kein Erlebnis des Lebens ist. (TLP 6.431). Es muss sich dementsprechend weder davor gefürchtet werden, noch gilt es, Rätsel um das Ende des Lebens zu lösen. Das wahre Leben liegt für Tolstoi und Wittgenstein außerhalb der Zeit. Ein unproblematisches Leben ohne Rätsel ist keines, welches das irdische Leben in irgendeinem Jenseits schlicht fortsetzen würde, sondern es hat weder einen zeitlichen noch räumlichen Bezug. Wittgenstein greift genau dies im *Tractatus* 6.4312 auf:

Die zeitliche Unsterblichkeit der Seele des Menschen, das heißt also ihr ewiges Fortleben nach dem Tode, ist nicht nur auf keine Weise verbürgt, sondern vor allem leistet diese Annahme gar nicht das, was man immer mit ihr erreichen wollte. Wird denn dadurch ein Rätsel gelöst, daß ich ewig fortlebe Ist denn dieses ewige Leben dann nicht ebenso rätselhaft wie das gegenwärtige? Die Lösung des Rätsels des Lebens in Raum und Zeit liegt *außerhalb* von Raum und Zeit. (TLP 6.4312)

Die Verwandtschaft von Wittgensteins und Tolstois Denken wird hier in der antitranszendentalen Herangehensweise offengelegt. Der Parallelismus im Denken der beiden hat Wittgenstein dabei von Beginn an fasziniert.

4. Wittgenstein und Tolstoi zur Welt

Für Wittgenstein ist die Welt, beziehungsweise die Tatsachen und Sachverhalte in ihr, an sich weder gut noch böse. „Die Welt ist unabhängig von

meinem Willen“ (TLP 6.373) und es gibt keinen logischen Zusammenhang zwischen meinem Willen und dem, was in der Welt geschieht (TLP 6.374).

Der Glaube an Gott bedeutet für Wittgenstein, eben dies zu bemerken. Meine Wünsche haben keinen Einfluss auf die Tatsachen der Welt. Das, was geschehen soll, wird unabhängig von *mir* geschehen. Hier sei ebenso an Tolstois Darstellungen vom Willen Gottes erinnert, wie auch an Wittgensteins Aufzeichnungen während des Krieges: „Wurden beschossen. Dachte an Gott. *Dein* Wille geschehe!“ (TB 11.10.14) Ziel des Lebens kann es demnach nur sein, mit der Welt in Übereinstimmung zu leben. Der Punkt, indem das „Ich“ relevant ist, ist der Einfluss, den es auf die Grenzen der Welt hat.

Hierzu muss zunächst nachvollzogen werden, was Wittgenstein im *Tractatus* unter Subjekt versteht (Milkov 2005, 223-224):

Subjekt (I) – ist das empirische Subjekt, das in der Welt aus Fleisch und Blut wissend und erfahrend die Welt erlebt und erkennt. Dieses gibt es nach Wittgenstein nicht. Es ist lediglich ein Schein, von dem es sich zu trennen gilt. Wir nehmen die Welt zwar als Subjekte, auf eine individuelle Art und Weise wahr. Wir als Subjekte sind jedoch nicht Teil dieser Welt in der Hinsicht, dass wir uns selbst nicht als Subjekt wahrnehmen können.

Subjekt (II) ist für Wittgenstein das metaphysische Subjekt, dieses ist mit dem Sinn des Lebens verbunden. Dieses Subjekt liegt an der Grenze zur Welt und bringt Sinn und Zwecke in diese.

Das Subjekt (III) ist nach Wittgenstein das wollende Subjekt. In den Gedanken hierzu werden Wittgensteins Verbindungen zu Schopenhauer offensichtlich. Auch Tolstoi ist von dem deutschen Philosophen beeinflusst worden. 1869 hielt der russische Denker ihn für den genialsten aller Menschen. (Brief an Fet, 30.8.1869, Sergejenco 1910) Das wollende Subjekt wird als das handelnde Subjekt verstanden, welches Entscheidungen trifft und eine Haltung gegenüber der Welt und ihren Tatsachen einnimmt. Je nachdem, mit welchen Werten und Normen ich an die Welt und ihre Tatsachen herantrete, so verändert sich auch meine Welt, das wie ich sie sehe und wie ich mich ihr gegenüber verhalte. Demzufolge ist ein glückliches Leben eines, bei dem ich den Sinn des Lebens erkannt habe und meine Welt zu einer ganz anderen wird – die eines Glücklichen. (Vgl. TLP 6.43) Merkmale für so ein glückliches

Leben lassen sich nicht aufzählen – am Verschwinden des Problems des Lebens merke ich schlichtweg, dass ich es führe. (Vgl. TLP 6.521) Mein eigenes Leben bekommt einen Sinn, da ich mich mit meinem Willen zu ihm positionieren kann.

Aus all dem gilt es zu schlussfolgern, dass der Sinn des Lebens außerhalb der Welt liegt. Gleiches trifft auch für die Ethik zu – die Werte und Normen von mir oder einer Gesellschaft sind ebenfalls keine Tatsachen dieser Welt und liege außerhalb von ihr. Wie die Ethik, so liegt auch die Ästhetik außerhalb dieser – die Logik reiht sich hier ebenfalls ein.

Abschließend lässt sich festhalten, dass der antitranszendente Ansatz sowohl bei Tolstoi als auch bei Wittgenstein dazu beiträgt, ein lebensnahes und klares Bild von Religions- und Lebensauffassung zu bilden. Die Verbindung beider Denker ist eine fruchtbare, die es auch in anderen Bereichen, wie dem der Kunst, weiterzuverfolgen gilt.

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Acknowledgement

Vielen Dank für die Unterstützung an Nikolay Milkov und Peter Keicher.

The Quest for Simple Objects

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Abstract

Wittgenstein, like Leibniz, thought that, for logical reasons, there must be simple objects because it follows from the ideas of complexity and analysis. And like Leibniz's monads these objects are the substance of the world. The exact nature of Wittgenstein's objects, however, and their role in the "states of affairs" has remained unclear since the publication of the *Tractatus*. In an attempt to demystify the objects, Anthony Kenny once offered the game of chess as a model for the *Tractatus* world. I will modify this model slightly so that it becomes a cellular automaton. In a second part I present a new "Causal Theory of Views" by physicist Lee Smolin who is heavily influenced by Leibniz. He postulates a new kind of objects that are actually events. These objects, although inspired by monads, might be candidates for the simple objects of Wittgenstein.

1. Facts and Monads

The world consists of birds and bees and trees and clouds. The world consists of elements. Of atoms. Of sub-atoms. The world consists of sense data. The world consists of bits and bytes (because it is a simulation). The world consists of facts. The world consists of Monads.

The last two claims are, of course, by Wittgenstein and Leibniz, respectively. And since a fact is the existence of atomic affairs and an atomic affair is a concatenation of objects it seems that at least in some sense both Leibniz and Wittgenstein are concerned with the ultimate constituents of being, the Elements of Things, as Leibniz calls them (Leibniz 1714: 3). And there are other similarities between the *Monadology* and the *Tractatus*.

"Both texts are composed as a sequence of numbered sentences; both lay out a picture of the world with[out] little or no argument; both advance a pictorial conception of meaning; and both advance from a description of the structure of the world to reflections on ethics" (Sluga 2018).

And both admit the possibility of alternative worlds, and both deny that there is absolute space and time.

But there are important differences.

For Leibniz (and this is one of the criticisms of Russell) every proposition is ultimately reducible to one which attributes a predicate to a subject. That is,

relations are not real. (“I hold that paternity in David is one thing, and filiation in Solomon another, but the relation common to both is a merely mental thing” (quoted in Russell 1900: 206).) For Wittgenstein, it might be argued, only relations are real. The only properties of an object are the internal, i.e. the possible relations to other objects, and the external – the actual relations.

The monads are simple only in respect to the compounds they enter. The monads must have qualities, Leibniz says, “otherwise they would not even be existing things” (Leibniz 1714: 8). This follows from his Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles. The qualities of a monad, it turns out, is its ability to mirror the qualities of all other monads (Leibniz 1714: 56).

As a consequence, this means that one cannot take away one monad without affecting all others. Wittgenstein completely disagrees. Not only are objects independent of one another, but even the states of affairs are independent from one another (TLP 2.061). This is the difference between a monistic and pluralistic view of the world. And Wittgenstein’s view is in direct opposition to the Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles: “Two objects of the same logical form are – apart from their external properties – only differentiated from one another in that they are different.” (TLP 2.0233)

Another major difference between a monad and an object is that the Wittgensteinian object is not really a constituent of the world. A state of affairs is the smallest ontological entity. Since all combinations of states of affairs can exist and the number of possible combinations of n states of affairs is 2^n (TLP 4.27) it follows that a world with no states of affairs is possible. And even this world would have all objects in common with any other possible world (TLP 2.022 and 2.023).

I will use the chess game to illustrate the crucial difference between the philosophies of Wittgenstein and Leibniz concerning the nature of being. And from an exegetical point of view, in the case of Wittgenstein, I think that chess might illuminate his concept of logical form. For, as he says, “in order to be able to represent logical form, we should have to be able to station ourselves with propositions somewhere outside logic, that is to say outside the

world” (TLP 4.12). This is obviously impossible. But since we invented the game of chess we are in a sense outside the world of this game, and we know its logical form perfectly well.

2. Chess as a Model of the Tractatus World

When Wittgenstein returned to the problems he tackled with in the *Tractatus* in 1929 with “Some Remarks on Logical Form” he still believed that propositions of ordinary life could be analyzed “to the point where it reaches propositional forms which are not themselves composed of simpler propositional forms” (RLF 1929: 162). They, the elementary propositions, represent the “ultimate connexion of terms” and it is to them, he says, we have to look for the subject matter. What is the form of these propositions? It is tempting, he says, to think of them as having the subject-predicate form or relational form, but this, he thinks, “is a mere playing with words.” Because: “An atomic form cannot be foreseen” (RLF 1929: 163).

This is why he is careful in the *Tractatus* to talk of logical form and of logical space and logical co-ordinates (e.g. TLP 3.41).

On the other hand it seems that it is not only tempting but inevitable to talk in a subject-predicate form or relational form when we try to investigate the nature of elementary propositions. Wittgenstein himself follows his own warning with examples where he uses spatial relations to analyze the proposition “P is red” and subjects-predicate expressions when he tries to demonstrate that, contrary to his opinion in the *Tractatus*, there are unanalyzable statements of degree that are mutually exclusive (RLF 1929: 165ff.).

So let us now look at the subject matter of chess.

Anthony Kenny once suggested a (modified) game of chess that would serve as a model “as near as we can get to [...] for the way the world is conceived in the *Tractatus*” (Kenny 1975: 74). In this model pieces and squares are the objects of the world and a state of affairs would be the relation between a piece and a square. This model would indeed honour some of the key concepts of the *Tractatus*. The world would be the totality of facts, not the pieces but its

positions on the squares would be relevant. The rules for the positioning of the pieces give their logical form. The internal properties of for example a bishop would be its ability to move diagonally, its external property the actual position on the board. The bishops would share the same logical form. In Kenny's modified chess pieces are not allowed to be taken, since objects are "indestructible". But even with this modification, the analogy limps because, as he acknowledges, "the atomic facts of chess are not independent on each other in the way that *Tractatus* states of affairs are" (Kenny 1975: 75).

Space and time (and colour) are forms of objects (TLP 2.0251), so it seems wrong to regard the squares of the board as objects themselves. Somehow the position of a piece must be established in a way that avoids a reference to some (absolute) points in space.

One way of simplifying the game from a logical point of view without removing any essential features is to regard chess a cellular automaton. Instead of having pieces and squares as inhabitants of the Tractarian chess world we will allow only one kind of object, the cells.

Most cellular automata (like John Conway's 'Life', for example) have cells with two states, black and white or on and off. But we can have a multi-state cellular automaton. A cell, (or square), could be, for example, in a "bishop" or "pawn" state. Normally one would say there is a bishop on a particular square and it can be moved diagonally in every direction. But one can get rid of the actual pieces and say that the cell possesses the ability to transpose its internal properties to any cell in a diagonal direction.

The external properties limit this ability to all diagonal cells with an empty state or a non-empty cell with a different parity (meaning it is of the opposite colour). So instead of describing a chess piece with either an absolute position on the board or relative to other pieces, we just describe the current state of a cell by the sum of its possible moves. Only that there is nothing that actually moves. A "move" means that the source cell switches to an empty state and the target cell switches to the state of the source cell. The advantage of this model is that it allows 'pieces to be taken'. There are no actual pieces, a piece is just a (human readable) marker for the state of the cell, no more essential than the colour of a field or the material of the board. What happens with a move is just

that two cells change its state. (Notice that in contrast to other cellular automata where many cells can change their state, we have here multiple possible states but only two state changes.)

This chess game without pieces would still be chess because it shares the logical form with standard chess. It has the same multiplicity. A single red ball, Kenny says, cannot represent a game of chess, but if we allow to bounce the ball, we could create a system where every possible chess situation is represented by us bouncing the ball a specified number of times (Kenny 1975: 75).

The bouncing system would not be very useful, but one very interesting way to transfer the game of chess to a different medium is to represent a game of chess by a piece of music.

The note defines the chess piece (or a cell state), e.g., pawn = 1/16th note, knight = 1/8th note. The eight columns of a chess board correspond to the eight audible octaves. So the field c4 gets mapped to the middle C on the piano. With some clever musical transformations, one could actually make the musical game quite pleasing. (Stokes 2011)

And the advantage of this chess incarnation is that we not only got rid of the pieces but also of the space frame. You can consider the musical rendition of a game of chess as a kind of alternative notation. In standard notation like “1. e4 e5 ...” we get a one-dimensional representation of a game with the minimum necessary information. Only the changes of the position are recorded. You must know the starting position. But the important thing is that there is a one-to-one correspondence between standard notation, the Stokes notation and an actual game. It is the logical form of chess what they all have in common.

One of the games Stokes transformed is the famous one played by Adolf Anderssen and Lionel Kieseritzky on 21 June 1851, the so-called Immortal Game. This is a good example of the difference between the monistic system of Leibniz and the pluralistic system of Wittgenstein.

With the seventh move White puts a pawn on d3. This move has been criticised by German grandmaster Robert Hübner who suggested Nc3 instead. This would have been a legal alternative. And in one sense it would be natural

to say that the alternative move changed the position of a pawn and a knight, but “everything else remains the same” (TLP 2.21). On the other hand, Leibniz would say, that everything has changed, since every chess piece is defined by its relation to all other pieces (more precisely by its perceptions of the other pieces). Nc3 would not be *compossible* with the other pieces that make up the Immortal Game world. It belongs to a different world. And of course, with the Hübner move we would not be in the Immortal Game anymore. Wittgenstein would say that chess is modular. At every position any legal move branches into a different game. There is no mythical connection between one chess piece and all the others. Any legal move leads to a perfectly normal new position and the game can non-deterministically continue to the end. The fact that in this particular position at one time the pawn was moved to d3 is just that: a historical, contingent fact. I think both views are equally plausible and intuitive. So, I do not judge.

3. A Causal Theory of Views

Are there Wittgensteinian objects? Wittgenstein was not sure. “It always looks as if there were complex objects functioning as simples, and then also *really* simple ones like the material points of physics...” (NB June 21, 1915). He doubted that questions like the one about the nature of the object could be answered. “It looks as if I could say definitively that these questions could never be settled at all” (NB September 3, 1914).

And it is probably safe to assume that there is no group of scientists at CERN in Geneva searching for Wittgensteinian objects – or monads.

But the idea is not as ludicrous as one might think. Because theoretical physicist Lee Smolin recently advanced a new theory that explicitly refers to Leibniz. He lets himself be guided by five principles all of them being aspects of a single principle: Leibniz’s Principle of Sufficient Reason (Smolin 2020: 233). From quantum theoretical assumptions Smolin holds that “space and time cannot both be fundamental. Only one can be present at the deepest level of understanding: the other must be emergent and contingent” (Smolin 2020: 235).

Smolin was inspired by the *Monadology*. He even calls the elements of his relational model of the universe “nads”. Nads, of course, are not really monads. For one thing, they do not have a soul. “Nads have two kinds of properties: intrinsic properties, which belong to each individual nad, and relational properties, which depend on several of the nads” (Smolin 2020: 242).

This actually sounds more like a description of a Wittgensteinian object than a monad. Especially as monads do not really have relations. (Remember, relations are only a mental thing.) On the other hand, Wittgensteinian objects certainly do not obey the Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles (TLP 2.0233).

Next, Smolin adopts the Leibnizian idea that nads have a “view of the universe” and he even thinks that the actual universe differs from other possible ones in that it has as much perfection as possible. Only the “quantity that is maximized, which Leibniz called ‘perfection’, we call an action” (Smolin 2020: 243).

A nad, Smolin goes on, is an event and the relation between events is causation (Smolin 2020: 254).

“I then would propose that each event has a certain quantity of energy, and that energy is transmitted from past events to future events along the causal relations” (Smolin 2020: 261).

In our musical chess world, a note would cause the next note. Or the state of a cell would cause the change of state of a different cell. A state of affairs then, that often is thought of as a spatial relation of objects, would really be a causal relation of two (in chess) objects in time.

In his summary Smolin says that “the universe consists of nothing but views of itself, each from an event in its history, and the laws act to make the views as diverse as possible” (Smolin 2020: 271).

Taken out of context, this sounds as mysterious and esoteric as a philosopher's speculations. It is a new theory, and “as is the case with any new theory”, Smolin says, “it is most likely wrong”. But, and here there is a difference to the systems of Wittgenstein and Leibniz, “one good thing about it is that it will be most likely be possible to test it against experiment” (Smolin 2020: 248). And I

think that both Leibniz and Wittgenstein would agree that this in itself is an improvement on their own ideas.

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Transcendental Idealism in the *Tractatus*. Between Inheritance and Originality

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Abstract

An interesting and compelling way of engaging with Wittgenstein's philosophy in general and his *Tractatus Logico-philosophicus* in particular is through a dialectic of continuity and discontinuity with Kant's thought. Kantian (and anti-Kantian) receptions of TLP have copiously proliferated since the early days of its publication. In a sense, no comprehensive interpretation of TLP has been (and, plausibly, can be) supplied without comparing and contrasting Wittgenstein's work with Kant's philosophical project. My paper focuses on one theme of Kant's philosophy through which interpreters have read TLP: the doctrine of Transcendental Idealism. In Section 1, I briefly outline Kant's original doctrine, as it appears in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. In Section 2, I consider one of the first commentaries on TLP's inheritance of this Kantian doctrine, by looking at Erik Stenius' *Critical Exposition*. In Section 3, I present two contemporary readings, respectively elaborated by Peter Sullivan and Adrian Moore, which have recently stirred the debate on TLP's Transcendental Idealism. In Section 4, I set up the general terms of my own, original proposal, inspired by the work of Stanley Cavell. Finally, in Section 5, I sketch some promising ways to develop the proposal in detail.

1. Introduction

The panoply of aspects of convergence and divergence between the philosophical thinking of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-philosophicus* and of Kant's critical project includes, among many others, the reflection on the nature of philosophy, the role of metaphysics, the limits of sense-making and the scope of ethics. In what follows, I will focus my attention on a theme that could be seen to cut through all these aspects. This *fil rouge* is represented by the doctrine of Transcendental Idealism ("TI" hereinafter).

In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant defines the "[TI] of all appearances [as] the doctrine that they are together to be regarded as mere representations and not as things in themselves, and accordingly space and time are sensible forms of our intuition, not determinations given for themselves or conditions of objects as things in themselves" (Kant 1998: A 369). In brief, Kant's TI is a specific position about space and time, where these are taken to be necessary conditions for the appearance of objects in our experience. What we can come to know are appearances whose essential features (starting from their spatio-temporal location) depend on the forms of our human cognitive apparatus. Indeed, Kant extends these features of objects to what is covered by the "Table

of Categories” (Kant 1998: A 80/B 106): objects appear not only to be here and now, but also as such-and-such through the a priori forms of our conceptual repertoire. It follows that we cannot know things independently of these forms, but we are limited to the knowledge of what appears in our experience and is individuated by the a priori of space and time, together with the categories. Hence, we cannot know things in themselves, which “ground” (Kant 1998: A 49) the appearances we only can know.

Considering the rough overview of Kant’s TI here outlined, the doctrine has apparently nothing to do with Wittgenstein’s TLP, which, at first sight, provides an abstract theory of language and logical symbolism. Nevertheless, interpreters have wondered whether a suitably modified version of TI is in fact present in TLP and redirected their attention to which role such a doctrine might play in the work. Sections 2 and 3’s task is to trace this suggestion in the Wittgensteinian scholarship and briefly illustrate it.

2. Transcendental Idealism in TLP. Past...

One of the inaugural associations of TI with TLP in the English-speaking world is Stenius’ *Critical Exposition*. In the last chapter, Stenius argues that “Wittgenstein was in essential respects a Kantian philosopher” and that “his anti-Kantianism meant only that he [...] transformed the system of Kant and thus created a Kantianism of a peculiar kind” (Stenius 1960: 214).[1]

According to Stenius, the “essential modification of the Kantian view which gives rise to all the differences between Wittgenstein and Kant” (218) is that, while for Kant what we can know is what can experience through the forms of our conceptual apparatus, for Wittgenstein what we can say is what we can describe in meaningful language thanks to the *general form of the proposition*. They both attempt to indicate the limits of theoretical discourse. Wittgenstein, on his part, takes this task to entail the investigation of what can be said at all in language: he thus moves from the limits of knowledge to the limits of language. The logical analysis of language that Wittgenstein’s TLP undertakes is supposed to parallel Kant’s transcendental investigation of the a priori of empirical knowledge. The identification of a general form of the proposition thus allows Wittgenstein to draw a limit between what is meaningfully said in language and what is not, which is simply nonsense.

Stenius concludes that “Wittgenstein’s philosophical system could be called ‘Critical Lingualism’ or ‘Transcendental Lingualism’ or even ‘Lingualistic Idealism’” (220). Following TLP 5.6, we are said that what we can propositionally make sense of the world depends upon the form of our language. We cannot propositionally make sense of anything independently of it. And this is a peculiar form of TI: “the limits of language are the transcendental limits of the world” (Stenius 1960: 221). What about what lies beyond such limits? For Stenius, Wittgenstein leaves that region for the “unreachable transcendent” (223), inexpressible (cf. TLP 6.522) but showing itself in the mystical feeling (cf. 6.45). His TI carves out room for what transcends the limits of our meaningful language (similarly to Kant, who had “to deny *knowledge* in order to make room for *faith*” (Kant 1998: Bxxx)[2]).

Stenius’ judgment on Wittgenstein’s endeavours, however, is mixed: “[w]hat is of lasting value in [TLP] is not the philosophical system [...], but the views proposed in the different steps of the argument” (Stenius 1960: 224). He regards TI as part of the “inconsistencies” (ibid.) of TLP, which should be thrown away after we have followed the nonetheless philosophically valuable steps that have led us to it (cf. TLP 6.54).[3]

A coda on Stenius. He believes that the apparent “positive ring” of Wittgenstein’s appeal to the inexpressible is “*not* a reverence for the ineffable” (Stenius 1960: 225). In invoking silence at the end of the book (cf. TLP 7), Wittgenstein would not aim at setting us free from the linguistic cage that debars us from contemplating the ineffable, but rather at giving us (and himself) a way out from philosophy as a whole. The outcome of TLP, for Stenius, is not the mystical turning of philosophy, but the abandonment of philosophy *tout court* because of its aimlessness. The interpreters who have recently revived the debate on TI in TLP do not think that this abandonment is possible. On the contrary, they read Wittgenstein’s work as precisely reminding us of the urgency of doing philosophy.

3. ...And Present

The letter of Stenius’ groundwork might be lost, but it is not the case for its spirit. The Wittgensteinian scholarship has been witnessing a rich variety of positions about the place of TI in TLP over the years. A recent exchange

between Peter Sullivan (“PS”) and Adrian Moore (“AM”) has stirred the debate anew, given their argumentative sophistication and the relevance of their contribution to other mainstream and wide-ranging debates in philosophy.[4] In raising the issue about the place of TI in TLP, we actually search answers to three questions:

- (a) what is TI?
- (b) is TI there in TLP?
- (c) if yes, what is TI doing there?

PS and AM substantially agree about (a) and (b). Their answers are not dissimilar, in principle, by that of Stenius. Broadly speaking, TI is the theory according to which what we can make sense of depends on the kind of sense-making with which we are endowed. Moreover, TI involves the (suitably qualified) impossibility of making sense of what transcends that sense-making, and, *a fortiori*, of the very dependence of what we can make sense of on that sense-making.[5] Another way to put this is to say that in TI the limits (i.e., essential features) of our sense-making are limitations (i.e., features that at some level exclude certain possibilities). Both interpreters agree that in TLP, and notably in the 5.6s, we find remarks that bespeak Wittgenstein’s TI. This amounts to a doctrine according to which the (metaphysical) subject sets the limits of language (and, therefore, of the world) as limitations, fencing us off from certain possibilities (starting from that of answering the question about why these limitations are as they are). By going through these remarks, it is easy to see how TI rests on very fragile grounds, for it deprives itself of the very possibility of being stated. Hence, TI is self-refuting. These claims are obviously up for debate and may not find total agreement, but in what follows I will reason in line with this significant interpretation.

The final self-renunciation of TLP and the progressive affirmation of the “resolute” reading (the interpretation of the work famously popularised by Conant and Diamond) make (c) the real point of contention. PS believes that Wittgenstein ends up “repudiating, not just the truth of [TI], nor yet just its meaningfulness, but also its *appropriateness*, even *qua* self-consciously nonsensical and knowingly futile attempt to express the understanding one has of its sources” (Sullivan 2003: 218). According to Sullivan, the

understanding of how we go on with language that Wittgenstein wants to impart comes (in part) from the nonsense he deliberately produces in TLP,[6] but not from that of TI, which is present as a luring doctrine that needs, ultimately, to be “diagnosed and dispelled” (Sullivan and Potter 2013: 11). In a sense, then, PS shares much of Stenius’ conviction about TI. AM, on the contrary, is more inclined to believe that some understanding is conveyed by the spectacular self-sabotage of TI in TLP. In particular, TI rises and falls because of our attempts to give voice to the *ineffable* understanding we can achieve of our propositional relation with things in the world. AM claims that TI “is there as a result of an unsuccessful attempt to express certain inexpressible insights into the limits of language and into the incoherence of attempts to violate those limits, insights which, on the one hand, are supposed to be fostered by seeing that such nonsense is the result of an attempt to express them and, on the other hand, are supposed to foster seeing that such nonsense is nonsense” (Moore 2013: 248). In other terms, AM allows for a seemingly positive role played by the nonsense engendered by TI, which has to do with the ineffable understanding – in particular, of what it is to make propositional sense of things – that accrues from manipulating the nonsense that Wittgenstein accurately crafts (cf. TLP 6.54).

Apart from this central disagreement, it is hard to tell where the two scholars really differ. For what matters here, the rough reconstruction just presented has fulfilled its purpose if it has shown some ideas that have been injected in the recent debate about TI in TLP. Rather than ending such a debate, these ideas can contribute to fostering new ways of thinking about it.

4. The “Truth in TI”

In the wake of the previous remarks, I intend to sketch now the terms of an original proposal about the issue of TI in TLP. In doing so, I endorse the answers that AM and PS have provided to (a) and (b): given a suitably qualified understanding of the doctrine, TI can be said to be there in TLP. In order to provide an answer to (c), I will draw on Stanley Cavell’s treatment of scepticism, which seems to me to offer invaluable insights for the issue here at stake.

TI, like scepticism in Cavell's view, takes our relation to the world as a whole to be a problem of knowledge (cf. Cavell 1979: 46), or, in the terms of TLP, of propositional sense-making. In particular, TI holds that we cannot propositionally make sense of what lies beyond the limitations of our language. In the attempt to counter the very source of TI (cf. TLP 5.6s), Wittgenstein ends up yielding to it (cf. 1s, 6.44-6.45), hence accepting TI.[7] For the reasons given above, TI produces its self-undercutting: by advancing it, Wittgenstein cannot but fail to give meaning to the words he uses. This represents the "failure" of TI, which is astonishingly made manifest in the conclusive self-repudiation of the book (cf. 6.54).

Yet, such a "failure" is not insignificant. On the contrary, it points to the "truth in TI", or its moral (cf. Cavell 1979: 45, 241). This truth must not be taken to mean that Wittgenstein's TI is true but inexpressibly so. It instead means that in failing to express what he attempts to articulate, Wittgenstein acknowledges that "the limitations of [our language] are not failures of it" (241). Instead of an essential inadequacy of our language to articulate the world, the "failure" of TI reveals a trait of our human, "metaphysical finitude", which we mask behind some kind of "intellectual lack" (493). We conceive of ourselves as ineradicably constrained sense-makers, condemned to fail to make propositional sense of the general relation of our language to the world, and so much the worse if we fail to make sense even of this last feat (whence the "failure" of TI). In fact, the relation of our words to the world as a whole does not get stored and receive expression in our words, but there is nothing we irremediably fail to do. The "truth in TI" is meant to capture the idea that nothing in the nature of language makes it such that it can or cannot express the relation. Instead, the relation with the world we inhabit ultimately resides and can be identified in our ordinary *uses* of language, once they are made clear. This explains Wittgenstein's repeated invocation of "clarity" (cf. TLP *Preface*, 3.251, 4.112-4.116) and the sense in which, once we are done with the questions formulable in language,[8] nothing is achieved for us, human beings (cf. *Preface*, 6.52). Our metaphysical finitude lies in the fact that the relation of our words to the world is not something we can achieve or fail to make sense in words, but something which may wax or wane (cf. TLP 6.43), depending on how we use them.

5. Conclusion

The kernel of the proposal that the previous section sets up is surely in need of both exegetical and theoretical expansion. Apart from better tailoring Cavell's insight to the issue of TI's presence in TLP, there are further ways to hone the proposal that I envisage. Here I want to suggest three.

First of all, given that Cavell is generally acknowledged as the patron saint of "resolute" readers, one interesting prospect to delve into is whether my reading can be assimilated to the resolute interpretation of TLP. The idea of a "truth in TI", if on the right track, might indeed reveal important limitations in that interpretation. Secondly, there are aspects of my proposal that make it similar to that of AM. In this sense, both his reading and mine would improve from a comparison that aims at highlighting points of convergence and divergence (in particular, on the theme of ineffability). Thirdly, it may be worth investigating how my proposal fares with Wittgenstein's convictions about ethics and religion, in order to assess whether it can profitably illuminate what the philosopher thinks about these domains. But about what I cannot say (*here*), I must be silent.

[1] The anti-Kantianism Stenius writes about refers to Wittgenstein's rejection of the synthetic a priori truths, the possibility of which is at the heart of Kant's TI. This is generally accepted by scholars also in present days. Cf. Moore 2012: 234.

[2] A similar point is also made by authors considered in Section 3, but I will not return to it in the continuation.

[3] Stenius does not specify why, but the issue of TI's coherence will return later.

[4] I have in mind, for instance, debates about those aspects common to both Kant's and Wittgenstein's thinking, mentioned at the beginning of Section 1. In this section, I consider the last word of the protracted and subtle exchange between AM and PS, pronounced respectively in Moore 2013 and Sullivan and Potter 2013, with small integrations.

[5] Such a formulation is along the lines of Moore 2012: 142.

[6] For instance, in his treatment of logical category distinctions.

[7] Such a dialectic is painstakingly described by AM, for instance in Moore 2013: § II.

[8] A reminder. The question about the relation of our language to the world as a whole, to which TI aims to answer and on which scepticism levers in order to be threatening, is no question at all (cf. TLP 6.51).

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Acknowledgement

This paper constitutes a very early engagement with the topic under investigation, which dates back to the beginning of my now close-to-end PhD. For their help and encouragement, I would like to thank Denis McManus, Adrian Moore, Ed Witherspoon, Graham Priest, David Cerbone, Stephen Mulhall, and Ed Minar. I owe an unbridgeable debt of gratitude to Filippo Casati: his friendship and passion for the discipline helped me re-discover the beauty of philosophy, in particular when done among friends and with great care. This paper has also benefited from audience feedback from postgraduate seminars at the University of Southampton. It was also made possible by generous funding from the Presidential Scholarship.

Tautologies and Theorems in the *Tractatus*

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Abstract

Conant argued that the epistemology of logic developed in the *Tractatus* is “a structure of thought which is designed to undermine itself” (1992, 97). I argue that this is not correct and put forward an alternative interpretation. Wittgenstein’s view might seem self-defeating because he says that tautologies are senseless. This might seem to suggest that Wittgenstein’s tautologies correspond to Frege’s non-well-formed sentences. But, in fact, Wittgenstein postulates that his notion of senseless tautology corresponds to Frege’s theorems, effectively taking for granted soundness and completeness results. There is nothing in the body of the *Tractatus* suggesting that Wittgenstein’s epistemology of logic entails that contradictions are nonsense. Therefore, the only support for the resolute interpretation remains ‘the frame.’

1. Preliminary Remarks

There are two issues that I need to set aside, to keep my discussion manageable. First, I disregard questions as to whether Wittgenstein changed his views, and how many times (see Stern (2006), among others). Whenever I mention Wittgenstein in the present article, I intend to refer to the early Wittgenstein in a purely chronological sense. Given this focus, unless otherwise noted, all references are to TLP 2021, Pears and McGuinness translation, quoting the proposition number.

Second, I disregard the parts of TLP that resolute readers call ‘the frame.’ According to the resolute reading, the main body of the book is nonsense. Only some remarks, the frame, should be taken at face value; namely, the remarks telling us that the theory presented in the main body is “plain nonsense” (Diamond 1991, 23) or a “mock theory” (Conant 1992, 98). This paper focuses on the allegedly nonsensical theory. Regardless of whether the frame is evidence that Wittgenstein regarded the main body of TLP as nonsense, here I discuss whether Wittgenstein’s theory itself, specifically his views on the justification of logic, supports the resolute interpretation. My evaluation is that it does not. But let us not get ahead of ourselves.

2. Wittgenstein's and Frege's Terminologies

I suggest that Wittgenstein's notion of pseudo-proposition [*scheinsatz*] maps onto Frege's notion of grammatically ill-formed expression (Frege 1892, 28).

These are sentences, Frege would say, that cannot be *grasped*. On the other hand, Wittgenstein's notion of senseless tautologies maps onto Frege's notion of theorems. These are sentences, Frege would say, that must be *asserted*.

The notions of *grasping* and *asserting* in Frege's concept script are marked by the horizontal and judgement strokes. Wittgenstein held that "Frege's judgement stroke '┐' is logically quite *meaningless*" (4.442). At this juncture, Hacker maintains that Wittgenstein is pointing out that a valid argument can have false premises (1986, 31). What Wittgenstein does not seem to appreciate is that Frege was aware of this:

The task of logic is to set up laws according to which a judgement is justified by others, irrespective of whether these are themselves true (Frege 1906, 175).

Wittgenstein's reason to discard the judgement stroke was that, in his understanding, this symbol represents a psychological state of the authors (NB 1961, 96). This might be a correct assessment of Whitehead and Russell's assertion-sign (Russell and Whitehead 1910, 8). Possibly, Wittgenstein had Russell's view in mind in his early notes for TLP since there he talks about the "assertion-sign" (NB 1961, 96). But then in 4.442, the main critical target is Frege, since there Wittgenstein talks about the "judgement-stroke." Thus, the psychologist criticism misses its mark, given Frege's systematic rejection of psychologism. Frege does not mark every step in his proofs with the judgement stroke because he thought that "one can draw inferences only from true assertions" (Hacker 1986, 31). Rather, premises in Frege's proof must be marked by the judgement stroke because, while giving a foundation of arithmetic, he is concerned solely with sound arguments.

Wittgenstein also distinguishes between sound and unsound arguments. He calls 'tautologies' unconditionally true combinations of signs (4.46) and he outlines a method to recognize a given combination of signs as tautological (6.1203). This method, in effect, is a semantic truth-table proof system (5.101). But Wittgenstein also allows the use of other proof systems in cases where drawing a truth table would be cumbersome. This is a syntactic proof of the sort that Frege and Russell use since it applies rules that deal only with signs (6.126). Now, according to Wittgenstein, syntactic proofs are "merely a

mechanical expedient to facilitate the recognition of tautologies in complicated cases" (6.1262). This effectively takes for granted soundness and completeness results. Therefore, Wittgenstein postulates that his notion of tautology corresponds to Frege's notion of theorems.

There is some evidence to indicate that tautologies in TLP are neither true nor false, which would make them rather different from Frege's theorems. Wittgenstein says that a proposition can be true or false only in virtue of being a picture of reality (4.06) and continues "if a proposition has no sense, nothing corresponds to it, since it does not designate a thing (a truth value)" (4.063). Tautologies lack sense (4.461). Thus, tautologies have no truth value. See also NB 108, where Wittgenstein says that the propositions of logic are neither true nor false, and 6.125 where tautologies are said to be 'true' with inverted commas. My suggestion here is that these remarks, with the possible exception of 4.063, which might refer to *unsinn*, rather than *sinnlos*, indicate that Wittgenstein's notion of a true proposition corresponds to Frege's notion of contingent truth. Only empirical propositions that could have been false are true in Wittgenstein's sense. When Wittgenstein remarks that tautologies are neither true nor false, he means that lacking a sense, tautologies cannot agree or disagree with the existence of state of affairs (4.2), they are not bipolar. Tautologies are 'true' in the distinctive sense of being *unconditionally* true (4.461). This, Wittgenstein remarks, is a somewhat improper kind of truth, because tautologies are uninformative, they say nothing. Nevertheless, tautologies are true by Frege's standards. Frege does not distinguish between true and unconditionally true propositions, as Wittgenstein does, by saying that only the former is strictly true. Wittgenstein develops a truth-table proof system that can show that a given proposition is tautological in the familiar way, and he takes for granted soundness and completeness results. Therefore, his notion of tautologies maps onto Frege's notion of theorems, which is also the contemporary default notion, regardless of Wittgenstein's terminology in connection to truth values.

Another Fregean notion that maps nicely onto Frege's terminology is that of an ill-formed sentence, which corresponds to Wittgenstein's pseudo-propositions, *scheinsätze*. For Frege, if a string of symbols is ill-formed, then it is nonsense. Otherwise, it has a sense, which is the way it displays its truth value. Wittgenstein agrees with Frege that a string of symbols can violate the rules of

logical syntax, resulting in pseudo-propositions. No string of signs in and by itself is a pseudo-proposition. But once a proposition is assigned to a string of signs, rules of formations follow (3.342). Therefore, when we assign a proposition to a sign, other signs on that convention necessarily turn out to be pseudo-propositions. The convention can be changed giving sense to signs that formerly were pseudo-propositions, but there will again be other pseudo-propositions, and the underlying logical facts are unaffected by the choice of notation. Wittgenstein, unlike Frege, emphasizes that what is nonsensical in a notational convention may not be nonsensical in another. But this is hardly a point of departure from Frege. Frege was aware that a well-formed sentence in his concept script need not be a well-formed sentence in, say, the language of *Principia Mathematica*.

The mapping between Frege's and Wittgenstein's terminologies is imperfect because they have different views about sense. Crucially, the bearers of sense differ. Although they use the same word, *sätze*, Wittgenstein's propositions, do not correspond to Frege's well-formed sentences. According to Frege, strings of symbols themselves are the bearers of sense, Wittgenstein has an intermediary notion: strings of symbols (propositional signs) correspond to propositions, and propositions are the bearer of sense. Moreover, for Frege, the sense of a well-formed sentence is the distinctive way it displays its reference. For Wittgenstein, a proposition's sense is the distinctive way it partitions the space of possibilities if it does.

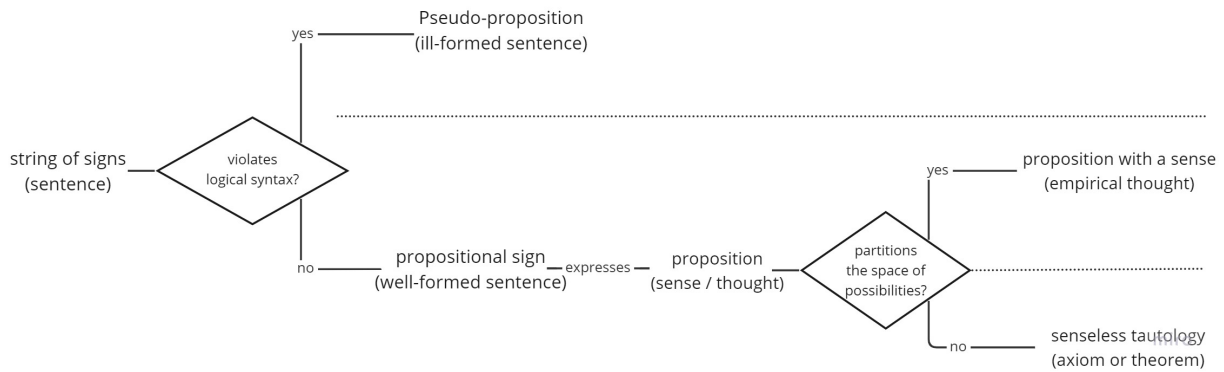
There is some evidence suggesting that in TLP all propositions have a sense, which would make 'sense' a somewhat redundant notion. Wittgenstein says that a picture is a model of reality (2.12). A proposition is a model of reality (4.01). Thus, a proposition is a picture. A logical picture is a thought (3). Thus, a proposition is a thought, since "every picture is also a logical picture" (2.182). But a thought is a proposition with a sense (4). Therefore, a proposition is a proposition with a sense: it is part of the nature of propositions that they have sense.

Now if this were correct, then every time Wittgenstein talks in terms of 'propositions of logic' he would be making a category mistake, because tautologies lack a sense. There is some evidence to support this; in his notes, Wittgenstein occasionally seems to imply that tautologies are pseudo-

propositions (NB, 12) or that they are not propositions, given that “there are no such things as analytic *propositions*” (NB, 21). I suggest that these few preparatory remarks, which have not been written in TLP, are not part of the theory that Wittgenstein intended to present. If they were, then the theory would be self-defeating in a much more mundane sense than resolute readers have it. Wittgenstein talks in terms of “propositions of logic” throughout the book. If all these occurrences were category mistakes, then TLP would be self-defeating in the uninteresting sense of using contradictory terminology. Furthermore, if all propositions had a sense, proposition 4, which was one of the first focuses of Wittgenstein's attention in the writing of PT, would state a needless redundancy. This seems highly unlikely. Accordingly, I suggest that Wittgenstein did not realize that the definitions above seem to jointly entail that all propositions have a sense. In the intended TPL account of sense, propositions may or may not have a sense. Propositions with a sense are thoughts, and they are logical pictures. Propositions without a sense are tautologies or contradictions, they picture nothing, they say nothing, but they show the logical structure of the world.

In an early note for TLP, Wittgenstein suggests that propositions correspond to Frege's well-formed sentences (NB 1961, 2), possibly because, as Anscombe suggests (NB 1961, 15 translator's footnote), at that time he had still in mind Frege's theory of sense. But in TLP a proposition is not a combination of signs. A string of symbols in TLP is called a “propositional sign” (3.5). For Wittgenstein, a proposition is an abstract entity corresponding to a string of signs, “a model of reality as we imagine it” (4.01). Commentators seem to agree on this (Conant 1992, 64 and Hacker 2021, 18, among others).

For Frege, on the other hand, abstract entities corresponding to well-formed strings of signs are thoughts. This extensionally corresponds to Wittgenstein's propositions because, according to both, there is only one sort of entity that can be expressed by well-formed sentences (propositions for Wittgenstein and senses for Frege). Frege holds that well-formed sentences refer to truth values *through* their senses. No well-formed sentence can have a truth value but no sense, or a sense but no truth value. Thus, truth values are not a Fregean notion whose extension could overlap Wittgenstein's notion of proposition.



This sums up the above discussion, with Frege's terms in parenthesis. I am not suggesting that the disagreement between Frege and Wittgenstein concerning the nature of sense was verbal. Although their taxonomies are extensionally equivalent, they differ intensionally. But extensional equivalence is sufficient for my purposes.

3. The Justification of Logic

Conant (1992) attributes to Wittgenstein the self-defeating view that contradictions are nonsense because he superimposes Frege's view about sense on TLP: there is only one way that a sentence may lack a sense, which makes it neither true nor false. But Wittgenstein distinguishes pseudo-propositions, which are neither true nor false, from senseless tautologies which are most emphatically true. The graph above illustrates this. In Wittgenstein's terminology, a senseless proposition must be asserted. Indeed, Wittgenstein asserts tautologies by saying that they are "unconditionally true" (4.461). This brings us to the key proposition on the impossibility of illogical thought.

What makes logic a priori is the *impossibility* of illogical thought (5.4731)

Wittgenstein acknowledges that, in complicated cases, one might not realize that a given sign corresponds to a tautology (6.1262). But once a tautology has been grasped, it is impossible to reject it. To think out a proposition amounts to visualizing its truth table. Even fallible humans, having thought out a tautology, cannot reject it. We cannot *think* illogically, although we can fail to visualize the truth table of a sentence. It is possible to think illogically in the sense that one can mistakenly associate a false proposition with a tautological propositional sign. However, it is impossible to think illogically in the sense

that one cannot reject a tautological propositional sign that one has applied and thought out (i.e. having visualized its truth table). This is factually false, contemporary non-classical logicians reject classical tautologies and it is absurd to say that they fail to visualize their truth tables. But obviously, Wittgenstein had never encountered logicians seriously defending non-classical logics at the time.

It is often remarked that, unlike Frege and Russell, Wittgenstein thought that ordinary language is in perfect logical order (Anscombe 1959, 91-2). Frege's concept script is a technical tool developed to replace ordinary language for specific scientific purposes, analogous to a microscope (Frege 1879, 105). Wittgenstein's notation, by contrast, is meant to display the underlying logical structure of ordinary language.

Again, one must not confuse Frege's and Wittgenstein's terminologies. Wittgenstein says that language is the totality of propositions (4.001). That is, language is the totality of what propositional signs express. Frege, by contrast, regards languages as collections of symbols and rules to manipulate them. Frege's formal language is intended as a tool to express more precisely some of the thoughts that ordinary language expresses. For Wittgenstein, on the other hand, language is the collection of thoughts expressed by various notations.

Wittgenstein's use of the term 'language' occasionally alternates these two meanings. In proposition 3.325, for instance, he uses interchangeably 'sign-language' [*zeichensprache*], 'concept script' [*begriffsschrift*], and 'language' [*sprache*]. This ambiguity is plausibly what misled Russell. Russell thought that the *Tractatus* aims to describe a logically perfect language (see Russell's introduction to TLP). This reading is quite correct if a language is a notational convention, indeed Wittgenstein develops a notational convention in the *Tractatus*. It is absolutely wrong if language is understood as the totality of thoughts (see also WC, 98).

Frege could very well agree that language is in perfect logical order if language is understood as the totality of what he called *thoughts*. Wittgenstein's conception is intensionally different because he takes a semantic, rather than a syntactic approach to logic. But as to the impossibility of illogical thought, they agree. Logical errors, for Frege, result from psychological limitations,

which he strives to eliminate by developing his concept script. If we could ideally see all syntactic consequences of any given sentence, we would never make mistakes in logic. Having unintentionally postulated soundness and completeness results, Wittgenstein's view coincides with this.

Let us consider now how Wittgenstein intended to bridge the ideal impossibility of logical mistakes with the justification of logic. Here is one reasoning that Wittgenstein could have advanced: he could have pointed out that since logical mistakes are ideally impossible, the world must obey the laws of logic because otherwise, our epistemic standpoint would lose its ground. We must believe tautologies. Therefore, if there were any false tautologies, we could not possibly find them. That is, if tautologies were false, we have no way of finding it out, not even ideally. This is a skeptical scenario in which the world has a certain feature that we are bound to believe it lacks. If Wittgenstein rejects this scenario, his view that logical mistakes are impossible entails that tautologies are true.

I argue elsewhere that Kant and Frege proposed an argument along this line. This move is available for Wittgenstein as well. Indeed, he wrote: "scepticism is not irrefutable but obviously nonsensical" (6.51). However, he does not seem to have linked this with the justification of logic. The proposition where Wittgenstein bridges the limits of language with the structure of the world is this:

The limits of my language mean the limits of my world (5.6)

Logic pervades the world: the limits of the world are also its limits (5.61)

It is a complex exegetical problem, one that I do not tackle here, to evaluate Wittgenstein's notes about solipsism. It suffices to say that 5.6 and the remarks about it are the propositions most clearly stating that the gap between inconceivability and justification can be filled. Thus, whatever view Wittgenstein was advancing there, that was his main reason to bridge logic and reality. Hacker (1986) argues that here Wittgenstein was influenced by Schopenhauer. If this is correct, then although Wittgenstein's view on the epistemology of logic has much in common with Kant's and Frege's, ultimately, they appeal to radically different devices. Kant and Frege reject skepticism because it is a scientific non-starter: if we are to do science, we need to

presuppose that, at least ideally, humans can obtain knowledge. Wittgenstein appeals to Schopenhauer's notion of a non-psychological "metaphysical subject" that constitutes the limits of the world by representing it.

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Der Nebel der Sprache und die Grenze des Denkens bei Wittgenstein

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Abstract

Wittgensteins Spätphilosophie bricht mit der traditionellen Vorstellung von Sprache und Philosophie: Typische philosophische Probleme resultieren aus grammatischen Missverständnissen. Diese Arbeit zeigt, wie Wittgenstein dabei methodisch vorgeht und wie philosophische Probleme als Rätsel bei Wittgenstein charakterisiert sind. Ferner stellt sich die Frage, was es bedeutet, sich innerhalb der Grenze des Denkens zu bewegen und diese als solche wahrzunehmen. Die zentrale These ist dabei, dass Wittgensteins Einsicht in das Funktionieren der Sprache und das Auflösen philosophischer Rätsel keineswegs rein destruktiv ist, sondern eine neue Perspektive auf die Welt bietet. Diese Philosophie zeigt einerseits einen neuen Weg zur Überwindung philosophischer Probleme und bleibt andererseits dabei höchst bescheiden: Sind die Probleme überwunden und der Nebel der Verwirrung gelichtet, wird Raum für andere Perspektiven und Betrachtungsweisen geschaffen. Die Welt bleibt weiterhin greifbar für Kultur, Literatur und Kunst, ganz ohne sprachlich-philosophische Verwirrungen. Die Philosophie Wittgensteins schafft damit Raum und Möglichkeiten für einen breiteren kulturellen Diskurs.

1. Sprachspiel und Bedeutung

Bereits zu Beginn in *Philosophische Untersuchungen* kritisiert Wittgenstein das traditionelle Bild der Sprache und deutet an, dass der Verstehensprozess von sprachlicher Bedeutung oft von einem Nebel umgeben ist, einer Art geheimnisvollen abstrakten Entität, die eine vermeintliche Erklärung für dieses Phänomen liefern soll (vgl. PU §5). In dieser Arbeit soll gezeigt werden, dass diese Kritik weniger zerstörerisch ist, sondern vielmehr eine neue Perspektive anbietet.

Wittgenstein führt zunächst den Begriff des 'Sprachspiels' ein, welcher den gesamten sozialen Handlungsablauf in der Sprache, einschließlich der Wortverwendung, regelt. Die Wörter der Sprache werden dabei in verschiedenen Situationen im Gebrauch unterschiedlich gelernt und haben ihre Bedeutung nicht nur deshalb, weil sie etwas bezeichnen. Vielmehr sind die Wörter unserer Sprache wie Werkzeuge in einem konkreten Anwendungsfall oder wie eine Schachfigur im Schachspiel zu verstehen. (Vgl. PU §§7-17.)

Das Sprachspiel kann dabei nicht scharf abgegrenzt werden und umfasst nicht nur Wörter (und ihren Gebrauch), sondern sämtliche damit verbundenen sozialen Handlungsabläufe und Tätigkeiten wie das Befehlen, Bitten, Hypothesen aufstellen usw. (vgl. PU §23).

Hierbei werden von Wittgenstein auch absolute Definitionen von Begriffen kritisiert. Definitionen dienen als Hinweis für einen Wortgebrauch, welche nie frei von Mehrfachdeutungen und nie absolute Erklärungen sind (vgl. PU §29). Um ein Wort sinnvoll in einem Kontext verwenden zu können, muss bereits Wissen gegeben sein (vgl. PU §30-31). Die Benennung ist dabei völlig willkürlich und spielt eine unterstützende Rolle im Sprachspiel. Beim Zusammenspiel aus Benennen, Zeigen und (konzeptuellen) Erfassen von Dingen, wie z.B. einer Schachfigur, überlappen sich kognitive Prozesse, und wir vermuten eine geistige Entität oder ein Abbild der Dinge (vgl. PU §36). Die suggerierte Verbindung zwischen Wort und Gegenstand, die über einen kontextuellen Gebrauch der Wörter hinaus geht, führt oft zu einem philosophischen Problem, wenn der Zusammenhang zwischen Sprache und Praxis übersehen wird: "Denn die philosophischen Probleme entstehen, wenn die Sprache *feiert*." (PU §38) Mit Feiern sei gemeint, dass Wörter (und ihre Bedeutung) sich meist aus ihrem Gebrauch, ihrem geregelten sozialen Kontext (eben dem Sprachspiel), entfernen, denn für viele Fälle gilt: "Die Bedeutung eines Wortes ist sein Gebrauch in der Sprache." (PU §43) Die in der Praxis funktionierenden Sprachspiele werden durch unterschiedliche erlernbare Regeln ermöglicht (vgl. PU §53-54).

Nach Wittgenstein haben dabei Sprachspiele keine allgemeine Wesenheit, sondern sind untereinander verwandt und weisen Ähnlichkeiten auf. Wittgenstein erläutert hier seinen Begriff der Familienähnlichkeit, da Sprachspiele untereinander Ähnlichkeiten besitzen wie die Mitglieder einer Familie. So gibt es auch zwischen verschiedenen Spielen (Brettspiele, Kartenspiele usw.) Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede. Auch die exakte Definition eines Spiels ist weder völlig abgeschlossen noch explizit zu nennen – die Grenze des Begriffs wird dabei von uns gezogen. (Vgl. PU §§65-69.)

Unsere Sprache ist dabei von Unschärfe geprägt, so gibt es auch z.B. unterschiedliche Bedeutungen und Sprachspiele über das Wort 'gut' (vgl. PU §77). Selbst die Logik (d.h. Regelanwendung) sowie unser Denken ist kein

Kalkül, sondern die Regeln der Sprache kommen von uns – sie sind kontingent, veränderbar, willkürlich (vgl. PU §§81-83). Dabei müssen die Regeln nicht vollständig oder über einen (pragmatischen) Zweifel erhaben sein (vgl. PU §§84-85). Auch bei der Erklärung von Regeln für Sprachspiele stoßen wir an Grenzen; diese kommen irgendwann an ein Ende, aber dienen dazu, Missverständnisse zu vermeiden (vgl. PU §87). Eine finale Rechtfertigung des Regelfolgens scheint es nicht zu geben: "Wenn ich der Regel folge, wähle ich nicht. Ich folge der Regel *blind*." (PU §219) Ähnlich formuliert Wittgenstein in *Über Gewißheit*, dass es scheinbar kein Fundament des Wissens gibt und eine allgemeine Rechtfertigung unserer Glaubenssätze nicht möglich ist: "Am Grunde des begründeten Glaubens liegt der unbegründete Glaube." (ÜG §253)

Wittgenstein zufolge verführen uns die Wörter unserer Sprache dazu, Tiefe zu vermuten, wo keine ist, wie am Beispiel der Logik (vgl. PU §89). Wittgensteins Methodik handelt aber nicht von tiefgehenden, exakten Erklärungen, sondern von der schlichten Untersuchung grammatischer Missverständnisse (vgl. PU §90). Ein Exaktheitsideal, wie in der Logik, ist dabei trügerisch, denn die Sprache funktioniert ebenso mit Vagheiten (vgl. PU §§100-101). Das Ideal ist allerdings fest in uns verankert: "Die Idee sitzt gleichsam als Brille auf unsrer Nase, und was wir ansehen, sehen wir durch sie." (PU §103) Wittgenstein bekämpft somit das Vorurteil der all-erklärenden Logik: Eine ideale Sprache und ihre (logische) Analyse führt zu einer Scheinanalyse und die Sprache des Alltags muss in das Zentrum der Untersuchung rücken (vgl. PU §§105-107). Damit wehrt sich Wittgenstein gegen eine allumfassende Erklärung und einer Hypothesenaufstellung seiner Philosophie: "Alle *Erklärung* muß fort, und nur Beschreibung an ihre Stelle treten." (PU §109) Philosophische Probleme werden dadurch gelöst, indem man sich klar macht, wie diese in der Sprache entstehen: "Die Philosophie ist ein Kampf gegen die Verhexung unsres Verstandes durch die Mittel unserer Sprache." (PU §109) Die philosophischen Probleme sind dabei tief in unserer Vorstellung von Sprache verankert (vgl. PU 111). Eine Lösung gegen eine idealisierte, metaphysische Vorstellung ist, die metaphysischen Begriffe auf ihre alltägliche, ursprüngliche Verwendung zurückzuführen (vgl. PU §116). So werden metaphysische Luftgebäude eingerissen, die von der Sprache erzeugt werden (vgl. PU §118). Wittgenstein

bezeichnet seine Entdeckung als die eines 'Unsinns', die sich an den Beulen zeigt, "die sich der Verstand beim Anrennen an die Grenze der Sprache geholt hat." (PU §119)

Nach dieser Darstellung der sprachphilosophischen Methodik Wittgensteins werde ich im Folgenden näher darauf eingehen, was ein philosophisches Problem ist.

2. Was ist ein philosophisches Problem?

Aus dem vorherigen Kapitel geht hervor, dass Wittgenstein keine einheitliche Definition philosophischer Probleme zulässt. In *Philosophische Untersuchungen* bezeichnet Wittgenstein ein philosophisches Problem so: "Ein philosophisches Problem hat die Form: 'Ich kenne mich nicht aus.'" (PU §123) Nach Edmonds und Eidinow sind philosophische Fragen bei Wittgenstein demnach "keine Probleme, sondern Rätsel." (Edmonds & Eidinow 2003, 209)

Wittgenstein behandelt in seinen Werken eine ganze Reihe unterschiedlicher philosophischer Fragestellungen, wie die Frage, ob etwas gleichzeitig ganz rot und grün sein kann oder ob ich wissen kann, dass ich Schmerzen habe (vgl. Edmonds & Eidinow 2003, 209). Für Wittgenstein standen diese Rätsel allerdings im Bann der Sprache und sind nur durch ein grammatisches Missverständnis hervorgerufen, welches durch das Bewusstwerden ihres Entstehens wieder aufgelöst werden konnten (vgl. Edmonds & Eidinow 2003, 209).

Ein philosophisches Problem oder Rätsel lässt sich so weder exakt definieren noch scharf abgrenzen. Man könnte ähnlich wie bei einem Spiel selbst das Konzept der Familienähnlichkeit auf philosophische Probleme anwenden, um diese als solche zu begreifen. Jedoch gäbe es hier eine Gemeinsamkeit: Für Wittgenstein sind sie sprachliche Verwirrungen. Ob diese mit Familienähnlichkeiten erklärt werden können, bleibt offen. Wittgenstein vertrat jedenfalls nach Popper in deren berühmten Streitgespräch die Meinung, dass es keine 'wirklichen' philosophischen Probleme gibt, die nicht auf einem sprachlichen Missverständnis beruhen (vgl. Edmonds & Eidinow 2003, 212). Wittgensteins Lösung gleicht einer Therapie: Man "behandelt eine Frage; wie eine Krankheit." (PU §255)

Bereits in *The Big Typescript* merkt er an, dass die (grammatischen) Probleme tief in uns sitzen und unsere Art, mit ihnen konzeptuell zu denken, zu einer festen Gewohnheit geworden sind, weshalb sie schwer zu bekämpfen sind (vgl. BS 90, 423). Wittgenstein geht es dabei um eine Ordnung in unserem sprachlichen Geflecht; eine Übersicht zu schaffen über den tatsächlichen Gebrauch der Sprache, anstatt im 'Nebel' der Sprache, d.h. in künstlich erzeugten Entitäten umherzuwandern und eine (sprachlich-logische) Regel zur Beantwortung einer philosophischen Frage darzulegen (vgl. BS 89, 416-417). Damit bricht Wittgenstein mit der analytischen Tradition, welche er selbst noch im *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* vertrat und stellt nicht mehr die Logik als Sinnkriterium für sinnvolle Sätze ins Zentrum (vgl. Edmonds & Eidinow 2003, 205f). Was jedoch fortgeführt wird, ist eine Grenze des Denkens: "*Die Grenzen meiner Sprache* bedeuten die Grenzen meiner Welt." (TLP 5.6) Diese Grenze unterscheidet sich zwar von jener seiner Spätphilosophie, jedoch ist das Bestehen darauf, dass unser Denken Grenzen hat, für seine Sichtweise essenziell.

3. Die Grenze des Denkens

Wittgensteins Grenze des Denkens kann man sich vorstellen, als wandere man in einem sprachlichen Labyrinth und anstelle sich eine bessere Übersicht über das Labyrinth zu machen und das Rätsel aufzulösen, rennt man mit dem Kopf ständig gegen eine vermeintliche Mauer und holt sich so 'Beulen', wie Wittgenstein es ausdrückt. Weiters kann man sich vorstellen, dass dieses Labyrinth von einem Nebel durchzogen ist, der von der Sprache erzeugt wird: Es fehlt jegliche Orientierung. Doch neben dem Nebel, also der sprachlich erzeugten Unübersichtlichkeit, sitzen wir einem weiteren Vorurteil auf: Wir betrachten unsere Umgebung durch eine Brille aus Vorurteilen, um einen Ausgang zu finden und mögliche Lösungswege zu konstruieren; um (vermeintlich) klarer sehen zu können. Es muss dort und dort ein Weg sein, wo nach Wittgenstein keiner ist. Durch diese Metapher soll hervorgehoben werden, dass sich Wittgenstein nun (i) gegen ein solches Exaktheitsideal der Logik, welches man mit der analytischen Tradition vergleichen kann, wehrt (die Brille), (ii) die Sprache und unser Denken eine natürliche Grenze haben (die Ränder des Labyrinths) und (iii) wir den Gebrauch unserer Wörter im Nebel der Sprache übersehen (vgl. PU §122).

Beim Philosophieren ist die Gefahr des Verlaufs dabei generell groß: "Wer philosophiert, verliert den Weg leicht, indem er sich durch die Sprache irreführen lässt." (Schulte 1989, 134) Wittgensteins Metaphorik umschreibt dies noch radikaler: Für Wittgenstein lassen wir uns von der Sprache verhexen, wogegen sich zu wehren ist (vgl. PU §109) Anstatt eines Labyrinths vergleicht Wittgenstein unser Dasein als Gefangene in einem Fliegenglas: "Was ist dein Ziel in der Philosophie? – Der Fliege den Ausweg aus dem Fliegenglas zeigen." (PU §309) Dies bedeutet vom Bann der philosophischen Probleme gelöst zu sein. Die Übersicht über das sprachliche Labyrinth stellt hierbei allerdings keine Semantiktheorie dar.

Nach Wittgenstein sind wir in die Grammatik, menschliche Praxis und in sprachliche Konzepte hineingeboren, durch die wir die Welt wahrnehmen; die Natur selbst ist nicht begrifflich strukturiert, da die Begriffe und Struktur von uns stammen (vgl. Moyal-Sharrock, 219). Wie ist jedoch der Zusammenhang zwischen unserem Denken und der Welt geklärt? Während Kants transzendentaler Idealismus erklärt, dass wir die Welt in idealisierter Form in unserem Denken durch gewisse Kategorien wahrnehmen (und damit die Beziehung zur äußeren Welt erklärt), geht Wittgenstein Jonathan Lear zufolge ähnlich vor: Die sozialen und kulturellen Bedingungen des Denkens stehen im Vordergrund (vgl. Lear 1984, 240). Ist unsere Grammatik selbst dabei die Grenze der Sprache? Ist sie ähnlich einer Kategorie bei Kant? Wittgenstein würde dies nach Simon Blackburn nicht so streng sehen, da unsere Grammatik und begriffliche Konzepte (und Regeln) kontingent sind (vgl. Blackburn 2004, 247). Blackburn unterstreicht stattdessen die Vielfalt der aus praktischen Handlungen entstandenen Konzepte, wobei kein Konzept dem anderen rational vorzuziehen ist (vgl. Blackburn 2004, 256).

Ist Wittgenstein damit ein Relativist? Ein Therapeut? Oder doch bloß Pragmatiker? Und was bedeutet dies für unsere Grenze der Sprache und des Denkens? Denn unsere verschiedenen Sprachspiele schaffen bzw. formen unsere Welt, die wir vorfinden. Unabhängig davon ist kein Denken möglich, auch nicht darüber hinaus. Gerade wenn wir philosophieren, kommen wir zwangsläufig mit der Grenze in Berührung. Egal, ob wir nun gegen diese Grenze rennen oder im Nebel wandern oder uns durch angeschlagene

Brillengläser vorwärtsirren – für Wittgenstein ist die Sprache ein gigantisches Netzwerk unscharfer Begriffe, etwas Lebendiges, sich stets Veränderndes und wir ein elementarer Teil davon. Raus aus der Sprache können wir nicht.

4. Was bleibt von der Philosophie?

Wittgenstein lehnt eine einzige Methodik der Philosophie klar ab und spricht sich gegen ein Dogma in der Philosophie aus, eine philosophische Theorie zur Erklärung der Phänomene formulieren zu müssen. Dabei betrachtet Wittgenstein scheinbar die gesamte Philosophie als Problem, das überwunden bzw. therapeutisch behandelt wird. Der neue Zweck seiner Philosophie ist nicht das Aufstellen von tieferen Erklärungen oder irgendwelchen Schlussfolgerungen, sondern eine sprachliche Ordnung wiederzuentdecken und die philosophischen Beulen zu behandeln. (Vgl. PU §§122-133.)

Ist damit Wittgensteins Philosophie so destruktiv wie sein Ruf es beschreibt? Wittgenstein geht es hier nicht um eine vollständige Zerstörung der traditionellen Philosophie, sondern um eine Neubetrachtung, eine Reformation, die auch vieles offen lässt. Wittgenstein möchte vermeiden, dass wir weiter im Nebel wandern, und zerstört bloß konstruierte Scheinprobleme: "Aber es sind nur Luftgebäude, die wir zerstören, und wir legen den Grund der Sprache frei, auf dem sie standen." (PU §118). Wittgenstein war überzeugt, dass die meisten philosophischen Probleme bloß sprachliche Rätsel sind, jedoch war seine Philosophie wie auch er selbst dabei bescheiden: "Es gibt Probleme, an die ich nie herankomme, die nicht in meiner Linie oder in meiner Welt liegen. Probleme der abendländischen Gedankenwelt, an die Beethoven (und vielleicht teilweise Goethe) herangekommen ist" (VB 1984, 462). Wittgenstein lässt so Raum für die Kunst und andere Probleme, sobald der Nebel gelichtet ist: "[S]o habe ich eine amorphe (durchsichtige) Masse geschaffen, und die Welt mit ihrer ganzen Vielfältigkeit bleibt, wie eine uninteressante Gerümpelkammer, links liegen." (VB 1984, 462f)

Die Philosophie Wittgensteins ermöglicht den Zugang zu anderen Betrachtungsweisen. Die amorphe Masse bleibt offen für Literatur, Kunst und Kultur, die auch den Nebel tatsächlich als Nebel wahrnehmen.

Hier zeigen sich Parallelen zu einem Philosophen, mit dem Wittgenstein zunächst keine Berührungspunkte hat: Albert Camus. Dieser unterscheidet in *Der Mythos des Sisyphos* zwischen einem erklärenden Thesenroman und dem (absurden) Kunstwerk, welches mannigfaltige Erfahrungen hervorbringt (vgl. Camus 2014, 136-137). Die Kunst erschafft hierbei Neues und ist an Beschreibungen der Welt interessiert, anstatt sich in einem festen System zu bewegen (vgl. Camus 2014, 113-117). Sie kümmert sich um Klarheit, aber begrenzt auch die Welt, die sie schafft und wird zu einer unausgesprochenen Philosophie, die sich um die Darstellung der Wirklichkeit bemüht (vgl. Camus 2014, 119-121). Wie Wittgenstein zieht Camus Beschreibungen der Welt gegenüber Erklärungen vor. Sind die abstrakten Probleme der Philosophie überwunden, setzt die Kunst ein, die sich in einer gleichgültigen Welt entfaltet. Kunstschaffende müssen demnach "dem Leeren seine Farben geben." (Camus 2014, 134)

Die Philosophie Wittgensteins bemüht sich ebenso um Klarheit. Damit zeigt dieser eine neue Perspektive auf die Welt und löst philosophische Rätsel auf, die ihre Ursachen in grammatischen Missverständnissen haben. Jedoch lässt er auch Raum für andere Betrachtungsweisen. Dies heißt, alte Gewohnheiten und Vorurteile des von der Sprache verhexten Verstandes zu brechen und den Nebel zu lichten – der Ausweg aus dem Fliegenglas.

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Acknowledgement

Ich danke Herrn David Wagner dafür, dass er mich zur Einreichung dieser Arbeit motiviert hat. Ebenfalls danke ich meinen anderen Lehrpersonen sowie meinen Mitstudierenden am Institut für Philosophie an der Universität Wien für zahlreiche Einsichten. Auch danke ich Herrn Kurt Wischin für viele erhellende philosophische Gespräche über Wittgenstein.

The Wittgenstein Ontology: Representing the *Tractatus*

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Abstract

The Wittgenstein Ontology is a project initiated in 2006 by the Wittgenstein Archives in Bergen (WAB). It currently organises knowledge about over fifty thousand separate remarks that appear both in Wittgenstein's *Nachlass* and his published works, as well as about other Wittgenstein resources such as his correspondence. The up-to-date base contains, for example, information about the date of a *Nachlass* remark, whether it refers to a particular person, or contains a drawing; it also relates a remark with all the volumes which include another version of that remark. However, the aspirations of the contributors to the project have been much more far-reaching and embraced modelling the philosophical content of Wittgenstein's writings. I propose to implement theoretical solutions offered by researchers associated with the WAB, especially the idea of representing different perspectives, by means of the reification mechanism permitted by the RDF syntax. According to my approach, there are three layers of the representation of philosophical content: textual, propositional, and sub-propositional. The textual layer is simply a structured collection of Wittgenstein's papers and publications. The propositional—or logical—layer should represent philosophical claims that should be related to both the textual and sub-propositional layers via their relations to sentences and STATEMENT instances, respectively. The sub-propositional—or structural—layer should generally consist of structures of concepts represented via the syntax of reification. In my paper, I focus on the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* and demonstrate how the representation of its content can be created.

This paper is my second report on my contribution to the development of the Wittgenstein Ontology, a project initiated in 2006 by the Wittgenstein Archives in Bergen (WAB). I delivered the first report at the 43rd International Wittgenstein Symposium in Kirchberg (2022). At that time, I presented an attempt to solve some of the problems related to representing the section of the *Tractatus* devoted to mathematics. The results of the work that has been continued since then will be presented in my three publications already accepted for printing (Gomułka forthc. a; forthc. b; forthc. c). I see my contribution primarily as an implementation and follow-up to the proposals formulated by researchers associated with the WAB (Zöllner-Weber, Pichler 2007; Mácha *et al.* 2013; Pichler, Zöllner-Weber 2013; Addis *et al.* 2015; Pichler *et al.* 2021). Here, I present a further development and a certain correction of my earlier ideas, as well as a set of techniques that can bring about the actual construction of the knowledge base covering early Wittgenstein's philosophical concepts. In other words, I try to demonstrate how to complete the knowledge base for the full content of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*.

The Wittgenstein Ontology project

The computational ontology devoted to Wittgenstein being developed by the WAB currently organises knowledge about over fifty thousand separate remarks that appear both in Wittgenstein's *Nachlass* and his published works, as well as about other Wittgenstein resources such as his correspondence. The working part of the knowledge base is available via a comprehensive interface under the web address <https://wab.uib.no/sfb/>. The up-to-date base can be downloaded as a large 64MB file in OWL format from the address: http://wab.uib.no/cost-a32_philospace/wittgenstein.owl.

The knowledge base contains, for example, information about the date of a *Nachlass* remark, whether it refers to a particular person, or contains a drawing; it also relates a remark with all the volumes which include another version of that remark. However, the aspirations of the project's authors have been much more far-reaching, as revealed in their publications. For example, in their 2007 text Pichler and Zöllner-Weber write that their goal is "to investigate to what extent it is possible to model the content of a philosophical text such as Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* using a formal ontology language, as well as to test subsequent computational applications" (Zöllner-Weber, Pichler 2007: 249). The authors notice that although this task may seem simple at first glance due to the fact that Wittgenstein's early philosophy concerns a domain that can be relatively easily categorised into classes, subclasses, and properties, and the *Tractatus* itself appears to have a clear hierarchical structure, the attempt to create an ontology for the content of this work has revealed that the task is not so simple after all. In their subsequent article (Pichler, Zöllner-Weber 2013), both scholars argue that their ontology must be based on elements related to fragments of documents from the *Nachlass* that are made available by the WAB. It must therefore be object-oriented, not event-oriented. The article describes a fragment of the ontology for the emerging knowledge base of Wittgenstein's philosophy by enumerating the family of the SUBJECT class. It is to comprise the subclasses: ISSUE, PERSPECTIVE, POINT, and FIELD, where FIELD gathers sub-disciplines and areas of interest like "philosophy of language"; ISSUE groups such notions as "logical independence", "atomic proposition", "state of affairs", etc.; POINT encompasses simple philosophical theses; and PERSPECTIVE is introduced to deal with the fact that Wittgenstein's

views are inconsistent and underwent changes (Pichler, Zöllner-Weber 2013: 702–704).

Another 2013 paper by authors associated with the WAB discusses in detail, although only theoretically, the problem of incompatibility between different possible representations of knowledge in the humanities. Thus, the authors justify the need for a mechanism that can take into account various perspectives in a representation of knowledge, and so they broaden the possible employment of the PERSPECTIVE class (Mácha *et al.* 2013).

At the time of writing, the latest publication by researchers associated with the WAB (Pichler *et al.* 2021) is a summary of the current state of the project and its goals. The authors indicate that modelling a representation of knowledge in the humanities encounters serious difficulties. They suggest that in order to develop such a representation, we need to take into account "dynamic concepts, non-shared conceptualisation, knowledge about knowledge, competing claims, contested arguments and ongoing debate" (Pichler *et al.* 2021: 65). Therefore, they propose a revision of the idea of computational ontology and call for new approaches to ontology design (*ibid.*). However, the paper concludes with an ascertainment that the authors do not yet have a detailed outline of the proposed new ideas for a formalised computational ontology (*ibid.*: 71).

It should also be mentioned that in their recent reports the WAB scholars tend to use different names for the two SUBJECT subclasses: instead of ISSUE and POINT, they discuss CONCEPT and CLAIM, respectively. From now on, I will use the latter names because I believe they are more accurate.

The proposed construction of the knowledge base

In all three of my forthcoming texts mentioned above, I propose to implement the ideas of researchers associated with the WAB by means of the reification mechanism permitted by the RDF syntax. RDF is a key component of the Semantic Web technology. It is a formal language, a way to describe and represent knowledge on the Internet so that computers can make use of it unsupervised by humans. It does this by breaking down knowledge into small units – called triples – that define a relationship between a subject, a predicate,

and an object. These triples can then be combined to form larger information structures, the so-called named graphs, which can be made available online to people and machines. I also suggest attributing instances of the CLAIM class with reified structures created from instances of the CONCEPT class. According to this approach, there are three layers of the representation of philosophical content: textual, propositional, and sub-propositional. The textual layer is simply a structured collection of Wittgenstein's papers and publications. It has itself a three-level order divided into volumes ("Tractatus logico-philosophicus", "Ms-104", etc.), remarks ("Tractatus logico-philosophicus 2.022", "Ts-208,37r[3]", etc.), and sentences ("Tractatus logico-philosophicus 2.022[1]", "Ts-208,37r[3][1]", etc.). The WAB knowledge base does not yet provide the last level; it only includes the subclass SENTENCE which has no instances (however, they can be easily generated – see below). Notice that the instances of the textual layer do not belong to the SUBJECT branch but the SOURCE branch of the project's class hierarchy. In addition to SENTENCE, the latter also includes the NACHLASS BEMERKUNG, PART, MS, TS, and WERK subclasses.

The propositional – or logical – layer should consist of instances of the CLAIM class related to both the textual and sub-propositional layers via their relations to sentences and structures of concepts, respectively. The claims themselves can and should be linked with each other by such logical relations as "entails", "presupposes", "suggests", etc. Notice that the mapping of claims on sentences is not one-to-one but many-to-many. On the one hand, there can be a textual sentence that comprises more than just one claim; for instance, TLP 1.1 "Die Welt ist die Gesamtheit der Tatsachen, nicht der Dinge" can be logically divided into two claims: the one states that the world is the totality of facts while the other says that the world is not the totality of things. On the other hand, there can be a claim that is related to more than just one sentence; for instance, the claim that mathematics is a kind of a logical method can be attributed both to the first sentence of TLP 6.2 "Die Mathematik ist eine logische Methode" and to the first (and only) sentence of TLP 6.234 "Die Mathematik ist eine Methode der Logik"; indeed, we can assume that the difference between the two sentences is only superficial.

The sub-propositional – or structural – layer should generally consist of instances of the STATEMENT class that is a built-in feature of the RDF syntax and provides the means for the mechanism of reification. It should be

attributed with three standard properties: Subject, Predicate, and Object, whose values are constitutive elements of a simple propositional structure; that is, an RDF triple. For instance, if we want to build a sub-propositional representation for the claim that mathematics is a kind of a logical method, we can create a STATEMENT instance whose Subject property is "Mathematics" (an instance of the CONCEPT class); Predicate property is "is a kind of" (a property itself); and Object is "Logical method" (another instance of the CONCEPT class).

More complicated structures of claims are also possible. For example, the only sentence of TLP 6.001 says that "Dies sagt nichts anderes, als dass jeder Satz ein Resultat der successiven Anwendung der Operation $N(\bar{\xi})$ auf die Elementarsätze ist". This sentence contains a subordinate clause, so unlike the TLP 1.1, it cannot be divided into two claims but rather its logical counterpart is a single claim that has a complex grammatical structure. Its main clause is represented by a STATEMENT instance whose Subject property is the formal expression " $[\bar{p}, \bar{\xi}, N(\bar{\xi})]$ " (this is the anaphoric reference of the pronoun "dies" in the sentence); Predicate is the property "says"; and Object is another STATEMENT instance whose Subject property is the concept "Proposition"; Predicate is the property "is explicated as"; and Object is the concept "Result of successive application to elementary propositions of the operation $N(\bar{\xi})$ ". (Actually, the subordinate clause is also directly affirmed by 6.001, so we should have a second claim that is attached to this sentence: a sub-propositional counterpart of the claim should be the latter STATEMENT instance.) Other, more complex structures, are discussed in Gomułka forthc. c. Obviously, there should be relations that are obtained between concepts; for instance, the concept "Result of successive application..." is complex and should be attributed with the property "contains" with a couple of values as "Operation $N(\bar{\xi})$ ", "Successive application", and so on.

Fully adequate models of claims' structures require a new kind of sub-propositional elements, and so a new class that would be a sibling of CONCEPT and CLAIM. I call it FORMULA. Its instances are all logical or mathematical expressions, schemes, and tables that can be built by means of LaTeX syntax. Formerly, I called the proposed class SYMBOL (cf. Gomułka forthc. a), but the name was both too specific and confusing, particularly in the context of the *Tractatus*. The need of the FORMULA class arises from the fact that equations

(cf. TLP 6.02), expressions of the quantificational logic (cf. TLP 5.531–5.534), and tables (cf. TLP 4.31) obviously belong to the philosophical content of the *Tractatus*, but they clearly cannot be regarded as concepts (though they can occur in conceptual structures). The aforementioned TLP 6 formal expression " $\lceil p, \bar{\xi}, N(\bar{\xi}) \rceil$ " should also be an instance of the FORMULA class.

In my papers (Gomułka forthc. a; forthc. c) I propose two additional extensions to the Wittgenstein Ontology class hierarchy: RULESET and CLAUSE. Currently, I do not think that the latter that were to represent conceptual parts of claims that have no assertion, is necessary: we can simply use STATEMENT instances that are values of other STATEMENT instances' properties, as has been demonstrated above. In turn, RULESET can provide a useful mechanism for utilising sub-propositional structures stored in the knowledge base to build inference rules for generating new information. A simple example could be the use of the TLP 6.02 definitions (represented as FORMULA): they can be used to create a rule that, for any expression created according to the pattern " $\Omega'\Omega' \dots \Omega'x$ ", will generate its counterpart; that is, " $\Omega^{0+1+1 \dots +1}x$ ".

The sub-propositional layer, which already seems very complicated, is actually much more complex as we take into account perspectives. The latter are unavoidable because modelling conceptual structures of natural-language sentences is a form of translation and requires countless more or less arbitrary decisions. In other words, a sub-propositional representation can only be developed from the particular perspective of a particular scholar (or group of scholars). Therefore, all the aforementioned relations between instances of STATEMENT, CLAIM, CONCEPT, and FORMULA should be reified and attributed via further instances of STATEMENT to a particular instance of the PERSPECTIVE class.

The questions of implementation and use

The complexity of the proposed structure of the knowledge base, especially its third, sub-propositional layer, may give rise to questions regarding its feasibility and usability. With regards to the first issue, it is clear that standard ontology tools like Protégé are of no use here for the simple reason that they do not support reification. Therefore, we are in need of new ontology editing

tools. Moreover, we could also consider using a set of scripts capable of parsing the text of the *Tractatus*. Such scripts can utilise natural language processing libraries like Python's spaCy package that provides a robust support for German. With the aid of this tool, it is possible to readily isolate distinct sentences. The package also enables automatic recognition of the role of individual words in a sentence. This, in turn, enables the extraction of grammatical subjects and objects – candidates for concepts – as well as verbs – candidates for properties. Therefore, it is possible, at least partially, to automate the process of translating sentences from the *Tractatus* into RDF triplets.

Regarding the second issue, as has been suggested in one of my upcoming papers, we should need a kind of an overlay on the standard knowledge base interface that would, for instance, produce a "resurfaced" part of the base; that is, a set of temporarily de-reified structures attributed to a single perspective (this would be an analogue of a view in relational databases). This would also allow for more user-friendly perspective-oriented queries that would be internally translated into standard queries given to our base (cf. Gomułka forthc. a): it would be possible to choose a particular scholar's perspective and formulate a query as if the structures "immersed" in that perspective directly occurred in the knowledge base.

The Wittgenstein Ontology has the potential to become a very useful tool for both teaching and researching the ideas of the author of the *Tractatus*. It may also become a platform for presenting, conducting, and in some cases perhaps even resolving interpretative disputes. Completing this project requires significant effort and the cooperation of many researchers. However, contemporary natural language processing systems allow for a significant degree of automation of this job.

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Wittgenstein's Unity of Life and Philosophy, an Aesthetic Approach

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Abstract

It's very contested whether there is one Wittgenstein or several of them based on the different stages of his philosophical thoughts and publications. Considering both approaches, this paper argues that there was at least true unity in a deeply existential aspect of his thought: the need, precisely, for unity and coherence between philosophy and life. And that the footprint of that existential coherence was already set in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. A footprint that follows seamlessly through and into the latest works of the author, thanks to the concepts of "telling" and "showing", which Wittgenstein will never drop. More specifically, the text aims to trace that connexion through an aesthetical enquiry, thanks to its restricted and practical nature and its well-known relation to ethics. It will approach it both epistemologically and biographically, by looking at practical instances of artistic endeavours in Wittgenstein's life and how they show the coherence between his thought and his active choices. Aesthetics here becomes a case study in a topic that is much larger than them, but that can be very enlightened by an aesthetical approach.

1. Introduction

The coherence between life and philosophy troubled Ludwig Wittgenstein throughout his life. This concern was directed mostly to his inner self, to his intimate growth as a human, and only by proxy to the field of ethics. He undertakes it with the seriousness of a man who knows that he is fighting for his soul. But he very rarely adapted that personal fight into a comprehensive reflection on ethics. The reason, as we will see later, is that he is not talking about ethics *per se* as a discipline, but of the whole of philosophy which, for him, is an ethical endeavour in itself.

Building on that, aesthetics might be seen as a particularly difficult field regarding how little he wrote about it. But in a way, it makes for a privileged field to convey a lot with very little and to skim to the basics by listening to the author himself, silence included.

But silence is the least empty in aesthetics because of its very active nature. In theory, he usually approaches aesthetic questions in a casuistic way. But if one takes a step back and looks at the whole picture, his philosophical ideas deeply permeate his life and actions. They're in his works of art, his philanthropical choices, his architecture or engineering.

So, we will take the path of aesthetics, not to explain them, (that would be a much longer work), but to let them be our guide until the actions can speak for themselves.

2. Aesthetic Approach

When asked about Ludwig Wittgenstein's aesthetic theories, the short answer is relatively simple: there are no systematic theories. Or at least, not any that he personally put down in writing. But biographical elements and the projects he undertook throughout his life, the various comments in his philosophical works, his diaries and many enthusiastic oral lessons, of which we only have the notes of a few, indicate that he had some very specific ideas on the subject (cf. MAM, 1958 p.53 & LA, 1957).

Finding out what these ideas are, however, is in a certain sense an archaeological task, partly of unearthing these comments and actions scattered throughout the various sources, partly of reconstruction, filling in the gaps with the maximum philosophical and historical coherence possible.

For that, the distinction between the first and second Wittgenstein has great hermeneutic value, apart from its academic tradition, and I will refer to it constantly. However, I veer closer to those who defend the unity of Wittgensteinian ideas.

That connection can be perceived more clearly in the context of non-scientific questions. Aesthetics is a fundamental part of those because of its communicative value. There is a central idea made explicit in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* that will no longer be lost: **the distinction between saying and showing**. If we follow that path, whatever comes after that is a process of clarification of an intuition present from the very first moment.

In a way, that is the underlying concept on Philosophy that bridges the different stages of Wittgenstein's work. And aesthetic happenstances are real-life examples of how that approach is not merely an intellectual musing but a bounding life choice, even an ethically charged one.

It wouldn't be a stretch to say that Wittgensteinian philosophy is shaped by the search for the conditions of possibility of knowledge. At the time of the

Tractatus, these conditions of possibility were the logical framework of what one "can speak" about with propriety. In the second Wittgenstein, that place is taken by the language-games, which shape our relationship with the world. But that search for knowledge is not neutral:

[T]he point of view of the book is ethical (...) My work has two parts: the first is what I have written, and the second is unwritten. It is precisely the second part that is the most important. My book draws a limit for ethics from the perspective treated, and I am convinced that it is the only way with rigour.

Where, while many others have done nothing but pure charlatanism, I have succeeded with my book to put things in their place in a firm way by asking for silence about them. (Luckhardt 1979, pp. 94-95)

Besides the reference to the unwritten, the primacy he gives to ethics as the guiding discipline of the content of his book sticks out. All interests of reason make sense as long as they are, and because they are, ethical. That is, if they can contribute to our living life more ethically, a life worth living. As he will expand in his *Lecture on Ethics* many years later:

Now I am going to use the term Ethics in a slightly wider sense, in a sense in fact which includes what I believe to be the most essential part of what is generally called Aesthetics.

(...) the enquiry into what is valuable, or, into what is really important, or I could have said Ethics is the enquiry into the meaning of life, or into what makes life worth living, or into the right way of living. (LE, 1993, p. 36)

Before moving forward, it would be fitting to introduce the well-known adage:

6.421 It is clear that ethics cannot be put into words.

Ethics is transcendental.

(Ethics and aesthetics are one and the same.) (TLP 1974, p.147)

Of course, it does not mean that both disciplines are "the same" in an absolute sense. But they are similar extensionally, in terms of method and the place they occupy within his philosophy, in the mystical. Extensionally similar in so

that he mentions ethics as a part of aesthetics (and not the other way around) but at the same time ethics is in a way all-encompassing. Yet there is something more than a philosophical symmetry. The aesthetic aspect is an active endeavour:

I think I summed up my attitude to philosophy when I said: philosophy ought really to be written only as a *poetic composition*. (VB 1980, p. 24e)

Thus lies the privileged situation of art, in this case, poetry, to shed light on vital questions. The key is in its expressive power. As a mirror of ethics, where ethics seeks the practical answer to the good life, art exposes life itself. Where philosophy explains partially, or shows “absurd” things, art can “show”, because in art, form and content are not separated, nor poisoned by the tricks of language. Only there, the game is transparent or aims to be so.

But before going further, I should remind that Wittgenstein's philosophy is explicitly ethical, and only derivatively, aesthetic. The extension of the structure of aesthetics within philosophy is extended, but not its significance. Taken out of context, the special status of aesthetics would lose its meaning. Only with that nuance can justice be done both to the originality and delicate anthropological attunement of Wittgenstein's thought.

3. The Epistemological Transition

Although he would later abandon the idea of having marked the philosophical limits “rigorously” and “firmly” in the *Tractatus*, he already hinted this in its paradoxical end:

6.54 My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical, when he has used them —as steps— to climb up beyond them. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it.)

He must transcend these propositions, and then he will see the world aright. (TLP 1974, pp. 150-151)

But this is far from being a simple anecdotal contradiction. On the contrary, it marks the direction to go further. The most important propositions may be

nonsensical, but somehow, they open our eyes so that we can "see the world correctly". Coherently, a key idea in his second philosophical stage, giving pre-eminence to the things that are possible to show, but not to say or to explain, fits perfectly as the natural elaboration of that "nonsense" aspect of his *Tractatus* propositions. With that method, things are shown, including the limits of language through the idea of language-games. It is no longer a matter of conjuring those transcendent elements, clashing with the limits he had imposed on himself. He can finally undertake what he had already postulated.

In that sense, it can be said that in his second stage what he did was to find a method for finally making the philosophy he wanted to in the *Tractatus*.

Another idea that is present in his notes from before the *Tractatus* and also at the end of his life, and that complements the concepts of "telling" and "showing", is that philosophy should not explain, but describe.

Tellingly, many of his later comments on aesthetics are within a lecture on "description" (cf. LA, 1967, pp. 37-40). If philosophy describes, art goes one step further: **it clarifies**. Philosophy, art, and the choice between explaining, describing, or clarifying, in the end, always go hand in hand and have to be understood as an epistemological-transcendental continuum.

In that continuum, the aesthetic choice, by directing the person's attention to the object for its own sake makes us see it "*sub specie aeternitatis*". As he wrote in his early notebooks:

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. (TB 1961, [83e])

Borrowing Spinoza's expression, he delves into this relationship between ethics and aesthetics, albeit as briefly and cryptically as usual. The Spinozian expression, "*sub specie aeternitatis*" implies an objective, transcendent sight. How to access ethics and aesthetics then?

It is above all a distancing, both from the world, to live an honest life, and from the objects, by transforming them into works of art. "A work of art forces us -as one might say- to see it in the right perspective". (VB, 1980, p.4e)

But to say what this distance consists of, or what conclusion must it lead to, would be, once again, absurd. Instead, the answer must be found in each case, in each life, in a personal commitment; an idea that would later be expressed in a very famous Wittgensteinian insight, comparing philosophy to medicine, which must treat each case one by one (PI, p. 91e [133, 254, 255]).

It's more than just an intellectual effort, it is an existential one. The commitment may vary: many questions of an aesthetic nature are closer to prosaic everyday problems, such as the proper cut of a suit. Wittgenstein emphasizes that our most usual (although not the most respected, for it wouldn't apply to a Symphony of Beethoven) judgments of that kind are not of taste, but of correctness: that is, with universality. (cf. LA, 1967, pp. 7-8). That idea of correctness brings us back to that connection to ethics.

Conversely, Wittgenstein only quite managed to express some personal choices that would have seemed ethical in nature, like the ascetic austerity of his rooms in Cambridge, when he translated it into aesthetic choices. Each piece of furniture had to be just in the right place (cf. MAM, 1958 p.25 & Monk, 1990, p. 106). In the same vein, what he considered unsightly architectural works suffered from a "lack of taste". But they were also clearly ethically charged:

While sitting in Trafalgar Square and talking about its architecture he denounced the historicizing classicising forms of Canada House, just being completed: 'That's bombast; that's Hitler and Mussolini.' On the other hand, he admired the Georgian architecture of houses in Dublin: 'people who built these houses had the good taste to know that they had nothing very important to say, and therefore they did not attempt to express anything'. (Wijdeveld, 2000, p. 176)

As such, looking at his "ways of doing" might be more elucidating than trying to decipher what he would have meant to say. It could even be the most paradoxically textual interpretation of his thought.

4. His Artistic Work

Wittgenstein put artistic and scientific issues into practice before, during and after talking about them. If scientifically he distinguished himself in

engineering and mathematics, artistically, although his actions were not many, they were poignant. It's suitable then to look at his responses to a type of question that calls for practical resolution. Each of these active responses should be seen as one more example of a type of communicative field, like language-games, and not as an absolute answer to be taken at face value. But they can help us elucidate the response to a particular challenge at a particular time and, crucially, what that entails.

The two pieces that Wittgenstein made with full self-consciousness of his role as an artist are the sculpture of a bust and the house that he built for his sister Margarethe. The latter is the most significant in ambition, projection and influence. The bust, however, will be more accessible for this brief dissertation. But the most radical inference we can get about their importance is the perception held by those who knew him intimately. In that sense, the memory of his sister Hermine is almost completely articulated around those two pieces and the passion that her brother Ludwig felt for music. (cf. Rhees, 1881, pp. 1-11). True, Hermine was an artist and a painter herself, but her biographical note on him focuses on these vital milestones as much as on his travels and changes of residence, and barely on his philosophical achievements. It shows us the subjective importance it had for Wittgenstein himself: what occupied his conversations and what made him proud (a rare feeling in his case).

The bust was created between 1925 and 1928 in the workshop of his friend, sculptor Michael Drobil, whom he had met as a prisoner in the First World War. Not surprisingly, the purpose of trying his hand at sculpture was to try to "clarify" a series of Drobil's sculptures, one of which did not quite convince him, without being able to express exactly what was wrong with it. His then-girlfriend Marguerite Respinger posed for him, although it wasn't a portrait of her, nor even an attempt to capture her expression. She was a clutch to help him find an expression and a gesture that had been in Wittgenstein's mind since he saw Drobil's original sculpture. It was the same impulse that drove him in his philosophical project: to clarify little by little and step by step, to show, rather than to explain. (cf. Monk 1990, pp. 158, 240)

It is a real-life episode that could well have inspired the lesson on aesthetics in which he describes how aesthetic experience presents us with something that

simply "clicks" or doesn't, and how that reaction cannot be expressed in words but is presented in the action taken by the subject. Sometimes, listening to a piece of music several times, re-reading a poem, or wearing a well-cut suit. (cf. LA, 1967, pp. 1-36) Properly speaking, by continuing the game in the same language in which it began. Wittgenstein mentioned on several occasions in his notes that artistic language was the only language that aspired to or tended to perfection (though of course, it did not necessarily always achieve it, if ever).

That is what makes his pieces so relevant, even if they are not perfect expressions of what we are trying to study. They are pointers. Insofar as Wittgenstein's clarifying effort was honest and carried to its ultimate consequences, they are indeed the best possible expression of it. But also, since Wittgenstein was not a professional sculptor or architect, he lacked the tools of the game of language that would have allowed him to use that particular language perfectly. And he was well aware of this:

I think I summed up my attitude to philosophy when I said: philosophy ought really to be written only as a *poetic composition*.

It must, as it seems to me, be possible to gather from this how far my thinking belongs to the present, future or past. For I was thereby revealing myself as someone who cannot quite do what he would like to be able to do. (VB 1980, p. 24e)

This last sentence might very well sum up his life, and in pure honesty, the human condition. But, in a way that might be less obvious for a reader, but very clear for those who treasured memories of him and knew what truly mattered to him, I'd like to think that his relentless search for honesty brought him much closer than he realized to embodying a *modus vivendi* which template he had set where it all began, in his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*.

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Acknowledgement

To Jaime Nubiola for his guidance, mentorship and patience, and to Raquel Cascales and Philip Muller, without whose support this text would not have been written.

Wittgenstein in the Laboratory: Pre-Tractatus Seeds of Wittgenstein's Post-Tractatus Aesthetics

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Abstract

Wittgenstein's experiments on rhythm (1912-13) were based on Charles Myers's 1911 written protocols for laboratory exercises. The experiments provided an early onset for Wittgenstein's career-long exploration of the philosophically pervasive implications of aspects. Years before the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein already got a glimpse of a philosophical angle, which was bound to become very important to him not only in aesthetics, but also for his overarching philosophical development. He became interested in the possibilities of aesthetic conversation, in what we actually do when we re-phrase, compare, come up with good similes in order to illuminate something definite within the space of possibility. These initial insights were bound to recede into the background for a while by the mounting demands of the *Tractatus* framework, only to fully bloom in Wittgenstein's later work.

One of the least understood and often overlooked episodes in Wittgenstein's early thought is his stint during the years 1912-1913 as a researcher at Charles S. Myer's laboratory for experimental psychology in Cambridge, where Wittgenstein eagerly conducted experiments on rhythm designed to "ascertain the extent and importance of rhythm in music" (Pinsent 1990: 3). This was his first (and only) attempt to do experimental aesthetics, and scholars usually refer to these experiments in relation to Wittgenstein's later explicit views (in his lectures in Cambridge in the 1930s) on the use and abuse of experimental psychology for aesthetics. In this paper I would like to consider these experiments in the context of Wittgenstein's later recounting of them in a 1933 lecture on aesthetics in Cambridge (Wittgenstein 2016: 9:40-42), thereby elaborating on my published findings on the subject (Guter 2020).

While neither the original notes and data from the experiments, nor the two resulting public presentations by Wittgenstein (given in 1912 to the British Psychological Society, and in 1913 upon the ceremonial opening of Myers's new laboratory in Cambridge) are to be found, the existing textual evidence is complete enough to allow for a solid understanding of their methodology and substance. Moreover, as I shall argue, the evocation of these experiments in the context of Wittgenstein's 1933 lecture on aesthetics affords a rare, indeed surprising glimpse into Wittgenstein's initial aesthetic dispositions as manifested in the context of his thinking about music at the time before the *Tractatus*. This rare glimpse, I submit, goes beyond the usual reference to these

early experiments as being merely just another example of the ridiculousness (in Wittgenstein's eyes) of the idea that aesthetics is a science that tells us what is beautiful.

Wittgenstein's experiments concerned a phenomenon then called "subjective rhythm", aiming to determine the conditions under which subjects heard or read into a sequence of beats a rhythm which, in a sense, was not there. By 1912 this phenomenon had already been well documented and studied. As early as the 1890s, published research demonstrated that beat trains appear to group into units of two, three, or four despite being isochronal and equitonal and hence devoid of cues relating to coherence or pattern. According to McGuinness (1988: 124), Myers's laboratory was equipped with the standard scientific equipment at the time for such experiments, e.g., using a metronome, which could also be placed in a box, so that raising the lid unobserved by the subject would produce an objectively stressed beat. According to Monk (1990: 49-50), Wittgenstein's research was helped by Myers, who took these experiments quite seriously.

There is a striking similarity between Wittgenstein's description of the experiments (in his 1933 lecture) and Myers's protocol for laboratory exercise number 144 from the second volume of Myers's *Text-Book of Experimental Psychology, with laboratory exercises* (Myers 2013. I should note that while this is a reprint of the third edition from 1925, which is based on the second edition from 1911, the protocols for the experiments and Myers's commentary are identical also to the first 1909 edition.). It stands to reason that Wittgenstein followed Myers's protocol closely under the latter's supervision.

Exp. 144 is entitled "subjective accentuation in rhythm". The protocol states as follows:

The metronome is a convenient instrument for observing the subjective accentuation of the simplest rhythm. But care must be taken that no objective accentuation of its beats exists. The experimenter should set the metronome at various rates of oscillation, so that the subject may appreciate the relation between rate of rhythm and ease of subjective accentuation. The subject should observe and record the varying affective values (pleasant, wearisome, etc.) of different rhythms and the associated

experiences which they may revive. The experimenter may notice unconscious movements on the part of the subject. (Myers 2013: 98-99)

Wittgenstein (2016: 9:41-42) reported that in his experiments he used a machine which did not stress any beat. His subjects tended to group the beat train into groups of three, and to hear an accent on the first beat in each group. They also tended not to hear two consecutive beats as accentuated. This is consistent with Myers's (2013: 301-302) commentary for Exp. 144 in the *Text-Book*. According to Myers, if a metronome is rapidly beating with regularity and uniformity, the listener who preserves a passive attitude will observe that the sounds arrange themselves in groups, usually of two or four sounds, although groups of three (as was indeed the case in Wittgenstein's experiments) and of six may also be realized. In all cases, the first member of each of which becomes strongly accented in the sense that the intervals between successive groups appear longer than those between the members of such groups. Wittgenstein commented that "you can find laws which regulate what stress you hear. e.g. you try to divide into bars." Again, this is consistent with Myers's (2013: 302) comment that "the effect of accentuation, whether subjective or objective, is always to divide a series of auditory stimuli into feet or bars."

Interestingly, Wittgenstein (2016: 9:42) also reported that "if you construct a rhythm in such a way that 2 tendencies conflict, a curious effect is produced – that of a constant stumbling." This means that the experiments included objective accentuation as well. According to Myers's *Text-Book* (2013: 302) this can be done in two ways: either the auditory stimuli are of like loudness, but of unlike duration, or else there is a change of loudness in an otherwise uniform group of stimuli. In the former case, the longest lasting member of each group appears to be the loudest; it receives the accent and is apprehended as the first of each group. In the latter case, the objectively accented beat appears not only to be louder, but to last longer and to be followed by a longer interval of time than the other members of the group. The latter is essentially the focus of Exp. 145 in Myers's *Text-Book* (2013: 99), in which the effects of varying the objective accentuation are studied by enclosing the metronome in a box, the lid of which may be silently opened and closed at any moment so as to allow any desired sound to be intensified and so to be accented.

Wittgenstein's description of this part of his experiments fits the protocol for Exp. 145. Myers comments that iambic and anapestic measures are not maintainable rhythms in this experiment. The iambic tends to pass over into the trochaic measure, while the anapestic passes over to the dactyl. "There is a general tendency," Myers (2013: 302) explains, "for the series to be grouped so that the accent is received by the first member of every group." So, in either of these two cases one would expect a conflict of tendencies and a resulting effect of constant stumbling. Thus, it is safe to conclude that Wittgenstein followed Myers's protocol for Exp. 144 with added elements from Exp. 145.

Furthermore, in line with Myers's protocol for Exp. 144, Wittgenstein also reported that he collected the input of the subjects concerning the affective value of the perceived rhythm and the associated experiences which it evoked. Wittgenstein (2016: 9:40) was actually quite dismayed by their responses: "To most people the rhythm meant nothing: one lady said: 'It makes me feel like a butterfly with a pin through me'". I shall argue next that, when read in the context of Wittgenstein's 1933 lecture, his frustration at the laboratory disclosed the philosophical significance of the experiments.

What we first need to observe, if we pull away from the scientific context of these experiments, is that Wittgenstein produced in them the onset of what he would later call "noticing an aspect." The experiments produced a sonic equivalent of an ambiguous figure, not unlike his famous example of the Necker Cube in the *Tractatus* (Wittgenstein 1995: 5.5423), as different 'hearings' (rhythms) manifest themselves according to different manners of projection. Wittgenstein's test subject could have heard the isochronal and equitonal pulse train either as duple (or, less likely, quadruple) meter or, as Wittgenstein reported, triple meter. That is, he could have heard the accent either every other beat or every two beats, and he could have flipped back and forth between the two rhythmic patterns at will. As Myers (2013: 302) noted in his *Text-Book*, "subjective accentuation of a simple rhythm may be changed at will." Wittgenstein's manipulation of the pulse train in order to induce constant stumbling in the 'hearings' of his subjects, in their manner of characterizing what they hear, underscored his particular attention to aspects in these experiments. This is by far the earliest evidence of Wittgenstein's

career-long exploration of the philosophically pervasive implications of noticing an aspect, predating even his first treatment of aspects in his early writings on logic and mathematics.

Yet even more strikingly, I maintain, in comparison to Wittgenstein's formal treatment in the *Tractatus* of aspects such as the Necker Cube, in the dynamic context of the experiments he sought after the ways of characterization in which noticing an aspect feeds back into the subjects' use of language, that is, after the communicability of aspects. Over and above the scientific desideratum of "find[ing] laws which regulate what stress you hear", which was at best "moderately interesting" for Wittgenstein, by his own admission, the experiments harbored for him an idea that he already then found crucially important—a philosophical idea:

I was looking forward to talking with my subjects about something which interested me. I was looking for utterances inside an aesthetic system. [...] When I made those experiments, what would have satisfied me was comparison, within a system. (Wittgenstein 2016: 9:40-41)

The context of Wittgenstein's 1933 lecture on aesthetics allows us to fully understand what he was looking for already in 1912. Wittgenstein conceived aesthetics as a mode of conversation, which concerns what he variously calls "aesthetic controversy", "aesthetic enquiry" or "aesthetic investigation", and "aesthetic puzzle" or "aesthetic puzzlement". "Aesthetic puzzlement" occurs always *in situ*: it concerns something concrete that needs to be resolved, worked out, corrected or agreed upon for a particular purpose – hence an aesthetic discussion is always particular, addressing a tension arising in the case at hand. Part of Wittgenstein's discussion concerns the difference between experimental psychology and aesthetics. This is where he brings up the case of his own experience in the laboratory. The uniqueness of aesthetics lies in the nature of the explanations (giving reasons as opposed to causes) that are offered and accepted in the attempt to address, and possibly remove, a given instance of aesthetic puzzlement. Contrasting the modes of explanation in psychology and aesthetics allows Wittgenstein to spell out the conversational, non-hypothetical and therein immanently human character of aesthetics.

An aesthetic enquiry is un-hypothetical in the sense of affording a mere picture as a useful device, which “enables [one] to overlook a system at a glance” (Wittgenstein 2016: 9:38). It inheres in the particular case by means of paraphrasing, giving good similes, which result in a collective arrangement of (often surprisingly) similar cases. “Criterion of correctness of aesthetic analysis must be agreement of person to whom I make it”, says Wittgenstein (2016: 9:46), “Aesthetics does not lie in finding a mechanism”. While causal explanations turn a blind eye to the manifold verifying phenomena in human interaction, aesthetic explanations preserve them in their fullness: “I say all Aesthetics is of nature of giving a paraphrase, even if same words also express a hypothesis. It is giving a good simile” (2016: 9:37).

“A reason,” says Wittgenstein (2016: 9:33), “consists in drawing your attention to something which removes an uneasiness”. But also, “you want to compare notes but not any notes; only those which are illuminating” (2016: 9:41). In this sense, a reason addresses what presents itself as a necessity, as an experience of meaning. Yet to fix the very possibility at stake in a conversation, one needs a proper characterization, not merely a form of words. One needs to draw a possibility in, make it alive. According to Wittgenstein, this is what illuminating comparisons amount to. They illuminate a field of possible projections of a concept and a potential development of the mode of characterization. Characterization involves presenting phenomena, laid out side by side, independently of the causally determined sequence of events, in a creative, fitting order, which enables one to see things with understanding. A comparison is an articulation of possibilities, which invites further comparisons and re-phrasings, serving and instancing possibilities for the characterization of what can be seen and said. The open-endedness of the conversation, its flow, is regulated by manifold, nuanced, patently incalculable “verifying phenomena” of the parties involved, allowing ways to go on discussing and drawing out from the articulation further aspects of what is characterized that are there to be seen in and by means of it.

“I had a natural propensity to think about ideas which arise in music,” Wittgenstein (2016: 9:40) said about this 1912-13 experiments on rhythm. Yet at Myers’s laboratory he realized. “his dismay that the interrogative setting of the experiments stultified this sort of aesthetic enquiry. His test subjects answered what he called the *how* question, the psychological (hypothetical)

one, instead of the *why* question, the aesthetic. Wittgenstein (2016: 9:27) said: “The question of Aesthetics is not: Do you like it? But, if you do, why do you?” To answer the *why* question, the question about significance, to give a reason, requires making comparisons and ordering, as we draw in a field of possibilities and necessities, eventually offering the gift of a good simile. Such characterization requires a choice and an effort ‘to get it right’ within the space of possibility (a “synopsis”), to show someone else and enable a proper response. This was the source of the failure of his 1912-13 experiments on rhythm, but also the source of their significance, because they enabled him to tap for the first time, and very early on, a radical thought about the philosophical importance of paying close attention to the activity of characterizing, and the varieties of techniques for making illuminating comparisons *in situ*.

Such radical ideas which arose for him in music were bound to be suppressed for a while by the mounting philosophical framework of the *Tractatus*, which, according to Floyd (2018), powerfully fostered a philosophical disregard of characterizations and the belittling of the specific techniques of characterization involved in symbolizations and representations of all kinds. These pre-*Tractatus* seeds germinated in Wittgenstein's middle-period view of aesthetics when he brought back the idea of the anthropological form of life beginning in the early 1930s. As Wittgenstein's transitioned toward the anthropological view, his newly gained practical holism, to use Stern's (1991) notion, allowed for these seeds to grow. He obtained the view that our coping with things and people in, and through language can only be meaningful in specific contexts and against the background of shared practices, and only then, what he learned in the laboratory, namely, the significance of the ability to characterize, became of center importance for him in aesthetics, and he was able to further utilize this sense of characterization to a great philosophical effect in the years to come.

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"These are the fruits of W.'s style" – Karl Popper Reads George Spencer-Brown's *Laws of Form* and Thinks about Wittgenstein

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Abstract

It is well known that Karl Popper read Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*. Popper's interpretation of Wittgenstein served as a blueprint for Popper's criticism of language philosophy throughout his work. Apart from the allegation that Popper misunderstood Wittgenstein, one objection to Popper's criticisms is that they exclusively refer to the *Tractatus*, which is assumed to be the only work of Wittgenstein that Popper ever read. This paper presents evidence that Popper read the notebooks of Wittgenstein. On notes found in his edition of George Spencer-Brown's *Laws of Form*, Popper addresses a problem of negation that Wittgenstein was concerned with in 1915, and suggests that Spencer-Brown accomplished what Wittgenstein was aiming for.

1. Popper's criticism of Wittgenstein

The only known encounter between Karl Popper and Ludwig Wittgenstein took place in October 1946 at the University of Cambridge. Two books were written about this incident (Edmonds/Eidinow 2001; Munz 2004), reconstructing the course of the event and commenting on its outcome. The accounts of Popper meeting Wittgenstein in person differ and it is neither clear who said what to whom on that night, nor who was present at all.

There is consensus, however, that Popper expected Wittgenstein to hold the same views in 1946 as he did at the time of the *Tractatus*. In a 1952 address, Popper states that he had not seen any of Wittgenstein's "unpublished manuscripts which were privately circulated by some of his pupils" (Popper 1952: 128, footnote 1) and emphasises a continuity in Wittgenstein's thought, pointing out that he found the "most fundamental and influential point of his teaching unchanged" (Popper 1952: 128, footnote 1) during the 1946 meeting. Whenever Popper addresses Wittgenstein in his work, the criticisms can be traced back to views that Popper's claims to find in the *Tractatus*. This concerns two major points: Firstly, Popper disputes the claim, attributed to Wittgenstein, that philosophical problems do not exist and argues that there are genuine philosophical problems (cf. Popper 2002: 89). Secondly, Popper accuses Wittgenstein of advocating essentialism, i.e., the view that the meaning of a word is what designates its essence (cf. Popper 2002: 26). Popper instead rejects investigations of language in order to find out the meaning of words,

and advocates the examination of theories in order to approximate truth (Popper 2002: 25).

Popper laments in his autobiography that his criticisms of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* as given in *The Open Society and Its Enemies* "have been almost completely neglected by Wittgenstein's commentators" (Popper 2002a: 133). It can be argued, however, that many of Popper's objections are rooted in misunderstandings: Neither would Wittgenstein attribute Popper's essentialism to himself, nor argue that there are no problems in philosophy.

This circumstance had been brought to Popper's attention, it was addressed in several papers (see Klemke (1981) for a critical overview of Popper's criticisms), and it was pointed out to him that he should take notice of Wittgenstein's later philosophy. Popper was not to be convinced. On 8 June 1980, Viennese Klaus Pikal sent a letter to Popper pointing out several aspects of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* and *Philosophical Grammar* to which Popper should respond. Pikal asks why Popper treats Wittgenstein as if he had only written the *Tractatus*. In his reply of 17 June 1980, Popper writes "You complain that I have taken notice only of Wittgenstein's Tractatus but not of his later works. But why should I? I simply am not interested. You may say that I ought to be interested. But life is short, and there are countless philosophers: one must make a choice" (KPA box 338, folder 21).

This attitude did not change during Popper's lifetime and his reply to Pikal seems to be, at least in spirit, Popper's last word on this matter. This means that Popper's reading of Wittgenstein is limited to the *Tractatus*. Popper's final text that expresses an interest in discussing Wittgenstein's philosophy is the aforementioned 1952 address "The Nature of Philosophical Problems and Their Roots in Science", which was later edited and republished in 1963 as the second chapter of *Conjectures and Refutations*.

2. Popper's notes on Wittgenstein in his edition of Spencer-Brown's *Laws of Form*

Originally published in 1969, *Laws of Form* by George Spencer-Brown is a mathematical work that is highly enigmatic and idiosyncratic in its presentation and content. Spencer-Brown therein develops a calculus, called 'calculus of indications', which is used to create a 'primary algebra' and a

'primary arithmetic'. He aims to create a logical foundation for mathematics and a formal framework for the generation of meaning. Popper owned a copy of the 1973 Bantam Books paperback edition. A dedication on the first page suggests that it was given to him as a gift by E. Darlene Nisewanger in January 1976, an American student from California, who visited Popper in 1974 (cf. KPA box 331, folder 42; box 554, folder 4).

Popper left underlinings, highlightings, and comments in the book's introduction, the first two chapters, and occasionally on later pages. He was not fond of the work, as will be shown in the next section. However, a book with extensive annotations is rather an exception among the books of Popper's library, since he did not leave many annotations while reading. In addition, three notes with text written on both sides of the paper were found in the book; two of these notes deal with Wittgenstein. They reveal an engagement of Popper with Wittgenstein in the 1970s, just four years before his reply to Pikal.

The first note (figure 1) was inserted after page xvi of the introduction. Popper used two pens, a green fineliner pen and a blue ballpoint pen, to write it.

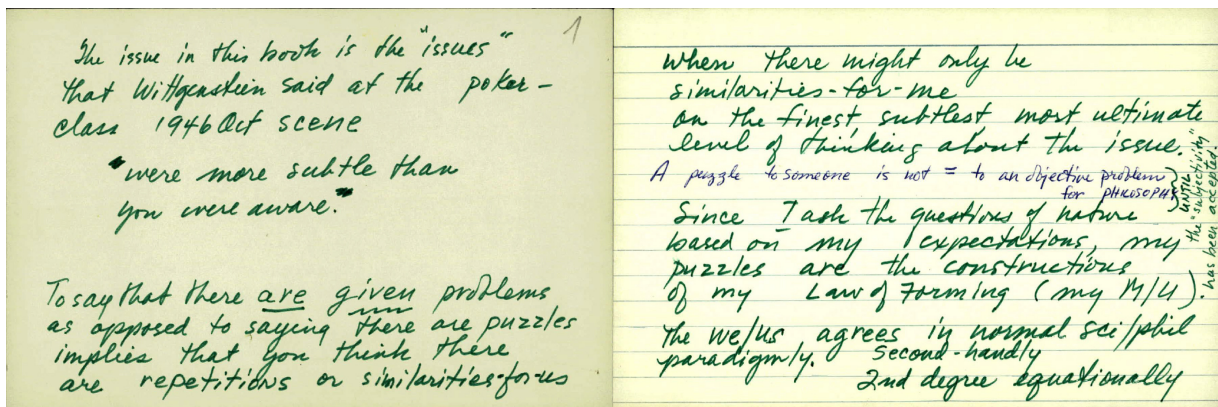


Figure 1: Popper's first note.

This note refers to Popper's main criticism of Wittgenstein regarding the distinction between problems and puzzles. Popper relates the issues of *Laws of Form* with the issues during the 1946 encounter with Wittgenstein. It is unclear if "were [sic] more subtle than you were aware" is to be understood as a literal quotation of Wittgenstein or a paraphrase of something that he had said to Popper in 1946. He then suggests a structural analogy of problems and puzzles with objective and subjective questions. A further discussion of this note must take place elsewhere.

The second note (figure 2) was inserted after page 2 at the end of the first chapter. A part of it, a paper strip approximately 1.8 to 2.5 cm high, appears to have been cut off with scissors. It is unclear whether something was cut away at the end of the first page, between "lies in" and "Negation", or not. Popper used the ballpoint pen to write this note and traces of the pen can be seen around the edge of the paper; but these traces do not allow any conclusion about letters.

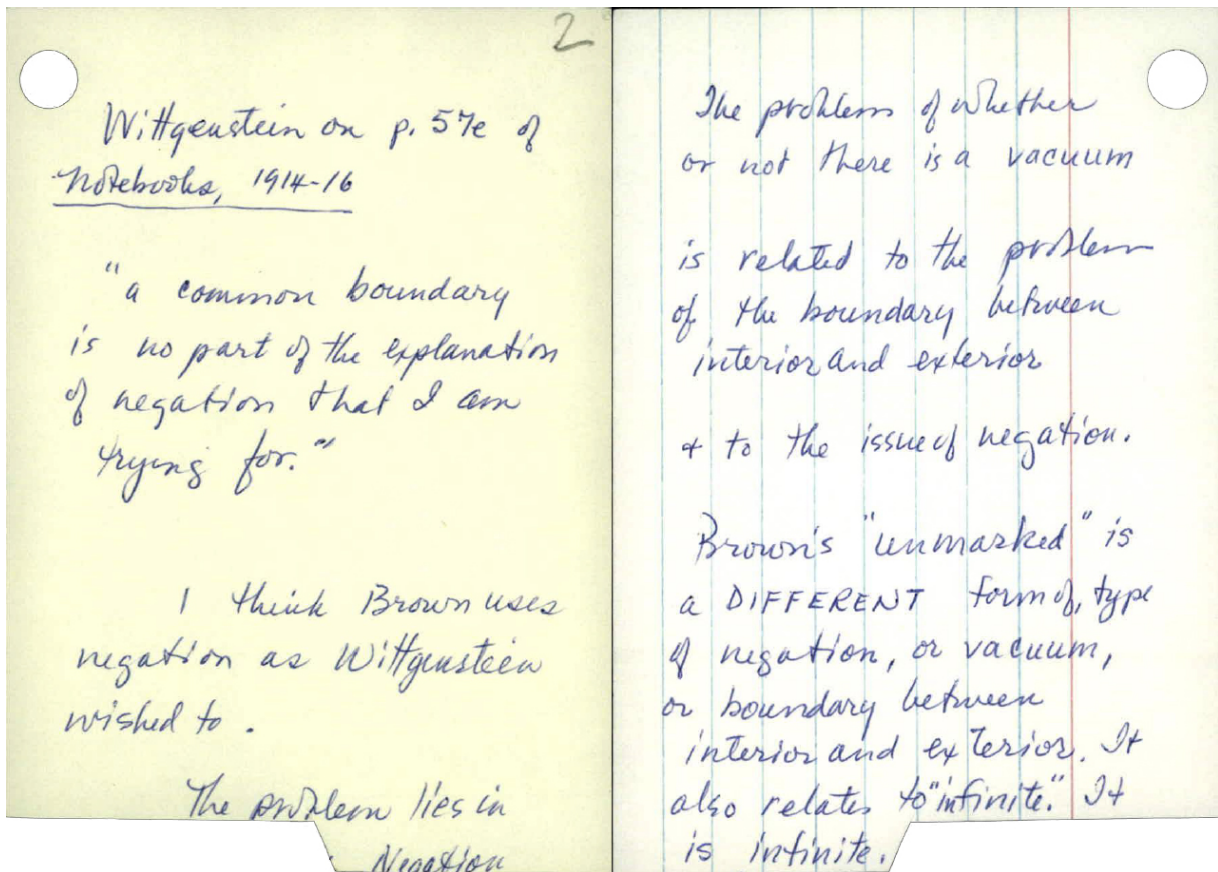


Figure 2: Popper's second note.

This note indicates that Popper was aware of Wittgenstein's notebooks, at least to such an extent that he was familiar with the passage about negation that he relates to Spencer-Brown. There is no indication in Popper's published writings that he read Wittgenstein's notebooks. No edition of NB is present at the Popper Archives in Klagenfurt.

3. Does Spencer-Brown offer a solution to problems of Wittgenstein?

Popper refers to the end of the NB entry of 6 June 1915. In this entry, Wittgenstein deals with tautology, the relation of his picture-theory to the theory of classes, and the relationship of an affirmative (*bejahend*) proposition with its negation. It contains the passage "Every proposition has only one negative; ... There is only one proposition lying quite outside 'p'" (NB: 6.6.15) that was later integrated into the *Tractatus* as § 5.513. On his note, Popper omits the first part of the sentence, which begins one page earlier. The whole paragraph reads: "My mistake must lie in my wanting to use what follows from the nature of negation, etc. in its definition.—That 'p' and '~p' have a common boundary is no part of the explanation of negation that I am trying for" (NB: 6.6.15).

Referring to this passage, Popper writes "I think Brown uses negation as Wittgenstein wished to." There is too little textual material to determine what Popper assumed about Wittgenstein's wish to use negation. Also, what Wittgenstein calls 'my mistake' must be interpreted. This question is discussed now, followed by a discussion of the connection to Spencer-Brown. Negation is, for Wittgenstein, an operation that reverses the sense of a proposition (cf. TLP 5.2341). Bonino (2008: 53) hints at a relation between Wittgenstein's understanding of sense in the pre-*Tractatus* writings and the concept of bipolarity. Bonino refers to the *Notes on Logic*, in which it is asserted that "[t]he sense of a proposition is determined by the two poles *true* and *false*" (NL 2009: B23, 279). That propositions must be capable of being true and false is an issue that Wittgenstein thought about in September 1913. In the *Notes on Logic*, addressing the notion of bipolarity, he remarks: "Every proposition is essentially true–false: to understand it, we must know both what must be the case if it is true, and what must be the case if it is false. Thus a proposition has two *poles*, corresponding to the case of its truth and the case of its falsehood. We call this the *sense* of a proposition." (NL 2009: C13, 285)

The notion of bipolarity is not found in the *Tractatus*, but it can be plausibly argued that the idea was taken up in the notion of sense: A proposition can be understood without knowing whether it is true or false, its sense allows us to comprehend a proposition without knowing its meaning. For an overview about bipolarity in the early writings of Wittgenstein and a deeper exploration about the concept's integration into the *Tractatus* and its

adaption, see Glock (2005: 63–66), Bonino (2008: 53–59, 68–90), and Potter (2008: 151–157, 173–174).

There is not enough space to go into the intellectual development of Wittgenstein's conception of negation from the writings of 1914 to the *Tractatus*. For the purposes here, it shall suffice to state what problem might be at stake when Wittgenstein writes of his mistake on 6.6.15. As propositions, p and $\text{not-}p$ determine a place in logical space (cf. TLP 3.4). In TLP 3.4 Wittgenstein claims that "the whole logical space must already be given by" this place, because logical operations, such as negation, do not introduce new elements into the logical space. When Wittgenstein attempted to interpret this relation as a relation between sets in June 1915, he encountered a problem, both in terms of affirmative (*bejahend*) and negative statements and of tautology and contradiction: "In the class-theory it is not yet evident why the proposition needs its counter-proposition. Why it is a part of logical space which is *separated* from the remaining part of logical space" (NB: 6.6.15). He assumes that by "attaching the '~' to 'p' the proposition gets into a different class of propositions" (NB: 6.6.15) and is confronted with the problem that "a common boundary is no part of the explanation of negation that I am trying for" (NB: 6.6.15). A few days earlier, on 2 June 1915, Wittgenstein mentions the notion of bipolarity and writes that "my theory does not really bring it out that the proposition must have two poles" (NB: 2.6.15). It appears that this was still an issue on 6 June.

Does Spencer-Brown use "negation as Wittgenstein wishes to", as Popper writes on his note? There are only a few comparative studies that explore connections between Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* and Spencer-Brown. Landini (2018), for example, examines similarities between Wittgenstein's N-operator and Spencer-Brown's primary algebra. Landini's claims are based on a comprehensive and comparative reading of the *Tractatus* and *Laws of Form*. It is unclear if Popper put the same effort in studying the two works. As the handwritten comments in Popper's copy of *Laws of Form* mainly encompass the first two chapters, I assume that his claims about negation rely on what can be found in these chapters. In *Laws of Form*, Spencer-Brown intends to "separate what are known as algebras of logic from the subject of logic, and to re-align them with mathematics" (Spencer-Brown 2011: xiv). In developing his calculus, he thus does not resort to common logical operators. Hence, negation

is not an element in the calculus of indications, but something that is possible to be translated into the formal systems derived from his calculus.

Laws of Form opens with taking the idea of distinction and the idea of indication as given. A distinction "is drawn by arranging a boundary with separate sides" (Spencer-Brown 2011: 1). Distinction is established as a premise of indication, because in order to indicate something it must be distinguished from everything that it is not. "Once a distinction is drawn, [...] contents on each side of the boundary, being distinct, can be indicated" (Spencer-Brown 2011: 1). Spencer-Brown then introduces the notion of marked states by the symbol of the 'mark', two right-angled lines, like the upper and righthand edges of a square. There is no genuine meaning of the symbol of the mark; its meaning is determined by the use of the mark, which Spencer-Brown calls the 'intent'. Spencer-Brown unfolds his calculus using the symbol of the mark, the empty space of the unmarked state, and operators that are introduced in chapter 3. It can be assumed that Popper read *Laws of Form* beyond chapter 2; but his notes and most of the annotations are found in the passages summarised here. It therefore is reasonable to assume that his reference to Wittgenstein was stimulated by these ideas.

The two states created by a distinction stand in a certain relation to each other: They share a common boundary. Spatial metaphors with which the act of distinction is introduced ('boundary', 'sides') are frequently used in the following text. But unless the distinction is indicated to be a spatial or logical negation by intent, the two states do not have any other properties than being distinct. From a structural point of view, there is a similarity between Spencer-Brown and Wittgenstein. Both the common boundary between p and $not-p$ in Wittgenstein and the results of a distinction in Spencer-Brown seem to lead to the problem mentioned by Wittgenstein. In Spencer-Brown, however, the boundary that is created by a distinction, and the two states, share a common origin. This origin can be restored by the calculus. The distinction is thus not determined by the boundary, but by an intentional act.

In the preface to the international edition of *Laws of Form*, Spencer-Brown writes: "The whole text of the *Laws* can be reduced to a principle, which can be stated as follows: [...] *What a thing is and what it is not, are, in form, identically equal*" (Spencer-Brown 1997: ix; translation T.H.). It may be a mere

analogy, but the passage is reminiscent of Wittgenstein's initial problem as stated in his *Notes on Logic*: "The chief characteristic of my theory is that, in it, p has the same *meaning* as not- p ." (NL 2009: B37, 281).

Popper could not have known this analogy, as the preface was written in 1997. It is thus even more surprising that Popper's notes suggest quite the contrary of a superficial understanding of Wittgenstein and point to an analogous problem in Spencer-Brown. It is less of a surprise that Popper did not enjoy it. At the end of page 3, after the last sentence of Spencer-Brown's First canon, "In general, *what is not allowed is forbidden*" (Spencer-Brown 2011: 3), Popper added the comment "These are the fruits of W.'s style".

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Acknowledgement

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Von Beispielen in Wittgensteins *Philosophischen Untersuchungen*

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Abstract

Die Beispiele, die Ludwig Wittgenstein in seinen *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* verwendet, sind ein tragendes Element in seinem Text. Sie sind gleichzeitig aber auch bemerkenswert unzugänglich. Anhand der am Beginn der *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* verwendeten Beispiele – dem apfelverkaufenden Kaufmann aus § 1 und dem Bauarbeiter und dessen Gehilfen aus § 2 – wird gezeigt, wie die von Ludwig Wittgenstein gewählten Beispiele aufgebaut sind: sie führen die Leserin in surreale Gefilde. Der Händler, der nur anhand eines Prüfverfahrens den Inhalt seiner Verkaufsaufgabe erkennt, und anhand von Tafel und Listen das Problem löst. Der Volksstamm, dessen Sprache lediglich aus vier Worten besteht und dessen Kinder ausschließlich Bauarbeiten lernen, ebenso. Beide Beispiele sind lebensfremd. In der vorliegenden Arbeit wird versucht, die Beispiele Wittgensteins zu verwenden und sie in eine persönliche und heutige Sphäre zu transferieren. Diese Methode soll dabei helfen, die Argumentation Ludwig Wittgensteins und dessen eigene Beispiele besser zu verstehen. Dieses bessere Verständnis wiederum führt dazu, dass die wittgensteinschen Beispiele in ihrer spezifischen Qualität besser wahrgenommen werden können.

1 Einleitung

Wir leben in einer anderen Zeit.

Es werden keine Äpfel mehr einzeln über die Budel gereicht (vgl. PU 2019: § 1). Bauarbeiter rufen sich nicht mehr zu, welcher Werkstoff gerade gebraucht wird (vgl. PU 2019: § 2). Menschen werfen sich außerhalb von dedizierten Sportveranstaltungen nicht Bälle zu, und Menschen werfen Bälle auch nicht planlos in die Luft (vgl. PU 2019: § 83). Sie erkennen die Beispiele wahrscheinlich wieder, die Ludwig Wittgenstein am Beginn seiner *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* verwandte.

Ludwig Wittgensteins Beispiele sind bemerkenswert unzugänglich, und das auf verschiedene Art und Weise. Erstens: Die Beispiele sind Kinder ihrer Zeit. Bauarbeiter können sich gar nichts mehr zurufen, weil die Maschinen zu laut und die sprachlichen Hürden zu hoch sind. Äpfel werden in der Regel im Supermarkt aus dem Regal genommen.

Zweitens: Die Beispiele Wittgensteins werden von schrägen Persönlichkeiten bevölkert: da ist zuerst der Obsthändler, der Tabellen in Schubladen seines Verkaufstisches lagert (vgl. PU 2019: § 1); dann ist da der passive Gehilfe am Bau, der auf Zurufe seines einsam arbeitenden Vorarbeiters wartet (vgl. PU

2019: § 2); da ist die Gruppe von Menschen, die nach immer wechselnden Regeln Ball spielt und ab und an den Ball einfach auch nur in die Höhe wirft (vgl. PU 2019: § 83).

Es ist gar nicht so einfach, sich von den Beispielen nicht ablenken zu lassen; es ist auch nicht einfach, die Beispiele weiterzudenken. Was ist denn nun der richtige Umgang mit Wittgensteins Beispielen? Soll man die Beispiele analysieren oder ignorieren, oder ist der richtige Zugang ein großzügiges und ungenaues Dazwischen? Tragen die Beispiele selbst Inhalt, sind sie also wesentlich, oder sind sie ein Beiwerk, das nicht mehr interessiert, wenn der zu Grunde liegende Gedanke verstanden worden ist? Ist es Absicht, dass Wittgenstein das Modellhafte in seinen Beispielen überbetont? Vielleicht um den dem Beispiel zu Grunde liegenden Gedanken in gleißendem Licht erscheinen zu lassen? Oder sind die Beispiele einfach das Produkt eines scharfen Verstandes gepaart mit skurrilem Humor?

Es kommt sehr darauf an, welchem Zweck denn ein Beispiel dienen soll. Im einfachsten Fall ist ein Beispiel eine Illustration. Ein Beispiel ist dann die Veranschaulichung von etwas Allgemeinen. Eine solche Illustration hilft der Einsicht in das Allgemeine auf die Sprünge, hat also eine mäeutische Funktion. Diese Art des Beispiels bildet den Ausgangspunkt für die Überlegungen in diesem Essay.

Das Beispiel kann aber auch eine Beleg- und Beweisfunktion haben: gemäß dem Sprichwort, wonach eine Regel so weit reicht wie die Beispiele gehen. Das Gegenbeispiel zeigt dann der Regel die Grenzen auf.

Luiz Antônio Marcuschi hat sich in seinem Buch „Die Methode des Beispiels“ ausführlich mit der methodischen Funktion des Beispiels, insbesondere bei Ludwig Wittgenstein, beschäftigt. Zu Wittgenstein sagt er: „WITTGENSTEIN wendet diesen Schreibstil an, um neue Anregungen zu weiteren Fragen zu gewinnen. Man möchte sagen, daß er Spaß daran findet, alles durcheinander zu bringen, um dann langsam, durch Beispiele, Bilder, Metaphern zu neuen Positionen zu gelangen“ (Marcuschi 1976, 179, Großbuchstaben im Original). Diese Erklärung passt wohl zusammen mit Wittgensteins Denken. Denn wenn er im Tractatus sagt: „Die Logik muss für sich selber sorgen“ (TLP 2019, 5.47), dann spricht er sich ja eigentlich gegen die Verwendung von Beispielen aus.

Das Absurde und Überhöhte in Wittgensteins Beispielen kommentiert Matthias Kroß in seinem Essay „Philosophieren in Beispielen. Wittgensteins Umdenken des Allgemeinen“ mit den Worten:

Interessant wird die Beispielverwendung für Wittgenstein vor allem bei der Lösung philosophischer Probleme. Hier findet man gehäuft Beispiele, die bis zur Absurdität überspitzt oder von vornherein fiktiv sind. Sie sollen zur Verunsicherung bzw. *Reductio ad absurdum* traditioneller philosophischer Fragehaltungen führen und damit ein Schritt zur Lösung des „Krampfes“ des philosophischen Reflektierens leisten: „Nur wenn man noch viel verrückter denkt, als die Philosophen, kann man ihre Probleme lösen.“ (ÜG 2021, 557)

[...]

Ohne diese methodische Zielstellung liefe das Beispiel „leer“ – es bewegte sich in den traditionellen Bahnen der Exemplifizierung eines bereits vorausgesetzten Allgemeinen, und es fehlte, wie Wittgenstein formuliert, seine „Reibung“ (PU, 130), und es erzeugte keinen „Widerstreit“ (PU, 107). Deshalb wählt Wittgenstein bewußt das abgelegene Beispiel aus“ (Kroß 1999, 182–183, kursive Passagen im Original)

Die methodische Zielsetzung ist es also, die den Beispielen Wittgensteins ihre Form und ihren Inhalt geben. Durch das Abweichen von gewohnten Denkwegen möchte Wittgenstein „spasmologisch auf das Philosophenhirn wirken“, wie Matthias Kroß das griffig benennt (Kroß 1999, 183).

In der vorliegenden Arbeit wird versucht, die Beispiele Wittgensteins zu verwenden und sie in eine persönliche und heutige Sphäre zu transferieren. Diese Methode soll dabei helfen, die Argumentation Ludwig Wittgensteins und dessen eigene Beispiele besser zu verstehen. Die Beispiele werden im übertragenen Sinn in ihre Einzelteile zerlegt und aus der Nähe betrachtet. Durch das genaue Hinsehen werden etwaige Unebenheiten sichtbar, man kann förmlich die Oberfläche des Gedankens abtasten und merkt, ob dieser rau und abweisend ist oder zugänglich und einladend. Dieses bessere Verständnis, diese Auseinandersetzung mit den einzelnen Bestandteilen wiederum führt dazu, dass die wittgensteinschen Beispiele in ihrer spezifischen Qualität besser wahrgenommen werden können.

2 Ein Beispiel für eine primitive Sprache (vgl. PU 2019: § 2)

Ein Vorarbeiter – Wittgenstein verwendet dafür den Begriff „Bauender“ – verständigt sich mit seinem Gehilfen. Verschiedene Elemente – Würfel, Säulen, Platten, Balken – stehen für den Bau zur Verfügung. Der Gehilfe muss dem Vorarbeiter solche Elemente reichen, und zwar jene, die der Vorarbeiter gerade braucht. Zu diesem Zweck „bedienen sie sich einer Sprache, bestehend aus den Wörtern: ‚Würfel‘, ‚Säule‘, ‚Platte‘, ‚Balken‘“ (PU 2019: § 2). Der Vorarbeiter sagt den Namen jenes Bauelements, welches er gerade braucht, der Gehilfe reicht es ihm. „Fasse dies als vollständige primitive Sprache auf“, mit diesen Worten schließt Wittgenstein diesen Paragraphen.

Wittgenstein baut hier also ein Sprachmodell, und zwar ein extrem reduziertes. Eines, das nur aus vier Wörtern, genau genommen aus vier Bezeichnungen von Dingen, besteht. Auf dieses einfache Sprachmodell kommt Wittgenstein in weiterer Folge in den *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* immer wieder zu sprechen: in den Paragraphen 6, 7, 8, 10, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 27, 37, 48 – um nur die unmittelbaren Bezugnahmen zu nennen.

Das Beispiel ist also zentral für die Entwicklung des Gedankens, den Wittgenstein verfolgt. Gemessen daran, dass das Beispiel von offensichtlicher Wichtigkeit ist, ist es, trotz seiner Reduziertheit, sperrig.

Da ist zuerst das Narrativ zu nennen: um den Gedanken einer primitiven Sprache einzuführen, ist die Vorstellung eines entstehenden Bauwerks nicht notwendig. An einer Baustelle wirkt eine solch reduzierte Sprache arg abstrakt. In einem chirurgischen Operationssaal hingegen nicht mehr. Keiner von uns wird je bei einer Operation in einem Saal live dabei gewesen sein; aber wir meinen zu wissen, wie die Ärztin mit dem Operationsassistenten kommuniziert: „Skalpelle“, „Tupfer“, „Schere“, „Defibrillator“. Die Sprache im Operationssaal ist eine, die von vornherein, in ihrer Grundkonzeption, und absichtlich einfachst gebaut ist: weil sie schnell und präzise sein muss, weil sie keinen Platz für Missverständnisse lassen darf.

Eine andere Möglichkeit wäre für Wittgenstein gewesen, das Sprachmodell, das er anhand der Kommunikation von Bauarbeitern entwickelt hat, von vornherein an den weiteren Anwendungszeck anzupassen. In § 6 nimmt

Wittgenstein erstmals wieder auf sein Modell aus § 2 Bezug und überhöht diese primitive Sprache der Bauarbeiter zur „ganze[n] Sprache eines Volksstamm[e]s“ (PU 2019: § 6). Nicht nur das, die Kinder werden in diesem Volksstamm auch dazu erzogen, nur die Tätigkeiten aus § 2 zu verrichten (also Häuser zu bauen oder anderen dabei zu helfen, Häuser zu bauen), und dabei ausschließlich die vier Wörter „Würfel“, „Säule“, „Platte“ und „Balken“ zu verwenden (vgl. PU 2019: § 6). Das Modell wird ins Absurde gesteigert.

Wittgenstein hätte das Modell relativ einfach auch so gestalten können, dass die in § 6 geplante Weiterführung nachvollziehbarer gewesen wäre. Ein Weg wäre gewesen, das Modell gleich vom Kindlichen her zu denken. Jedes Kind ist in seiner frühen Sprachentwicklung in einer Phase, in der nur wenige „Dinge“ namentlich benannt werden – Mama, Papa, Gurkerl, Wasser. Auf diesen recht natürlichen und allgemein bekannten Benennungen hätte Wittgenstein aufbauen können, um dann elegant in § 6 das Modell weiterzuentwickeln. Oder aber Wittgenstein hätte das tribale Element von Anfang an als Basis verwendet: ein fiktiver Volksstamm, vielleicht auf einer Insel, mit einfachster Syntax ausgestattet. Wenn diese Syntax lediglich aus einer Aneinanderreihung von Substantiven besteht, dann hätte Ludwig Wittgenstein dieselbe Versuchsanordnung zustande bekommen, die er in § 2 hergestellt hatte.

3 Das Erlernen einer primitiven Sprache (vgl. PU 2019: § 6)

Das Naheliegende war für Wittgenstein offensichtlich nicht zugänglich. Wir sind nun also in § 6 in der Versuchsanordnung bei einem Volksstamm, dessen Sprache aus vier Wörtern besteht und wo die Kinder dieses Volksstammes ausschließlich Bauarbeiten verrichten. Die Frage, die Wittgenstein nun aufwirft, ist, wie die Kinder dieses Stammes die Sprache lernen.

Er führt dabei sein Beispiel aus § 2 fort, und dies ausgerechnet mit dem Begriff „Platte“. Warum „ausgerechnet“? Weil von den vier Benennungen Würfel, Säule, Platte und Balken, „Platte“ wohl das unbestimmteste Ding ist. Wenn ich Sie bitten würde, jeder für sich, einen Würfel zu zeichnen – die Ergebnisse Ihrer Zeichnungen würden wahrscheinlich alle ungefähr wie ein Würfel aussehen. Bei einer Säule würden Sie wahrscheinlich meist etwas Zylindrisches zeichnen, bei einem Balken etwas, was wie ein längliches Rechteck aussieht. Wie aber würden Sie eine Platte zeichnen? Ja, rechteckig, ja,

flach. Aber würde eine Unbeteiligte zweifelsfrei beim Anblick Ihrer Skizze: „Das ist eine Platte“, konstatieren? Bei einem Würfel wäre das doch viel eher der Fall.

Man mag einwenden: Es verändert das Beispiel nicht inhaltlich, ob nun „Platte“ oder „Würfel“ von Ludwig Wittgenstein verwendet wird. Nein, das tut es nicht. Aber das Beispiel ist ja überhaupt nur für den Zweck eingeführt, Verständnis zu schaffen. Das Verständnis wiederum ist dann am Besten gegeben, wenn das Beispiel so nah wie möglich an der Lebenswelt des Adressaten angesiedelt ist. Die „Platte“ ist aus der zur Verfügung stehenden Auswahl – Würfel, Säule, Platte, Balken – wahrscheinlich jener Begriff, der vor dem geistigen Auge am wenigsten klar umrissen ist.

4 Der Kaufmann und seine Tafel (vgl. PU 2019: § 1)

In weiterer Folge verbindet Wittgenstein dieses ein Beispiel der Baustellen-Volksstamm-Sprache mit einem Beispiel aus dem ersten Paragraphen der *Philosophischen Untersuchungen*: dem Kaufmann, der Äpfel verkaufen sollte. Dieses Beispiel geht so: Ein Kunde ordert in einem Geschäft fünf rote Äpfel, und dann:

[D]er [Kaufmann] öffnet die Lade, auf welcher das Zeichen „Äpfel“ steht; dann sucht er in einer Tabelle das Wort „rot“ auf und findet ihm gegenüber ein Farbmuster; nun sagt er die Reihe der Grundzahlwörter – ich nehme an, er weiß sie auswendig – bis zum Worte „fünf“ und bei jedem Zahlwort nimmt er einen Apfel aus der Lade, der die Farbe des Musters hat. – So, und ähnlich, operiert man mit Worten. (PU 2019: § 1)

Es wäre das Beispiel leichter verkraftbar, wenn Wittgenstein nicht nachgeschoben hätte: „So, und ähnlich, operiert man mit Worten“. Unmittelbar, die Leserin kann den darauffolgenden Gedankengang gar nicht verhindern, fragt sie sich: „So operiert man mit Worten?“

Wittgenstein setzt in diesem Beispiel Worte und Dinge zueinander in Bezug, schafft damit ein Bezugssystem. Der Händler verfügt über ein Prüfverfahren, das ihm ermöglicht, den Begriff – gemäß Wittgenstein: das Wort – mit Inhalt zu hinterlegen. Mit dem gewählten Beispiel eines Händlers, der nur anhand

eines Prüfverfahrens den Inhalt seiner Verkaufsaufgabe erkennen kann, wird diese abstraktes Bezugssystem und das damit verbundene Prüfverfahren veranschaulicht. Die Phantasie des Lesers wird dabei aber arg in Anspruch genommen.

Ein solches Prüfverfahren wäre eigentlich alltäglich beobachtbar: Eine Schulklasse aus Baden bei Wien macht mit Ihrer Lehrerin einen Ausflug nach Wien ins Kunsthistorische Museum. Sie fahren mit dem Zug. Die Lehrerin geht zum Schalter und sagt der Mitarbeiterin der Badener Bahn, dass sie eine Fahrkarte für 17 Schüler nach Wien kaufen möchte. Die Mitarbeiterin der Badener Bahn schaut auf, zählt die Klasse durch – eins, zwei, drei, vier ... siebzehn –, versichert sich, dass die Kinder tatsächlich im schulpflichtigen Alter sind und sucht aus der Tariftabelle den Preis für eine Fahrkarte Baden – Wien.

Mit diesem adaptierten Beispiel würde für uns tatsächlich sichtbar werden, „wie man mit Worten operiert“, um paraphrasierend bei Wittgenstein zu bleiben (vgl. PU 2019: § 1). Worte bezeichnen, und was sie bezeichnen, ist entweder klar oder muss über ein Zuordnungs- oder Prüfverfahren ermittelt werden. Das Prüfverfahren der Fahrkartenverkäuferin ist ein alltägliches und Alltägliches ist leicht nachvollziehbar.

Es tut sich ein interessanter Zwiespalt auf: ein lebensnahes Beispiel lässt uns besser verstehen. Das wittgensteinsche Beispiel mit dem listenabhängigen Apfelverkäufer ist dafür so skurril, dass es im Gedächtnis haften bleibt wie eine Klette am Steirergewand. Wollte Wittgenstein mit diesem Beispiel seinen Gedanken erläutern, oder eher einen Wegpunkt im Gehirn der Leserin markieren? Es könnte sein, dass er beides gewollt hatte, und wenn er es so gewollt hatte, dann hat er es auch geschafft.

5 Die Sprache wird erweitert, die beiden Sprachmuster aus § 2 und § 1 werden miteinander verwoben (vgl. PU 2019: §§ 8-10)

Ludwig Wittgenstein fügt in weiterer Folge Elemente der beiden Sprachmodelle zusammen. Er nimmt das Zahlwort aus dem Beispiel des

Kaufmanns, dazu dessen Farbmuster. Weiters die Bezeichnungen für die Bauelemente – Würfel, Säule, Platte, Balken – sowie zwei neue Worte: „dorthin“ und „dieses“, ein deiktisches Begriffspaar (vgl. PU 2019: § 8).

Die Beispiele befruchten einander aber leider nicht. Es ist lediglich ein Vermischen von jenen Wortarten und Mechanismen, die in den beiden Sprachmodellen zuvor eingeführt worden waren. Dieses Aufeinander-Bezug-Nehmen ist auf Grund der weit auseinanderliegenden Narrative wahrscheinlich auch gar nicht möglich. Vielleicht wäre es für das Verständnis der Sprachmodelle hilfreich gewesen, Beispiele zu suchen, die miteinander in irgendeiner Art und Weise verwandt gewesen wären.

Die beiden besprochenen Sprachbilder – der Kaufmann und die Bauarbeiter - finden inhaltlich in den Paragraphen 9 und 10 ihr Ende. In § 9 denkt Wittgenstein darüber nach, wie Zahlwörter und die deiktischen Worte „dorthin“ und „dieses“ gelehrt werden könnten. Er verwendet in diesem und im darauffolgenden Paragraphen als Beispiel für Zahlwörter tatsächlich Buchstaben, nämlich „a, b, c, ...“ (PU 2019: § 9). Was zu weiteren Einlassungen einladen würde, was die Zugänglichkeit von Wittgenstein gewählten Beispielen anlangt.

Ludwig Wittgenstein nimmt zwar später immer wieder auf diese zwei Beispiele in den Paragraphen 2 und 8 Bezug, aber er entwickelt sie nicht weiter. Er reichert die Beispiele nicht mehr mit weiteren Gedanken an, er erhöht nicht mehr deren Komplexität. Es folgen Erklärungen, die die Modellhaftigkeit seiner Überlegungen mildern sollen: „Daß die Sprachen (2) und (8) nur aus Befehlen bestehen, laß dich nicht stören“ (PU 2019: § 18), oder, an anderer Stelle: „Man kann sich leicht eine Sprache vorstellen, die nur aus Befehlen und Meldungen in der Schlacht besteht“ (PU 2019: § 19).

Die Beispiele sind in weiterer Folge nur mehr ein Reservoir an Vokabeln. So wird das Wort „Platte“ von Ludwig Wittgenstein für Überlegungen zum Aufbau eines Satzes verwendet, z. B. in § 19 und in § 20. Für das Verständnis des Lesers wäre es aber egal, wenn er in diesen Absätzen statt „Bring mir eine Platte“, „Pflück mir einen Löwenzahn“ verwenden würde. Erlauben Sie mir, den Beweis dieser Behauptung anhand des § 20 der *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* zu führen:

Aber wenn nun Einer sagt „Pflück mir einen Löwenzahn!“ [im wittgensteinschen Original: „Bring mir eine Platte!“], so scheint es ja jetzt, als könnte er diesen Ausdruck als *ein* langes Wort meinen: entsprechend nämlich dem einen Wort „Löwenzahn!“ [im Original: Platte!]. [...] Ich glaube wir werden geneigt sein, zu sagen: Wir meinen den Satz als einen von vier Wörtern, wenn wir ihn im Gegensatz zu andern Sätzen gebrauchen, wie „*Reich* mir einen Löwenzahn zu“, „Bring *ihm* einen Löwenzahn“, „Bring *zwei* Löwenzahne“ [im Original jeweils: Platte], etc.; also im Gegensatz zu Sätzen, welche die Wörter unseres Befehls in anderen Verbindungen enthalten. (PU 2019: § 20, kursive Hervorhebungen im Original)

Es ist bemerkenswert. Genau jenen Begriff, der von den Sachbezeichnungen am wenigsten bildlich fassbar ist, nämlich die Platte, verwendet Wittgenstein zur Verbildlichung neuer Gedankengänge.

6 Conclusio

Wittgensteins Beispiele sind ein wichtiger Bestandteil seines Werks und trotz ihrer Sperrigkeit bleiben sie im Gedächtnis haften – vielleicht auch gerade deswegen. Die Beispiele weichen oft von gewohnten Denkwegen ab, sind manchmal sogar bis ins Absurde übersteigert. Sie bleiben dadurch klettengleich im Philosophenhirn haften und verhelfen im besten Fall zu neuen Gedanken.

Wittgensteins Beispiele zu verwenden und sie in eine persönliche und heutige Sphäre zu transferieren, hilft für das Verständnis von Wittgensteins Argumenten.

Durch das genaue Hinsehen, durch die Auseinandersetzung mit den einzelnen Bestandteilen der Beispiele können die wittgensteinschen Beispiele in ihrer spezifischen Qualität besser wahrgenommen werden.

Wenn dieses Verständnis einmal erarbeitet ist, ist es wohl das Richtige, die Beispiele wieder an ihren Platz zu rücken, Ludwig Wittgenstein zuzunicken und „Nichts für ungut“ zu sagen.

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Semantic Understanding, Aspect Perception, and Metaphysics

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Abstract

In his famous rule-following considerations, Wittgenstein argues that the meaning of a word (the technique of its use) can never be learned with the help of interpretations or explanations alone, but only through a direct exposure to and perception of its external criteria of use. Wittgenstein's account of semantic understanding thus presupposes a theory of perception that enables language users to recognize the objective application conditions of words. It is argued that Wittgenstein's numerous remarks on perceptual recognition are intended to provide just such a theory. In particular, his discussion of the phenomenon of aspect perception is meant to avert Cartesian models of the perceptual process and concomitant skeptical concerns about the cognizability of objective features in the world. It will be shown that the ability to perceive aspects underlies not only our basic conceptualizations of things but also more sophisticated efforts at understanding, which Wittgenstein develops under the notion of surveyable representation. This even suggests a novel approach to metaphysics: one in which surveyable representations of our general world experience can yield objective world knowledge, even if that knowledge must remain to some extent preconceptual and thus in some sense ineffable.

1. Semantic Understanding

According to the later Wittgenstein, understanding the meaning of a word essentially consists in mastering the technique of its use (cf. Z: §418), which is a specific case of what Wittgenstein calls “following a rule” (PI 2009: §199). Accordingly, the question of how to acquire such an understanding becomes the question of how to learn to follow the appropriate rule. In this regard, Wittgenstein famously argues that the answer cannot be that one learns to follow a rule correctly by *interpreting* (defining, explaining) it. For such an interpretation would be nothing but *another* rule specifying how to follow the first one, and that would only raise the question of how one learns to correctly follow *that* rule, and so on. The converse argument then says that there must be “a way of grasping a rule which is *not* an interpretation, but which, from case to case of application, is exhibited in what we call ‘following the rule’ and ‘going against it’” (PI 2009: §201). So, “‘following a rule’ is a practice” (PI 2009: §202).

Wittgenstein's conclusion has led many commentators to impute to him a purely conventionalist theory of meaning and a kind of “linguistic idealism” (cf. Anscombe 1981: 112) that acknowledges the social reality of a linguistic community but maintains that all features of the natural world are

constructed solely by the linguistic activities of the members of that community. It has certainly contributed to this reading that Wittgenstein's remarks are also directed against privatist views according to which rule-followers can determine the correct execution of a rule solely on the basis of their own interpretation of it. Such views would amount to everyone acting according or contrary to a rule whenever they think they are doing so. In this way, any action could be brought into accord or conflict with any rule, thus eliminating any distinction between correct and incorrect following of a rule, which would make nonsense of the whole idea of rule-following (cf. PI 2009: §201). Hence, "it's not possible to follow a rule 'privately'" (PI 2009: §202).

The point of Wittgenstein's argument, however, is much more general. For if individual agents cannot *learn* to follow a rule correctly by *forming* an interpretation of that rule, then others will not be able to *teach* them the correct following by *giving* them an interpretation either. Wittgenstein's momentous insight is that *no* rule, whether articulated privately or publicly, can of its own determine its proper application. What is additionally required for mastering the correct use of a rule, according to Wittgenstein, are concrete examples and paradigmatic applications of the rule: "Not only rules, but also examples are needed for establishing a practice. Our rules leave loop-holes open, and the practice has to speak for itself." (OC: §139)

Wittgenstein's point can be restated in terms of linguistic understanding. In his opinion, the meaning of no word can ever be completely stated. For such a statement would have to be articulated in a language. Thus, it would amount to nothing else than the substitution of one sign by another – which in turn would have to be replaced by further signs in order to express *its* meaning, *ad infinitum*. In all efforts to assert the meaning of a word, therefore, one will hit upon a residue of inarticulable meaning: "The inexpressible [...] provides the background, against which whatever I was able to express acquires meaning." (CV: 23) At the "limits of language" (PI 2009, §119), one is forced to convey a word's meaning by exposing the learner head-on to what the word means, namely, the thing or feature it denotes or describes:

[I]f a person has not yet got the *concepts*, I'll teach him to use the words by means of *examples* and by *exercises* [...]. In the course of this teaching, I'll show him the same colours, the same lengths, the same shapes; I'll make him find them and produce them; and so on. (PI 2009: §208)

On the part of the learner, the ability to acquire the meaning of a word presupposes the ability to detect when the standard conditions of the word's correct application are present in a particular situation (cf. PI 2009: §72). This ability, however, cannot be thought of as involving linguistic representations of those application conditions (on pain of an infinite regress). Rather, it is to be regarded as a preconceptual, perceptual responsiveness to them. As Wittgenstein puts it, "we recognize normal circumstances but cannot precisely describe them" (OC, §27).

2. Aspect Perception

Now, Wittgenstein's remarks leave some questions to be answered. To solve the rule-following paradox, the Wittgensteinian account of semantic understanding requires a theory of perception that enables language users to recognize the objective application conditions of words with sufficient reliability. Wittgenstein is aware that such a theory cannot perpetuate the traditional Cartesian model, which interposes epistemic intermediaries (such as mental images or sense data) between the perceiving subject and the objects of its perception; for such intermediaries would themselves first have to be checked for their credibility and thus could not by themselves provide the perceiver with any evidence that what is perceived actually exists in the way it is perceived (cf. PG: §118; BBB: 85–9; RPP I: §698). Wittgenstein's conclusion is that the perception of a word's objective conditions of application must be *immediate*:

If I'm told: "look for a red flower in this meadow and bring it to me" and then I find one – do I compare it with my memory picture of the colour red? – And must I consult yet another picture to see whether the first is still correct? – In that case why should I need the first one? – I see the colour of the flower and recognize *it*. (PG: §54)

Hence, Wittgenstein conceives perceptual recognition as direct “familiarity [*Wohlbekanntheit*]” (PG: §37). This familiarity consists in an “intransitive knowledge” (*ibid.*) of what something is or how it is (cf. PG: §115). It is not an occurrent feeling but manifests itself in the perceiving subject’s skillful interaction with the object of its perception (cf. BBB: 127–9.; PI 2009: §596; RPP II: §120–4.). This *may* include verbal reactions on the part of the subject. However, these are not to be understood as conscious applications of words to the perceptual situation according to certain linguistic conventions, but rather as primitive behavioral expressions of the subject’s familiarity with this situation (cf. PG, §116).

In this direct familiarity with a word’s standard conditions of application, then, Wittgenstein finds the necessary objective basis of all semantic understanding. There is, however, a complication. For Wittgenstein concedes that sometimes one and the same things can be seen in several different ways (cf. PI 2009: §74). In this context, Wittgenstein particularly refers to the phenomenon of “noticing an aspect” (PI 2009: 203) or “seeing-as” (PI 2009: 216). Aspects are what someone notices who, e.g., sees a likeness in two faces (cf. PI 2009: 203), an ambiguous image once as a rabbit, once as a duck (cf. PI 2009: 204), or a human figure in a puzzle-picture (cf. PI 2009: 206). What is noticed in such experiences are not (previously overlooked) parts or properties of the perceived objects, but a particular organization or configuration of their parts and properties – a *gestalt* that ultimately determines just what kind of thing one sees in those objects (cf. *ibid.*).

The peculiar experience of seeing things at once unchanged and yet different (cf. PI 2009: 203) suggests that in aspect perception a “fusion” (PI 2009: 208) of seeing and thinking takes place – which on the one hand makes the noticing of aspects phenomenologically akin to a passive-perceptive state (cf. RPP I: §8), but on the other hand also assimilates it to a deliberate act of interpretation: “‘The aspect is subject to the will.’ [...] It makes sense to say, ‘See this circle as a hole, not as a disc’ [...].” (RPP II: §545) It is this putatively arbitrary interpretative nature of aspect perception that prompts a reintroduction of the Cartesian model of perception – and a renewed skepticism about the possibility of objective world knowledge. Aspects seem to be, not objective features of the things perceived, but rather subjective ways of perceiving those things: “It is as if one had brought a concept to what one sees, and one now

sees the concept along with the thing. It is itself hardly visible, and yet it spreads an ordering veil over the objects.” (RPP I: §961; cf. RPP I: §899) This result, however, leads straight back into the rule-following paradox. Not only do perceptions of aspects seem to be conceptually shaped – they also seem to lack the necessary objectivity to provide language users with epistemic access to the correctness conditions of their word usage.

Wittgenstein, however, manages to avoid this aporia. In fact, his analysis of aspect perception is much less constructivist than is commonly (cf., e.g., Baz: 2000) assumed. He does say: “If I am describing an aspect, the description presupposes concepts which do not belong to the description of the figure itself.” (RPP I: §1030) However, Wittgenstein makes it clear that the concepts used to describe the aspects of an object are not to be understood in their ordinary sense, but take on a *novel* meaning in their application to the object whose aspects are described:

The epithet “sad”, as applied, for example, to the face of a stick-figure, characterizes the grouping of lines in an oval. Applied to a human being, it has a different (though related) meaning. (PI 2009: 220; cf. LW: §§742, 748)

Thus, the concepts employed in the description of aspects do characterize objective features of objects – just not in a literal way. Yet, Wittgenstein also clarifies that the nonliteral meaning of these concepts cannot be paraphrased in other terms (as in the case of ordinary ambiguity): “[I]f it amounted to this, I ought to know it. I ought to be able to refer to the experience directly, and not only indirectly.” (PI 2009: 204; cf. PI 2009: 211) As Wittgenstein says, the use of the concepts in an aspect description is “a secondary one” (PI 2009: §282), which cannot be explained but in terms of their primary meaning (cf. PI 2009: 227) – so that only someone who knows the primary meaning of these concepts can use them in this secondary meaning (cf. *ibid.*).

In its secondary meaning, a word is used to describe an object *in analogy to* the objects to which the word is applied in its primary meaning. However, the analogy does not take the form of an explicit simile, in which the analogized objects are first described in their own terms and then their analogies are stated, but rather the form of a *metaphorical redescription* of the object *in terms of the other objects*, which hints at its analogous features without being

able to articulate them directly (cf. PI 2009: 192). The secondary meaning of a word thus turns out to be ineffable in an important sense. What is expressed by it, the aspect of an object, is not something that could be literally said just as well, or even better, in other terms, but rather something that is poetically evoked “only by these words in these positions” (PI 2009: §531). In the end, it is a meaning that is grasped only through a direct acquaintance with the object to which the word in this secondary meaning applies:

When I look at a genre-picture, it ‘tells’ me something, even though I don’t believe (imagine) for a moment that the people I see in it really exist, or that there have really been people in that situation. For suppose I ask, “*What* does it tell me, then?”

“A picture tells me itself” is what I’d like to say. That is, its telling me something consists in its own structure, in its own forms and colours. (PI 2009: §§522–3)

What one becomes acquainted with in the perception of an aspect, in particular, is “an internal relation” (PI 2009: 223) between the perceived object and other objects (e.g., pertinent similarities between the painted people in the genre-picture and real people). Again, “the substratum” of this experience is not a subjective feeling, but rather “the mastery of a technique” (PI 2009: 219). For example, someone who sees a certain figure as a face can engage with it in some respects as with a human face: study its expression, react to it as to the expression of the human face, etc. (cf. PI 2009: 204, 213). The repurposing of certain words to describe the perceived aspect can also be considered a manifestation of this capacity. As in the case of perceptual recognition, however, the application of these words to the given situation is not to be understood as a considered judgment, but more like a spontaneous exclamation (cf. RPP I: §§125–6; RPP II: §574).

3. Metaphysics

Perceptual recognition and aspect perception, in the sense of a direct familiarity with the features of the objects of application of words, thus form the objective basis of all linguistic practice, indeed of all conceptual-cognitive endeavors. As it turns out, aspect perception plays a particularly important

role in learning the correct use of family terms. As Wittgenstein notes, such terms are applied to their diverse instances not on the basis of essential features common to them all, but on the basis of complex similarity relations between them (cf. PI 2009: §67). The implicit cognition of these “family resemblances” (PI 2009: §68) is what precedes and justifies the application of such terms to novel cases. Whether these reapplications are ultimately judged to be metaphorical, or whether the novel cases are incorporated into the literal meaning of the term, is more of a pragmatic consideration for Wittgenstein (cf. BBB: 139–40) – both uses are grounded in the same mechanism of aspect perception.

Wittgenstein even extends the principle of analogical thinking based on the perception of aspects to a philosophical method of understanding, which he calls “surveyable representation [*übersichtliche Darstellung*]” (PI 2009: §122). Wittgenstein originally introduces this method to account for sociocultural (cf. RF: 133), later linguistic phenomena (which are a species of social phenomena) (cf. PI 2009: §122). But he also likens scientific explanations of *natural* phenomena to surveyable representations in his sense (cf. CV: 26). As with the perception of aspects and the cognition of family resemblances, the understanding attained through such representations consists in “seeing connections” (PI 2009: §122) between the phenomena under consideration and other phenomena that are not already evident from the description of the phenomena alone. And like the secondary use of words for the description of aspects and the application of family concepts to novel cases, surveyable representations elicit this understanding by invoking objects of comparison, so-called “intermediate links [*Zwischenglieder*]” (PI 2009: §122), whose sole purpose is to “direct the attention to the similarity, the relatedness, of the *facts*” (RF: 133) and thereby “throw light on features” (PI 2009: §130) of the phenomena in question.

Given its anchoring in basal conceptualization processes and, ultimately, the perception of aspects, which in turn consists in a direct (albeit tacit) familiarity with objective features and relations in the real world, Wittgenstein’s surveyable representation constitutes a genuinely epistemic method of understanding. One may even discern in it the outlines of a new methodology for metaphysics understood as the philosophical inquiry into the fundamental nature of reality. The metaphysician, according to Wittgenstein, is somebody

who feels constrained by the categorial limitations of ordinary language (cf. BBB: 59). Their interest, then, is to develop new conceptual schemes that will enable them to adopt more expedient world-coping strategies (cf. *ibid.*). This they can achieve, says Wittgenstein, by means of a surveyable representation of their world experience which, through innovative analogies and metaphors, reveals aspects of reality that have hitherto gone unnoticed due to deadlocked and one-sided interpretations (cf. BBB: 28): “To resolve these philosophical problems one has to compare things which it has never seriously occurred to anyone to compare.” (RFM, VII, §15) Such a surveyable representation would generate, as it were, unadulterated knowledge of the structures of reality. The price for this authenticity, of course, would be that ultimately this knowledge could not be spoken, but only shown. A ‘Wittgensteinian metaphysics’ envisaged in this way would thus bring the philosopher into a contact with the world which is at once particularly direct and particularly elusive.

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Acknowledgement

Funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) – Project number 452319975.

Wittgenstein's *Movements of Thought*: Hypomnemata, and the Socratic Tradition of Philosophy

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Abstract

The latest edition of Wittgenstein's *Koder Diaries* was published recently under the title of: *Movements of Thought* (Rowman & Littlefield 2023). The book is a translation of a manuscript that was handwritten by Wittgenstein over seven years from 1930 to 1937. *Koder Diaries* was first published by Ilse Somavilla in 1997 in German. The English translations of the diaries are both based on Somavilla's edition. As indicated by editors, James C. Klagge and Alfred Nordmann, this notebook is "unusual" in the sense that it contains "both personal and philosophical remarks." In encountering such convergence of philosophical and personal notes one is bound to revisit a contentious point in Wittgenstein philosophy: His style of writing. In what follows, I situate Wittgenstein's remarks in the tradition of philosophy as spiritual exercises and I argue that contrary to Wittgenstein's misjudgement about the role and the impact of the Socratic conception of philosophy, embodied in Socrates' definitional dialogues, his own way of doing philosophy shares much in common both in terms of orientation and rhetorical style with the writings of Socratic philosophers from Plato to Henry Thoreau. Specifically, I argue that the convergence of philosophical and personal remarks in Wittgenstein's handwritten manuscripts is on the whole the result of writing in the form of *hypomnemata* or private notes or exhortations to the self with the intention of capturing the movements of thought and, more importantly, practicing *askesis*, or working on oneself according to an ideal of wisdom.

Reading the Socratic dialogues, one has the feeling: what a frightful waste of time! What's the point of these arguments that prove nothing & clarify nothing. (*Culture and Value*, p. 21)

Most commentators on the tradition of philosophy as spiritual exercises allude to Ludwig Wittgenstein's contribution, usually as they list the names of philosophers whose works can be situated within the tradition of philosophy as spiritual exercises. (Hadot, 1995, 1998; Nehamas 1998; Sharpe & Ure 2021) But what is the exact nature of such contribution and in what sense does his "work on philosophy" follows the Socratic conception of philosophy as "work on oneself"? With few exceptions, commentators often refer to Wittgenstein's conception of philosophy as "working on oneself" without acknowledging the direct link between such conception of philosophy and the central role of *askesis* or working on oneself based on an ideal of wisdom in the Socratic tradition (Cf. Conant 2001, 2019; Sunday Grève 2015). As a result of such disconnection Wittgenstein scholars often present his approach to philosophy as a rather idiosyncratic and anachronistic way of doing philosophy, marked

by the intense commitment to the clarity of vision and moral decency. (Monk 2001: 12) A long generation of Wittgenstein enthusiasts who lionized him as the revolutionary who wanted to do away with the history of philosophy in his search for a new method, a new “way of looking” at the problems of philosophy were culprits in creating the image of Wittgenstein as a “pure incarnation of the anti-philosopher.” (Conant 2019: 249) One might say, Wittgenstein himself had his share of entertaining the idea that if we look at philosophy as an “activity” and not a “body of doctrine” then perhaps we could move away from such doctrines. But the idea of philosophy as an activity or exercise did not begin with Wittgenstein and his famous characterization of philosophy as “work on oneself” in *Culture and Value* is a variation of the Socratic notion of philosophy as “care of the soul” (*Laches* 186e3). In what follows, I argue that Wittgenstein’s conception of philosophy has much in common with a longstanding tradition in the history of philosophy that can be traced back to Socrates’ elenctic method of enquiry. One might suggest, there is a connecting link between the goal of the same dialogues which allegedly left Wittgenstein unimpressed, and the manner in which Wittgenstein subjected himself to self-examination, as recorded in his manuscripts. Consider, for example, Plato’s characterization of the Socratic method of refutation and its impact on the interlocutors. As he writes in *Sophist* of those who:

Cross-examine someone when he thinks he’s saying something though he’s saying nothing. ... They collect his opinions together during the discussion, put them side by side, and show that they conflict with each other. . . The people who are being examined see this, get angry at themselves, and become calmer toward others. They lose their inflated and rigid beliefs about themselves that way, and no loss is pleasanter to hear or has a more lasting effect on them. Doctors who work on the body think it can’t benefit from any food that’s offered to it until what’s interfering with it from inside is removed. The people who cleanse the soul, my young friend, likewise think the soul, too, won’t get any advantage from any learning that’s offered to it until someone shames it by refuting it, removes the opinions that interfere with learning, and exhibits it cleansed. (*Sophist*, 230b-d4)

Wittgenstein’s commitment to establish “once and for all” that often philosophers say nothing though they think they are “saying something” is a

notable feature of his early works. Likewise, dismantling one's "inflated and rigid beliefs" about oneself remains at the core of his private notes, as exemplified in the alarming exhortation that "The *edifice of your pride* has to be dismantled. And that means frightful work." (1998:30; all italics in the original text)

The recent publication of *Movements of Thought* with its intertwined sequencing of personal and philosophical entries is an invite to revisit Wittgenstein's philosophical reflections and the variety of ways he was implementing and making use of established genres and rhetorical methods in the tradition of philosophy as spiritual exercises. Specifically, I argue that Wittgenstein's text should be viewed as belonging to the genre of *hypomnemata* or notes to the self and that one can identify common themes between his notes and the writings of Socratic philosophers. I refer to Socratic tradition and the tradition of philosophy as spiritual exercises interchangeably. Some of these recurring themes include self-knowledge and the cost of acquiring it, the implications of seeing (and not seeing) the world religiously, the primacy of praxis, despair and the role of writing in alleviating it, writing as a form of inner dialogue with the self, and the joy of writing as the joy of life. Though it is beyond the limits of this paper to flesh out these commonalities, I try to allude to them where relevant.

In his Introduction to *Movements of Thought*, Ray Monk highlights the "formative influence" of Otto Weininger's conception of genius as "the highest morality" on Wittgenstein's thought. (2023: 2) There is no doubt that Monk's classic biography of Wittgenstein, *The Duty of Genius*, offers a revealing account of Wittgenstein's works and days but it seems to me that his narrative of Wittgenstein as a tormented "genius" can only partially explain the affinity between his conception of philosophy and the works of Socratic philosophers. Intriguing as it might be, the tendency to categorize Wittgenstein with the tired narrative of a genius who was consumed by spiritual and philosophical problems and yet offered pseudo-religious or poetic solutions to "the problem of life" fail to do justice to the depth of Wittgenstein's contribution to a long-standing philosophical tradition.

Wittgenstein's handwritten manuscripts follow the standard norms of the genre of *hypomnemata* or "notes written on a daily basis for the author's

personal use” (Hadot 1995: 179). As Hadot argues on another occasion, *hypomnemata* can be defined as “private writings,” “notes not yet quite revised for publication and lacking a title” or “personal notes taken on a day-to-day basis.” (Hadot 1998: 24; 30-31) Some of these notes could be taken out of their original context and disseminated for public use. For example, Wittgenstein's first book, *Tractatus* is on the whole based on his notebooks from 1914 to 1916. When we compare the two, paying attention to what he transfers to the book and what he leaves out says something important about his style. Notably, in the process of selection Wittgenstein follows a strategy aligned with his general aesthetic preference to say less, to not “utter” “what is unutterable.” (Monk 1990: 151)

Hypomnemata, in this view, provides a space for personal *utterances*, an opportunity to situate oneself in the midst of life and capture what is usually revealed in the actual process of writing. As such, in the very act of writing down one's thoughts one creates a space for an inner dialogue with oneself, in order to get clarity about one's motives and intentions, to reflect on the events of the day and capture ideas in their most basic form for future references. Clarity of vision is a process even if it seems to dawn instantly. As he writes in his diaries,

It takes extraordinarily long until something is clear to me. —This is true in various spheres. My relation to others, for example, always becomes clear to me only after a long time. It is as if it took colossally long for the large patch of fog to recede & the object itself to become visible. But during this time, I am not even quite clearly aware of my unclarity. And all of a sudden, I then see how the matter really is or was. (21)

Writing, in this view, is an act of “courage” (16) as it indicates one's willingness to record, that is, to encounter one's innermost conflicts and confusions. Wittgenstein's famous moment of realizing “*There is no one here*,” (86) is such moment of clarity in his diaries. With regards to his “religious questions” in the diaries, mainly in the Norwegian winter of 1937, it is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the far-reaching implications of Wittgenstein's sympathetic approach to a religious solution but one cannot help thinking of what Brian Clack calls a “regrettable” feature of Wittgenstein scholarship: The tendency to “find in Wittgenstein's writings” what one expects to find there

“rather than what is actually there” (Clack 2001:12). What is unfortunate is our failure to appreciate his remarks in the contexts where his reflections have been documented: the intimate space of a friendly conversation or in the private space of a notebook meant for “personal use”.

In so far as *Movements of Thought* is concerned, if we situate and examine his remarks in their original habitat, as private notes or exhortations to himself we would be in a much-informed position to assess the connecting links between what James Klagge and Alfred Nordmann have aptly called Wittgenstein’s public and private occasions. In these exchanges of different voices at the moments of vulnerability and “unstable equilibrium,” (76) one could see a clear example of practicing self-examination and care of the soul. As such, the most personal notes allude to a universal “tendency in the human mind” (Wittgenstein 1965:12) to ask: “*How do you go through this life?*” (94) His personal exhortations are not there to be used or abused for theological discussions about fideism or divine hiddenness. The way we receive these notes, with a sense of appreciation for their personal tone, and sensitive to the fact that we are in the immediate presence of a person capturing their daily reflections, is identical to the way we receive meditations of philosophers in the Socratic tradition of philosophy as spiritual exercises. Hadot’s account of Marcus Aurelius’ private notes can be extended to Wittgenstein’s too. Upon encountering Aurelius’ private exhortations:

we feel a highly particular emotion when we enter, as it were, into the spiritual intimacy of a soul's secrets, and are thus directly associated with the efforts of a man who, fascinated by the only thing necessary – the absolute value of moral good – is trying to do what, in the last analysis, we are all trying to do: to live in complete consciousness and lucidity; to give each of our instants its fullest intensity; and to give meaning to our entire life . Marcus is talking to himself, but we get the impression that he is talking to each one of us. (Hadot 1998: 313)

Likewise, in his personal notes, which is aptly entitled *Movements of Thought*, Wittgenstein is indeed addressing himself but we have good reasons to believe that he is at the same time saying something about our lives. In this view, the philosopher-king and the “beggar who sometimes reluctantly admits that he is no king,” (100) in their moments of receptivity, reflect on questions and

concerns accessible and applicable to many of us. We as the audience or the interlocutors of these exhortations find that their nuanced questions and observations of life are directed at us as well. For example, he writes, “A good word from someone or a friendly smile has a lasting effect on me.” (22) But the question is do I extend the same friendly smile to others? He realizes later on that his judging attitude towards people “unless their appearance or demeanour makes a special impression on me,” (73) is devoid of good words and friendly smile: “A completely unfounded & unjustified judgment.” (73) Now, on the one hand, there is a conflict or tension that needs to be resolved, and, on the other, there is the unsettling realization that “Hardly any one of my remarks that reproach me is written *entirely* without the feeling that at least it is nice that I see my faults.” (66) That is, the acknowledgment of a deficiency in the soul could be just an imitation of integrity and as such it is not “part of one’s new life.” (16)

Likewise, in the diaries one could notice the weight and influence of letters on Wittgenstein’s reflections: “Offensive” letters, “kind” letters, “confession” letters, “late” letters, “last” letters, “dear letters,” “touching” letters, farewell letters, “family” letters and all sorts of innuendos of day-to-day human communications that need to be accounted for. Letters, back then, were able to create “upheaval,” (30) or defuse tensions: kisses that were dodged in the heat of “another serious conversation,” dismissive glances, and the understated shame of realizing that we are no longer “good & tender as in earlier days.” (30) He needs his writings to be an exercise in understanding “the human heart” (82) and not an exercise in cleverness.

In conclusion, one might say, in line with the norms of *hypomnemata*, Wittgenstein’s manuscripts were a place to record not only his philosophical reflections but also to capture fleeting thoughts about life in their relations to his own moral demeanour. In the absence of Socratic dialogues, or perhaps as an alternative to it, *hypomnemata* is a form of *askesis* or working on oneself according to an ideal of wisdom. As for Wittgenstein, it was a private platform “to discuss virtue every day” (*Apology* 38) not in the agora but in the quiet space of “a new page” (26), at the end of “a difficult day,” (86) or after looking at “Northern Lights” in awe. “For first one must live.” (94)

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Wittgenstein and the Evolution of Human Opacity

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Abstract

Despite Wittgenstein's cogent work dissolving the problem of other minds, a lot of philosophy, psychology, and lay thinking continues to labor under the delusion that minds are private phenomena hidden inside our bodies. As Peter Hacker discusses in a recent essay, this mistake has the dismal effect of leading us down many wrong paths in our efforts to understand others and ourselves more clearly. It is the human condition to find others and ourselves opaque sometimes, and the progress we can make towards understanding each other better depends on our properly understanding the nature of our difficulties. Instead, countless philosophers and psychologists continue to proffer bogus theories of internal mental mechanisms that falsify the realities of our lived experiences. In this essay, I pursue a line of thought regarding the origins of language and human forms of life suggested by Wittgenstein in certain of his remarks. By looking at how our psychological language and forms of life likely evolved from the time of the earliest hominids, we might hope to shift our perspective on the nature of mind in such a direction that the folly of the problem of other minds is apparent, and the real nature of human opacity is clarified.

In a recent essay, Peter Hacker argues that the real reasons that other people can be opaque to us, why their thoughts, feelings, and motivations can be so hard to know, have been obscured in philosophy and psychology by their failure to properly settle the problem of other minds (Hacker 2022). Other people are so hard to understand, the confused view claims, because their minds are hidden away within their bodies beyond direct observation. Furthermore, people are often inscrutable to themselves and all the more inscrutable to others because certain portions of our private minds are concealed in the doubly-secret chamber of the unconscious (and, for Freud, the preconscious as well). Hacker follows Wittgenstein's lead and lays out an account that reminds us that something like the reverse is true: it is because the aspects of life that we engage in when talking about our mental lives are so complicated and uncertain that we are tempted to posit hidden phenomena. The facts themselves lie "right before our eyes" (Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value* 1994, 8), so to say, but they are not the sort of facts that can be neatly cataloged and summed.

The assumption that other people are so hard to understand because their interiors are hidden from view has the damaging effect of blinding us to the real nature of our interpersonal difficulties. Hacker writes, "When Romeo avows his passionate love for Juliet, it would be risible to assert that she

conjectures that he has fallen in love with her” (Hacker 2022, 4). A real-life Juliet might question her Romeo’s love, but such suspicions are fundamentally different from the sort of doubts that a scientist might have about the existence of hypothetical entities. Consider the sort of thoughts that someone might have when she wonders if her husband still loves her or if he ever really did. Did he push me to excel in my career for my own good or for his? Is his flattery genuine or is he merely projecting his fantasy of who I am? The uncertainty one faces in such moments, Hacker argues, is ultimately insurmountable even if we might hope to claw our way towards some further clarity than we already have. In moments such as these, we run up against “genuine limitations on our knowledge and understanding of our fellow human beings,” as Hacker note. “Some of these rest on ignorance, others on the constitutional indeterminacy of the mental” (Hacker 2022, 1).

Hacker’s focus is on the wrong turn that western thought took around the time that early modern philosophy was born, when our confused theory of mind appears to have wended its way into the collective imagination. To get ahold of the “constitutional indeterminacy of the mental” and to understand the temptation to flee from it into the false certainties of psychological theories, however, we would do better to look much further back in time, to our anthropological pre-history. By reflecting on the origins of our complex forms of interpersonal life and the psychological language that is integral to them, we might hope to liberate ourselves from the false picture of the mind as internal mechanism. The point is not to do an empirical science of the origins of mind or language, but to use the exercise as a means of revising our way of thinking about the mental along the lines that Wittgenstein intends. It is one method of revealing the grammar of psychological language, in other words, or certain important and problematic dimensions of that language.

Wittgenstein himself sometimes pursues a similar line of naturalistic conjecture for the same purpose. He writes, for example:

I really want to say that scruples in thinking begin with (have their roots in) instinct. Or again: a language-game does not have its origin in consideration. Consideration is part of a language-game. (Wittgenstein, *Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology*, v. 2 1980, §632)

Elsewhere, Wittgenstein says:

I want to regard man here as an animal; as a primitive being to which one grants instinct but not ratiocination. As a creature in a primitive state. Any logic good enough for a primitive means of communication needs no apology from us. Language did not emerge from some kind of ratiocination. (Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value* 1994, §475)

One implication of these remarks that I want to develop here is that human opacity, including our difficulty knowing ourselves, is rooted in the fact that our language is based on animal capacities, not thought, not ratiocination, in either a conscious or an unconscious form. We are animals whose bodies evolved so that we might master the tasks of survival and propagation, and our capacity to master social exchange and the use of psychological language is one dimension of our evolved animal natures. “Consideration,” “thought,” “intention,” “emotion,” and other psychological concepts are at home within the context of our social lives and are not suited to do the theoretical work asked of them in the psychology and philosophy of supposedly hidden minds. They are not terms that do or that can refer to hidden phenomena.

Wittgenstein’s naturalistic bent in his philosophy of language is further expressed in certain of his remarks about pain, amongst other. He says, for example, that it “is a primitive reaction to tend, to treat, the part that hurts when someone else is in pain,” (Wittgenstein, Zettel 1981, §540) a point upon which he elaborates as follows:

But what is the word "primitive" meant to say here? Presumably that this sort of behaviour is pre-linguistic: that a language-game is based on it, that it is the prototype of a way of thinking and not the result of thought ... I want to say: it is characteristic of our language that the foundation on which it grows consists in steady ways of living, regular ways of acting... The basic form of the game must be one in which we act. What has to be accepted, the given, is - so one could say - forms of life. (Wittgenstein, Zettel 1981, §541)

Our language of psychology emerged as a part of these given forms of life that we evolved to be capable of occupying. “Language - I want to say--is a refinement, 'in the beginning was the deed” (Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*

1994, 36). The forms of life that we occupy are remarkably complex and nuanced. Being skeptical of another person's expressions of pain is as much a part of human life as are empathy and sympathy. This complexity of our reactions and our forms of life is an essential feature of Wittgenstein's insights into the nature of human opacity.

To think more clearly about the complexity of our interactions with other people and our efforts to understand them, let us consider a speculative pre-history of our species. The anthropological record suggests that *H. sapiens* descends from one or more groups of small primates who moved down from the trees and began to live at the edges of the African savanna several million years ago. It was then, in response to the demands of life on the ground, that our evolution towards ever larger and more complex groups and ever larger and more complex brains really began (Tattersall 2012, 59-61). It was after taking to the ground that *Australopithecus afarensis* and other early hominids began to live something like the hunter-gatherers who soon evolved from them. It is not certain, but both anatomy and environment suggest that *Australopithecus* lived much like modern day baboons (Tattersall 2012, 58).

A striking and pertinent fact about baboon societies is that they exert such strong social pressure from within the troupe that their further evolution would be shaped more strongly by social demands than by demands of the environment. Infanticide is the leading cause of infant deaths, for example (Cheney 2007, 40), and every individual's survival and success in mating depends heavily on his or her ability to navigate the complexities of baboon social life. Baboon life is highly political in the sense that it is organized by social power, and the most cognitively demanding tasks for a baboon are social. In baboon society, power is arranged both in gender-specific lines and in factions that form alliances and rivalries. The primatologists Dorothy Cheney and Richard Seyfarth write:

To succeed in baboon society, a female must, of course, recognize her own relatives. But to participate in coalitions, she needs more than this. ... Alliances involve not just the support of one individual but also hostility towards another --- and often, by extension, the other animal's family. They require nuanced decisions about when to join, whom to join, whom to threaten, and whom to ignore. (Cheney 2007, 64)

Baboons appear to be incapable of deliberately using vocalizations to manipulate others' beliefs, but they are acutely sensitive to what vocalizations imply regarding social dynamics. According to Cheney and Seyfarth, baboons "cannot hear a vocalization without thinking about the animal who is calling and the events the call describes" (Cheney 2007, 274). A grunt can calm a troupe and a call might trigger anxiety or upheaval depending on who "says" what to whom and how.

Given our assumption that *Australopithecus* had some similar form of society, it follows that the further evolution of hominids was most likely propelled by the increasingly complex demands of social life, particularly as communities grew larger. Social intelligence is the key to success in hominid life, and evolutionary competition favored ever more sophisticated players attuned to subtleties of gesture and vocalization. Though the matter is hardly settled, it is interesting to note that Cheney and Seyfarth speculate that both human language (Cheney 2007, 270) and tool use (Cheney 2007, 282) likely piggy-backed on cognitive developments originally evolved to meet increasingly demanding social problems. They write that "social intelligence shares several features with language, [and] many of the rules and computations found in human language may have first appeared as an elaboration of the rules and computations underlying social interactions" (Cheney 2007, 282).

To flourish in a society of *H. sapiens*, individuals must grasp the social significance of other members' bodily and vocal gestures, and that means seeing those gestures for what they mean when stood against the backdrop of social power. Note that I emphasize social power and, by implication, the utility of psychological language as an instrument of social power, only to cast language in a certain light. Our forms of life have many further dimensions, but to see our psychological vocabulary as a set of tools evolved to serve us *within* the course of hominid life helps illuminate Wittgenstein's insights regarding the nature of human opacity and the nature of psychological language. To speak of what someone else is "thinking" appears in this light not as a speculative hypothesis about someone's inner states, but rather as an instrument used to navigate society and its complex demands. This agrees with both Wittgenstein's recommendation that we think of language as a set of tools (Wittgenstein, PI 1957/1999, §23) and with his emphasis on the foundation of language lying in our animal reactions and capacities.

Psychological concepts such as “thinking” “feeling pain” and “intending” almost certainly existed in a pre-historic languages where they would have been employed in the quotidian tasks of social exchange. To lift them out of that context and suppose that they name hypothetical postulates in a theoretical realm is to take language “on holiday” (Wittgenstein, PI 1957/1999, §38) where it has no legitimate role to play. The error is analogous to the suggestion that “justice” refers to a yet-to-be isolated mechanical force of nature. The psychological conjecture that what evolved were private minds speculating about other private minds is a story told in a vocabulary unsuited to its task. The picture of the private mind is no more than an illustration of how we use psychological language in the course of hominid life. Concepts such as “pain,” “think,” “motive,” and even “unconscious desire” have meaning “only in the stream of life” (Wittgenstein, Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology, v. 2 1980, §687), as Wittgenstein says, and are rendered meaningless when deployed in theories of hidden mental mechanisms.

To return to the matter of human opacity, one thing to say is that evolution apparently shaped us to be able to play strategic games of spotting, sharing, hiding, and dissimulating significant gestures as a means of retaining or gaining social advantage. This is an empirical claim, of course, and the details of the history sketched above are not essential here. What is essential to see is that, whatever the facts of our evolutionary past, psychological language emerged as an element of the forms of life we participate in. This is the point that Wittgenstein is driving at when he says that a concept such as “consideration” is at home *within* a form of life. “Consideration” does not refer to a hypothetical process in a theoretical realm. It is a tool employed by certain *H. sapiens* in the course of social life.

Psychologists commonly suppose that they can use our vocabulary of the mental to describe the hidden causes of our behavior somehow embedded in our nervous system, as though our brains “consider” and “think” in a private realm. This is, more often than not, a source of profound confusion. Evolution molded our hormones, neurotransmitters, cerebral structures, and much else to lead to the evolutionarily desirable outcome of producing offspring who pass on our genes yet again. There is no reason to assume that those biological processes follow a logic reflected in a discourse evolved to give us a strategic advantage as players in the games of hominid life. In a book arguing that

human mating habits follow the logic predicted by Darwin's theory of evolution (despite what we might want to believe about ourselves), David Buss writes:

A man whose increased status opens up better mating alternatives does not think to himself, 'Well, if I leave my current wife, I can increase my reproductive success by mating with younger, more reproductively valuable women.' He simply finds other women increasingly attractive and perceives that they are more attainable than before. (Buss 1994, 172)

The man that Buss imagines need not entertain such thoughts either consciously or in the secret chamber of the unconscious. The body evolved to lay the foundations of our forms of life as it does. My point is not that Buss has the facts of human mating right (or wrong), and neither is it that his sort of explanation is more valuable than sensitive poetry, a history of gender relations or any other insightful study of human mating patterns. My point is that Buss's mode of explanation respects the categorical gap between the causal systems that shape our actions on the one hand and the sorts things we say about ourselves and others in a psychological vocabulary on the other hand. The language of psychology that evolved to play a part *within* the drama of *H. sapiens* life is unsuited to describe the biological processes that undergird those forms life, and theories of mind that violate this principle usually do more to scupper our understanding of ourselves than to clarify it. As Wittgenstein says, our forms of life are the given, not the products of ratiocination. In this sense, we are often opaque to each other and to ourselves, as there are causal forces at work in our lives that evade the language we ordinarily use to understand ourselves and others. This is one facet of the "constitutional indeterminacy of the mental" of which Hacker writes.

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Wittgenstein's Battlefield. The Kerensky Offensive

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Abstract

The text draws attention to the year 1917 in Wittgenstein's biography, probably the less known although most interesting from many points of view. On the basis of press releases covering that period, I try to reconstruct Wittgenstein's warfare during the last year spent on the Eastern front.

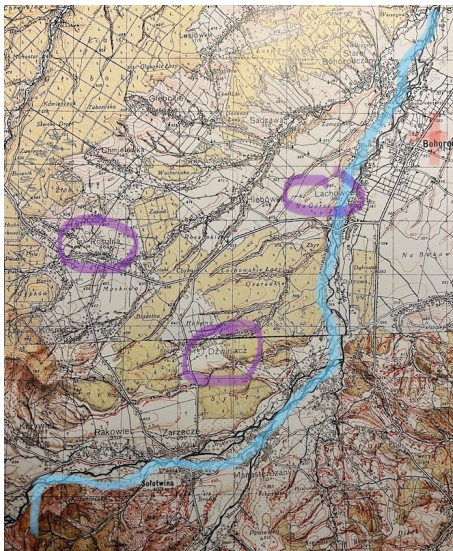


Illustration 1.

This paper is part of a larger project describing the historical and cultural embedment of Wittgenstein's thoughts during the First World War, with a special interest in its white spots such as the year 1917.

After the officer school in Olomouc, promoted to the rank of cadet (aspiring) officer, Ludwig Wittgenstein was posted once again to the Bukovina region, or the eastern foothills of the Carpathian Mountains, with the capital in Chernivtsi. He left Vienna after the Christmas break on the 6th of January 1917. Since diary entries of that time are missing (and also the exchanged correspondence, mostly with Paul Engelmann and Hermine Wittgenstein, is rather laconic), that period is one of the dark spots in his biography (McGuinness 1988: 257-259; Monk 1990: 150-151; Baum 2014: 100-101)

The last entry of MS 103 was written on the 10th of January 1917 on the way to the frontline. It reads as follows:

If suicide is allowed, then everything is allowed.

If anything is not allowed then suicide is not allowed.

This throws a light on the nature of ethics, for suicide is, so to speak, the elementary sin.

And when one investigates it is like investigating mercury vapor in order to investigate the nature of vapors.

Or is even suicide in itself neither good nor evil? (Wittgenstein/Perloff 2022: 191, 193)

Places where Wittgenstein stayed for almost a whole year (from the 19th of January till the end of November, even, possibly, till the beginning of 1918) with a break in February and a month-long break in June) vanish in obscurity, from which only residual military data is known. Meanwhile, Wittgenstein as an officer, for the first time, had men under his command and achieved considerable success on the battlefield, for which he was awarded two medals (Baum 2014: 101). In an attempt to illuminate this darkness of oblivion, one must start by explaining his position in Northern Bukovina, a land crisscrossed by trade routes with the Black Sea. Its geographic boundaries were defined by two obstacles, extremely difficult to overcome, the more difficult Carpathian mountain range and the Dniester River which was reinforced by the old-aged fortresses (Chocim, Kamieniec Podolski). Wittgenstein was already there in 1916 (Pilch 2018: 133), when Austro-Hungarians had been driven back from the Dniester and pushed deep into Galicia, while in 1917, they were trying to recapture cities up to Chernivtsi. To understand his position early that year I will refer to an account that appeared in the émigré magazine *Polonia* published in the summer of 1917. Covering a wide-ranging area of warfare, it contributes valuable information that facilitates understanding troop movements:

[T]he ranks of the revolutionary army failed to hold on to the captured positions. The agitation of the "Bolsheviks" did their part. Dissension and disorganization reigned anew in the ranks of the two attacking armies, even though Kerensky had chosen only those units in which he placed his trust. Soldiers abused their superiors and refused to obey. Then, on the 23rd of June, at a moment when Russia's political and internal situation was already critical, the Austro-Germans launched their counter-offensive. The

main effort was directed toward Ternopil, east of Zloczow [Złoczów]. This offensive was successful – the Russian lines were broken. Then the Germans immediately threw a great mass of troops, preceded by cavalry, into the created gap. These forces pushed toward the southeast, following the watershed between the Styrpa and Seret rivers. Thus, the Russian army located on the Halich-Brzejanj [Halicz-Brzeżany] line suddenly had its rear threatened.

A general back away began, and at the same time, the Austrians moved south of the Dniester and advanced rapidly through the Prut and Cheremosh valleys. Ternopil, Buczacz, and Husiatyn [Husiatyń] on one side of the Dniester, and Stanislawow [Stanisławów], Kolomea [Kołomyja], and Chernivtsi on the other, fell back into Austro-German hands. Today, all of Bukovina and Galicia, except for Brody, are occupied by Central Powers troops. (*Polonia*, 1917: 7)

Wittgenstein was among those Austrians who "moved south of the Dniester". He belonged to the 42nd Honved's Infantry Division under the command of three Croatian generals: Luka Šnjarić from February 1916 followed by Anton Lipošćak (from March 1917) replaced in June by Mihovil Mihaljević. One might ask why Wittgenstein found himself in the Hungarian part of the army (in a division that presented the following national composition: 61% Hungarians, 27% Romanians, 97% Croats, and Serbs), the answer is that he was part of reserves attached to troops depleted during the Brusilov offensive. In this company, Wittgenstein had every right to curse his comrades-in-arms, as the division was called "devilish" (in Croatian "Vražja divizija"), due to the cruelty with which they treated Serbs in 1914 on the southern front (including rape and torture among the civilian population).

The 42nd Division belonged to the XIII Corps of the Third Army. It was headed by Pflanzer-Baltin, but after losses in Galicia in 1916 he was dismissed from his post, replaced briefly by Karl von Kirchbach and then, a Hungarian, Herman Kövess.

Since February Wittgenstein's position was one of the central targets of the Russians' advance towards Lviv and the petroleum fields of Galicia. All the places mentioned by McGuinness are positions next to Bystrzyca Solotvinska [Sołotwińska] opposing the Russians' occupied - Bohorodczany.

According to a local Polish newspaper (*Płocki Kurier*) from the 16th of February, a Russian attack was repulsed on the southwest side from Bohorodczany on the Solotvinska Bystrzyca river. These may concern precisely Wittgenstein's activity mentioned by McGuinness (McGuinness 1988: 258). Wittgenstein is known to have participated in a patrol action to the town of Dzviniacz [Dźwiniacz] (15.03.1917) (McGuinness 1998: 257) standing on a hill above the Solotvinska Bystrzyca River. Next Wittgenstein's regiment moved to Lachovtse [Lachowce], almost opposite Bohordczany [illustration 1] (end of June 1917), and then was forced back (west) to Rosulna [illustration 2 and 5] (Baum 2014: 100). When the Kerensky's offensive was launched on the first of July, the central powers were pushed up north to the next river - the Lomnica [Łomnica] (Waugh 2008: 233). At that point, Wittgenstein's regiment was located in Ldziany [Łdziany] (McGuinness 1988: 258) (50 km northwest). These battles were decisive for two reasons: first, it was the last Russian offensive of the war and, secondly, conducted by revolutionary troops. Henceforth the whole world was observing Bukovina, wondering how Russia had changed after the February Revolution. Wittgenstein was therefore involved in the first clashes with the "new Russia", whose tsar was detained in Tsarskoye Selo under guard. The Russian offensive from the Bystrzyca Solotvinska to the Lomnica river was covered by newspapers around the world from Bombay, Toronto, Hobard to New York [illustration 6]. New Zealand's *Grey River Argus* wrote: "Russian official: We crossed to the left bank of the Lomnica and captured heights, driving back the enemy north-west of Chiluo [Kałusz]. We occupied the villages of Studzianka and Podhorki, and are now engaging the enemy, who is protecting the crossing of the Lomnica southwest of Kalush in the direction of Rozniatov and Dolina" (July 15).

The New-York Times on the 18th of July reported [illustration 4]: "Pressing, with the aid of heavy German reinforcements, their counterattacks on the upper and middle Lomnica river, in southern Galicia, the enemy has forced Korniloff's Russians to retire from Kalusz and retreat back upon the river. They also retook the village of Novica but were ejected on the arrival of reserves [Petrograd War Office report:] In the section of Novica-Lodziany [probably misspelled "Łdziany"]-Krasne our troops continued attacks, with the object of throwing the enemy back across the Lomnica. The enemy made stubborn resistance. With the approach of the evening, he counterattacked in

dense waves from the direction of Selohy-Kagnka, and, pressing back our troops, occupied the village of Novica..." (The New-York Times 18th of July)

The press release describes exactly Wittgenstein's military activity in Łdziany (McGuinness 1988: 258). The Entente countries press was rather optimistic till the middle of July, describing a series of successes "taking over 2,000 prisoners and 30 guns during the two days fight we continue to pursue the enemy in the direction of Dolina, (west of Stanislaus)[...] We have taken over 10,000 prisoners in advance towards Dolina, in addition to 80 guns and large heirs of trench mortars and machine guns." (Grey River Argus July 16, 1917). When Dolina, Rozniatov, and Kałusz are mentioned, it only shows the importance of the stand in Łdziany (far more southeast on the southern side of the Łomnica). Maintaining this place must have been of high importance for the Austro-Hungarian counteroffensive.

The Kerensky offensive is described from an insider and literary perspective by Victor Shklovsky. The memoirs of the famous Russian formalist and writer contradict McGuinness's thesis that the Russian army opposite to Wittgenstein's position "was not greatly affected by Red [...] propaganda" (McGuinness 1988: 258). Shklovsky has been sent to agitate and bear revolutionary spirit to soldiers by Kerensky himself and described the mood of each military unit. Fortunately for Wittgenstein scholars, he meets exactly the troops that are facing Wittgenstein and will participate in the capture of Rosulna and the battles around Łdziany, being the turning point of the offensive [among which the 47 regiment see illustration 3]. As a result of his description of the villages left by "Germans" just hours earlier, the wet forest, Austro-Hungarian highly sophisticated trenches (in comparison to Russian ones), we get a vivid image of Wittgenstein's battlefield. One might even hypothesize with good reason that the machine guns firing without interruption (Shklovsky 1967: 225) were directed from Wittgenstein's observation post. Two disciples of Tolstoy, both ardent readers of *Hadji Murat*, were passing each other across one field of the frontline. Both would agree with Tolstoy's thesis that war like any other human activity (trade or science...) is only meant to learn the moral laws by which they live (Tolstoy 1885). Following Wittgenstein's steps, just hours or at most days after him, and then, after the battle of Łdziany, escaping his army corps Shklovsky concluded: "I

had to be in the worst units during their worst moments" (Shklovsky 1967: 229). Who would have dared to make such an avowal in Wittgenstein's name, taking under consideration that although on the opposite side, he nevertheless crossed the same cornfields, and wet forests of Rosulna and Łdziany under heavy fire from both sides.

During the rest of the campaign, Wittgenstein famously took part in the capture of Starunia on July 24th (McGuinness 1988: 259). He must also have participated in seizing Nadvorna [Nadwórna] and then Kolomea. *Voice of Lublin* wrote on the 26th of July 1917:

Austrian-Hungarian troops occupied Stanisławów and Nadvorna, and German troops occupied Ternopil. The pursuing enemy corps hit the fierce resistance from the retreating troops several times [...] The Nadvornianska [Nadwórnianska] Bystrzyca could only be crossed after heavy fighting. (*Głos Lubelski*)

The failure of the last Russian offensive inspired the "July days" in Petersburg a subsequent partial revolution directed against Kerensky.

In August, allied troops moved south as the *Głos Polityczny* journal [Political Voice] reported, on the first of August they occupied Kachurnik north of Chernivtsi and broke into the "forested mountainous area south of the former state border." This area was already known to Wittgenstein from Brusilov's offensive. Next to this area on the east of the forested Kociuba Mountain is precisely the Savokrynicznyi [Sawokrynicznyi] Kordenpost in which Wittgenstein served in May-June 1916. (Pilch 2018: 133)

The excellent offensive spirit of our infantry made it possible, after prior artillery preparation, to quickly break the enemy's lines and bring the victorious forces closer to the main town of Bukovina. This rapid advance was assisted by Croatian troops advancing toward the city simultaneously from the north.

That this sentence refers to the 42nd HID is clear from the term "Croatian" troops.

Wittgenstein thus participated in the fighting that, despite the capture of Chernivtsi, moved the frontier farther toward the Dniester. In particular, this involved the village of Boyany [Bojany] and Dolzhok Hill [Dolžok] (McGuinness 1988: 259), which was a wooded elevation that provided important positions. We have some photos of that place coming from the winter of 1916, because of heavy fighting in this area.

Dziennik Kujawski from the 30th of August 1917 published a German communiqué: "On the northeastern bank of the Prut River, the Rhine, Bavarian, and Austro-Hungarian regiments attacked a strongly fortified position on Doleot [Dolžok] hill and the village of Bojan. The fierce resistance of the Russians was broken. We took 1000 prisoners, 6 guns, and numerous machine guns. At the Rąkitna section, we repulsed the enemy with heavy losses". (*Dziennik Kujawski* 30th of August nr 197)

The political daily *Głos Polityczny* wrote in August 1917 in reports from the war front "East of Chernivtsi German and Austro-Hungarian divisions captured the village of Rarańcze and the western part of the town of Bojan on the Prut". (*Głos Polityczny*)

This contribution to Wittgenstein's biography is not futile when we realize that for many reasons this "missing" year from the point of view of his biography is of great importance. Firstly, from the historical point of view, the eyes of the whole world were focused exactly on the Bukovina region where Wittgenstein was in service, as it is evidenced by the worldwide news releases, mainly because of the consequences of the February revolution. Russia had just been thrown into the greatest political transformation of its modern history. During the same war, the Russian army under the command of Tsar Nicholas II moved into an offensive bearing the name of the minister of war of the Provisional Government – Alexander Kerensky. As far as I know, no attempt has been made to consider Wittgenstein's words addressed to Hermine on the twelve of April 1917 "Here [that is with the escalation of war] we are dealing – I believe – with a complete victory of materialism, and the demise of any sense of good and evil" (Wittgenstein 2019: 123) as a reaction to fighting with the revolutionary Russian army. The morale of that army was low, revolutionary ideas were spreading, distrust towards officers was growing, and acts of fraternizing with the enemy to put an end to military operations were

increasing, which was the reason for Kerensky's visit to the frontline. In the same daily newspaper informing about that matter, an editorial was informing about the return to Kraków of the Austro-Hungarian ambassador to the US Count Tarnowski, accompanied by other noticeable Austrians, as a result of the American army joining the allied forces (*Kurjer Poznański* 26th May: 1, 3). Among them on the same boat, Rudolf Wittgenstein, Ludwig's older brother, was returning to homeland aiming to enroll into the army. In autumn 1917 for the first time three Wittgenstein brothers – Ludwig, Rudolf, and Paul (at office work) were engaged in military service.

Another reason for reclaiming this period is that it helps to understand Wittgenstein's continuous suffering from the companionship of fellow soldiers. The fact of being attached to the Croatian "devil's division" – the 42nd HID – shows that war life was for Wittgenstein a continuous challenge to "recognizing the humanity in man". Finally, the fact that he spent that most intense year of war in Bukovina and Galicia shouldn't be neglected. This mythical land used to be one of the most multicultural, polyethnic, and intensively saturated with religious phenomena (Chasidic, Orthodox, Catholic, Greek-catholic, Lutheran, etc) places in Europe. Wittgenstein was engaged in fighting back Chernivtsi, so he must have experienced at least a percentage of the cultural richness of that town: "Assimilated Jews and educated Germans, Ukrainians, Romanians [...] - philosophers, political thinkers, writers, artists, composers or mystics. Karl Kraus had a numerous commune of admirers in Chernivtsi; you could meet them, with *Die Fackel* in hand, in the streets and parks, in the surrounding forests and on the banks of the Pruth [...] There were Schopenhauerians and Nietzsche worshippers, Spinozians, Kantists, Marxists, Freudians" (Schlögel 2019: 51). Chernivtsi was not an oasis in the province of the empire, but a "melting pot of spirituality and languages". It is therefore also important to consider that these were times when Wittgenstein asked to send him works by Goethe, Mörike (31.03.17), and a small edition of the Bible (4.09.1917). He also received from Engelmann Uhland's poem *Count Eberhard's Hawthorn* and perhaps we should consider these geographical and historical circumstances as corresponding to these lines:

...The while he slowly rode
Along a woodland way;

He cut from the hawthorn bush

A little fresh green spray. (Engelmann 1967: 83-84)

Consequently, while the “sprig became a tree”, the memory of these days was overshadowing the inexpressible that Wittgenstein had resisted expressing.

Indeed, it is on the reverse side of a letter from Hermine, dated April 1917, that the final clause of the *Tractatus* can be found, probably written afterward by Wittgenstein: “Whereof one cannot talk, thereof one must be silent” (Wittgenstein 2019: 78).

Illustration 2.



Illustration 3



Illustration 4



Illustration 5



Illustration 6



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[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/
File:Scheinbatterie_und_maskierte_Straße_zwischen_Rosulna_und_Kosmacz,_30.April_1917._\(Bild](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Scheinbatterie_und_maskierte_Stra%C3%9Fe_zwischen_Rosulna_und_Kosmacz,_30.April_1917._(Bild)

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Acknowledgement

I want to thank Martin Pilch for his valuable comments and suggestions which helped me to improve my paper.

Tractarian Objects and the Concept *Horse* Paradox

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Abstract

In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein describes elementary sentences as concatenations of names, and the states of affairs they represent as configurations of objects which these names refer to. He does not seem to make room either for predicates in the elementary sentences, or for concepts, properties or relations as constituents of states of affairs. Although such view is at odds both with Frege's and with Russell's views, I argue that its philosophical sources are to be found in Frege's concept *horse* paradox and Russell's understanding of a proposition's being about a certain object. Frege's notorious claim that the concept *horse* is not a concept, but an object, indicates that objects can be used as proxies to represent concepts in sentences. Russell, on the other hand, understood propositions as structured entities that contain objects they are about as their constituent parts; in his view, an object cannot feature in the content that a sentence expresses in a merely accidental way, but characterises it necessarily. It is the adoption of these two insights (one from Frege and one from Russell) that led Wittgenstein to his controversial claims about objects and names in the *Tractatus*.

1

One of the striking features of the elementary propositions (*Elementarsätze*) in the *Tractatus* is that they consist only of names (*Namen*) (TLP § 5.55). Once fully analysed, they turn out to be nothing but concatenations of names (TLP § 4.22): they contain neither predicates nor expressions of any other semantic category. Accordingly, (possible) states of affairs (*Sachverhalte*) represented by these propositions are built up only of objects (*Gegenstände*): they are configurations of objects (TLP § 2.0272) and contain entities of no other ontological category (such as properties or relations) as their constituent parts. This, apparently, puts Wittgenstein's views of language, and of the facts it depicts, in stark contrast to those of Frege or Russell.

Frege (1984b: 193) believed that a meaningful sentence, regardless of how many saturated parts it contains, must also have at least one unsaturated part, which “glues” the other parts together and makes up the unity of the sentence. This unsaturated expression is called functional expression by Frege, since it contains an empty place for an argument (marked by a line or a variable). The reference (*Bedeutung*) of such an expression is an unsaturated entity, or function (*Funktion*): predicates (*Prädikate*) are just a special kind of functional expressions, namely those that refer to functions which assign truth values to objects, i.e. concepts (*Begriffe*) (Frege 1984a: 146).

In this regard, similar views can also be found in Russell's analysis of atomic propositions. Although these propositions contain particulars, each of them must also have a universal as its constituent part: a property or a relation (Russell 2010: 27). Hence, an atomic sentence cannot be built exclusively out of names (Russell 2001: 28), just as the proposition it expresses cannot contain only particulars.

Wittgenstein's position thus seems to sit oddly both with Frege's and with Russell's, even though he names the two, in the preface to the *Tractatus*, as the major influences on his early work. I will argue that his idiosyncratic view of objects results from an attempt to marry Frege's insights about the concept *horse* paradox with Russell's understanding of what a proposition's being about a particular object amounts to.

2

In "On Concept and Object", replying to Benno Kerry's criticism, Frege (1984b) claimed that his distinction between an object and a concept is absolute and, hence, that it cannot happen that something is both an object and a concept. The paradoxical consequence of such a view is that, according to Frege, of no concept it can be truthfully said that it is a concept. The sentence "The concept *horse* is a concept" is meaningful but false: the term "the concept *horse*" is saturated and thus refers to an (abstract) object, which, consequently, cannot be also a concept and, hence, cannot fall under the (first-level) concept referred to by the predicate "x is concept" (Frege 1984b: 195). That *horse* is a concept can only be "shown" in the predicative use of the expression which denotes it (Frege 1984b: 201-202), as in a sentence

(1) Bucephalus is a horse.

After Peter Geach's (1976) influential interpretation, Frege's concept *horse* paradox was identified as the main philosophical source of Wittgenstein's distinction between what can be meaningfully said and what can only be shown in the *Tractatus*; that it also importantly informed Wittgenstein's understanding of objects has not been sufficiently recognised.

Although the concept denoted by the predicate “*x* is a horse” and the object denoted by the name “the concept *horse*” are entities which belong to different categories, they are not completely unrelated: the sense (*Sinn*) of sentence (1) can be conveyed equally well with the sentence

(2) The concept *horse* is instantiated on Bucephalus.

Sentences (1) and (2) share their truth-conditions: in Frege’s view, they express the same content or thought. The object referred to by the noun phrase “the concept *horse*” is a proxy for the concept referred to by the predicate “*x* is a horse” (Proops 2013: 79) and can be said to represent the concept (Parsons 1986: 452): such proxies enable speaking about concepts through the use of objects (Frege 1984b: 197). In a similar fashion, concepts of second or some higher order can have their proxies in lower-order concepts and, ultimately, in objects: all concepts thus can be represented solely by means of objects. The proxy object reading of Frege’s concept *horse* paradox has been most thoroughly developed by Terence Parsons, who, on the other hand, thought that Frege was misled by the outward grammatical appearance of the term “the concept *horse*” into believing that it must be saturated. However, following through his initial assumption, it seems that Frege had no other way to go but to endorse some sort of proxy object theory; in Parsons’s (1986: 455) view, the way Frege describes a proxy for a certain concept is in many respects similar to how he talks about the concept’s extension. Building on Parsons’s ideas, Ian Proops (2013: 80-83) has recently shown that the claims about objects (or lower-level concepts) going proxy for concepts (or higher-level concepts) can be correctly expressed in *Begriffsschrift*, thus proving their meaningfulness within Fregean semantics.

3

Unlike Frege’s intensional account of content expressed by a meaningful sentence, Russell, in his logical atomist phase and earlier, had a more fine-grained analysis of sentence meaning. In his view, what a sentence expresses are not merely its truth-conditions, or an unstructured proposition, but rather a structured or, as it later came to be called, a Russellian proposition. If a sentence is used to make a claim about a certain object, then the proposition it expresses has to contain that very object as its part: Russell thus gave an

account of *aboutness* in *mereological* terms. If we, for the sake of example, suppose that Socrates is an object, then Socrates, the very man, just is what all the propositions about him have in common, regardless of how different they may be in other respects (Russell 2010: 19). If Bismarck had used the sentence “Bismarck is an astute diplomatist”, by it he would have managed to express a proposition that no one could have expressed but him, because it contains Bismarck as one of its constituent parts. In Russell’s view, only Bismarck has a direct knowledge by acquaintance with himself, which is a necessary condition for being able to refer to Bismarck by a logically proper name. In mouths of others, the same sentence would express a proposition which might be equivalent in truth value to the one that would have been expressed by Bismarck himself, but which, nevertheless, could not be the same proposition since there is no Bismarck among the objects it contains (Russell 2001: 30-32). Hence, sentences (1) and (2) do not express the same proposition since, if Frege’s proposed analysis is correct, the proposition expressed by sentence (2) contains the abstract object denoted by “the concept *horse*” as its constituent part, while the proposition expressed by sentence (1) does not. An object cannot appear in the content expressed by a sentence in a merely accidental way: if it characterises an analysis of the sentence’s meaning, it must feature in each and every admissible analysis.

4

Wittgenstein accepted, though in a somewhat modified form, this constraint of Russell’s. To be quite precise, he did not think that objects were parts of what an elementary sentence, containing names of these objects, expresses, for that is the sentence’s sense (or its truth-conditions). Nevertheless, objects appear as parts of the sentence’s would-be truth-maker, i.e. the state of affairs that the sentence depicts. If, at some level of logical analysis of a sentence, a name is reached, then the object denoted by that name must be a part of the represented *Sachverhalt*. For a name is a semantically simple expression and admits of no further analysis: hence, by additionally analysing the rest of the sentence, we can discover what other objects are also in the represented *Sachverhalt*, but cannot remove the reference to the already recognised object. Consequently, if a name appears in any analysis of an elementary sentence, it must also appear in its final or complete analysis, which is, according to

Wittgenstein, unique (TLP § 3.25). Analogously, if a linguistically represented state of affairs is featured by a particular object, it is necessarily so: taking the object away would inevitably change that which is represented by the sentence.

The importance of the abovementioned considerations cannot be overstated, for they buttress what Wittgenstein called his fundamental thought (*Grundgedanke*) in the whole of *Tractatus*, namely that “logical constants’ are not representatives” (TLP § 4.0312). Logical connectives, in Wittgenstein’s view, do not refer to abstract objects, as Russell thought at the time of working on *Theory of Knowledge*. If negation, for instance, were a name of an object, then $\sim\sim p$ could not represent the same chunk of reality as p , for the former would contain as its constituent part the object denoted by negation, while the latter would not (TLP § 5.44); in such a case $\sim\sim p$ and p would not share a common *Sinn* and would not express the same thought. It is important to stress here that the *reason* why Wittgenstein believed that two sentences, which represent two states of affairs such that one of them contains a certain object a and the other does not, could not express the same thought *is not* because the latter sentence can be true in worlds without a , while the former cannot, since there are no such worlds in Wittgenstein’s view. He claimed that possible worlds do not differ from one another with regard to objects they contain (TLP §§ 2.022-2.0231), but only in view of how these objects are combined together into *Sachverhalte*. The real reason, as suggested above, lies in his adoption of Russell’s principle that being about a specific object is an essential characteristic of a thought.

Quite analogously to the example with negation, if “the concept *horse*” is a name just as “Bucephalus”, as Frege claims, the thought expressed by sentence (2) involves the reference to the object named by “the concept *horse*”. This object thus has to feature in every sufficiently carried out analysis of the thought in question. Since that thought cannot contain both the object named by “the concept *horse*” and the property (or, as Frege would say, concept) denoted by the predicate “ x is a horse” (i.e. both the concept and its proxy object), the analysis of the thought into Bucephalus and *horse* cannot be its complete analysis. Hence, one cannot obtain the final structure of a sentence if one stops at the level of analysis at which names are still being distinguished from predicates; the predicates contain hidden names for so-called proxy

objects and should be analysed further, until only the names remain. Frege believed that the elementary sentence Fa could be equally well analysed into “ a is an F ” or “the concept F is instantiated on a ”; in Wittgenstein’s view, however, the former cannot be the full analysis, and is merely an abbreviation for the latter. The same applies to relational expressions: Rab can be interpreted as “ a stands in R to b ” or “the relation R is instantiated on a and b ”, where “the relation R ” is a name (which thus denotes not a relation, but an object). Frege would be satisfied with both readings, but Wittgenstein, if my suggestion is right, only with the latter one. Therefore, every elementary sentence can be understood as claiming that the relation of instantiation holds between some objects. But, it may be objected, this still leaves something besides objects at the end of analysis, namely the relation of instantiation. This objection presents no difficulty for Wittgenstein, since he would treat the relation of instantiation as what he labelled as formal concepts, which “cannot, in fact, be represented by means of a function, as concepts proper can” (TLP § 4.126). The relation of instantiation is not another constituent part of the represented *Sachverhalt* but merely the way “objects fit into one another like the links of a chain” (TLP § 2.03); analogously, instantiation is not represented by some special expression in an analysed sentence, besides names (see TLP § 3.1432), but instead it corresponds to the linear order of names within the sentence. Two or more objects can stand in many different relations, and it is not possible to linguistically represent all these relations in a *formally* different way; however, if by means of Fregean proxies, all these relations are reduced only to instantiation between objects, the mere order of names will suffice.

The philosophical motivation for Wittgenstein’s controversial claims that an elementary sentence consists only of names and that the state of affairs it represents contains objects only is to be found, if I am right, in Frege’s concept *horse paradox* and Russell’s understanding of aboutness. I will here only note that my proposed interpretation is not in accord with that of Max Black (1971), who believed that Wittgenstein by “name” understood any semantically simple expression, be it a traditional name or a predicate, and by “object” what we would normally call a simple object, a primitive property or a primitive relation. On the other hand, it is close in spirit to the interpretation of Elizabeth Anscombe, who admitted of objects only and maintained that material properties, such as being red, are “formed by a configuration of

objects” (1959: 111). There is, however, an important difference: while Anscombe uncompromisingly accepted Wittgenstein’s “objects only” ontology, she allowed for different objects instantiating the material property of being red by their taking part in configurations with *different* groups of others objects; if my suggestion points in the right direction, each of these configurations would have to contain among its constituents the proxy object for redness, that is, in Fregean terms, the object denoted by “the concept *red*”.

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Acknowledgement

My research has been supported by the Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovation of the Republic of Serbia (451-03-47/2023-01/200163) and the University of Rijeka, Croatia (uniri-human-18-239).

Die Ästhetik des Schweigens. Susan Sontag reflektiert Ludwig Wittgenstein

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Abstract

Susan Sontag (1933-2004) hat sich wiederholt mit Leben und Werk Ludwig Wittgensteins auseinandergesetzt und an zentralen Stellen ihres Œuvres führt sie ihn als Referenz für eigene Thesen an. Ihr biografischer Zugriff folgt zunächst einem romantischen Geniebegriff, für ihre Studienzeit in Harvard (1955-57) benennt sie Wittgenstein als einen der prägendsten intellektuellen Einflüsse. In ihrer Bibliothek, die zusammen mit ihrem Nachlass in der University of California verwahrt wird (*Coll. 612*), finden sich rund fünfzig Bücher von und über Wittgenstein, die von ihr größtenteils durchgearbeitet und mit Unterstreichungen und Anmerkungen versehen wurden. Auch Sontags Tagebücher und Notizhefte belegen ihre intensive Wittgenstein-Rezeption, die letztlich auch ihr Selbstverständnis als Kritikerin und kritische Denkerin berührt. Umso überraschender ist es, dass dieser Beziehung bislang kaum Beachtung geschenkt wurde. Sontags Reflexionen zu Wittgenstein betreffen eine neue Wahrnehmungsweise von Kunst und Nicht-Kunst, die Verbindung von ethischer und ästhetischer Betrachtung und die Öffnung eines Resonanzraums für Spiritualität jenseits des Schweigens. In seinem aphoristischen und sich bisweilen an der Grenze zur Poesie bewegenden Schreibstil erkennt Sontag eine adäquate Form der Weltbeschreibung und ein Vorbild für ihr eigenes Werk.

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bewegenden Schreibstil erkennt Sontag eine adäquate Form der Weltbeschreibung und ein Vorbild für ihr eigenes Werk.

1. Begabung, Zweifel und Verzicht

Als Kind in ihrer Familie stets unglücklich, sich unverstanden, als Außenseiterin begreifend, hält die junge Sontag schon früh Ausschau nach möglichen Wahlverwandtschaften und Vorbildern. Ihre ersten Notizen zu Wittgenstein sind von einem romantischen Geniebegriff geprägt. Rückblickend hält sie kritisch fest: „[I]ch wusste [...], dass ich nicht klug genug war, um [...] ein Wittgenstein [...] zu sein. [...] ich bin kein Genie“ (Sontag 2013: 177). Von Selbstzweifeln geplagt ist sie, ähnlich wie ihr Vorbild, auf der Suche nach Aufrichtigkeit. Sie fühlt sich unrein, kämpft mit Unzulänglichkeiten und Schuldgefühlen. Wie Wittgenstein liest sie Dostojewski und Tolstoi. Ihr Tagebuch bietet die Möglichkeit zur Selbstreflexion und ist zugleich Ansporn zur Selbstformung. In zahlreichen Listen hält Sontag fest, was sie lesen, lernen, an sich ändern will. Als 23-jährige Harvard-Studentin zählt sie Wittgenstein neben Platon und Nietzsche zu den Philosophen, die sie am meisten verehrt. Im Rückblick führt sie nur Wittgenstein für ihre gesamte Harvardzeit von 1955 bis 1957 unter der Überschrift „Meine geistige Formung“ auf (Sontag 2013: 174). Während dieser Studienzeit hatte sie den *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*, die *Philosophischen Untersuchungen*, sowie *Das Blaue und das Braune Buch* durchgearbeitet. Bei Rogers Garland Albritton, dem Leiter der Fakultät mit Schwerpunkt „Philosophie des Geistes“ und einem großem Wittgenstein-Kenner, belegt sie im Wintersemester 1956/57 ein Seminar zum „Mind-Body-Problem“. In ihrer über achtzigseitigen Mitschrift finden sich zahlreiche Zitate aus Wittgensteins *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* (insbesondere §243-464) mit ergänzenden Fragen, wie: Besteht ein dualistisches Verhältnis zwischen Leib und Seele? Wo lässt sich das Denken lokalisieren? Ist ein Körper mit einer Person gleichzusetzen? Und: Inwieweit können Worte Empfindungen (wie beispielsweise Verliebtheit) ausdrücken? Unter den Aspekten eines „poetic life“ und einer „aesthetic attitude“ (Sontag papers UCLA, Sign 612, Box 153, F.8) findet sie bei Wittgenstein Stimulanzen, auf die sie in ihrem Leben wiederholt zurückgreifen wird. Das Verhältnis von Sinnlichkeit und Askese, von Aufrichtigkeit und künstlerischem Ausdruck, von Inhalt und Form steht bei ihrer Wittgenstein-Rezeption im Vordergrund (Jaspers 2022).

An ihrem 32. Geburtstag notiert Sontag – nach einer Auflistung all ihrer persönlichen Defizite – dass sie sich Wittgensteins Tagebücher kaufen will. Im selben Jahr, 1965, beginnt sie mit Notizen für ihren Aufsatz über *The Aesthetics of Silence*. Darin spürt sie den Verbindungen zwischen Kunst und Spiritualität nach, und Wittgensteins *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* dient ihr dabei als Referenz. In ihrem Tagebuch notiert sie: „Wittgenstein // [...] Abkehr von der Berufung: W. – arbeitet als Lehrer, Krankenpfleger [...] Beschreibung [seines] Werkes als belanglos –“ (Sontag 2013: 106). In dem Essay führt sie aus, Wittgensteins „Absage an eine Berufung“ wurde „von der Erklärung begleitet, er betrachte seine früheren Leistungen in [...] [der] Philosophie [...] als Bagatelle, als bedeutungslos. Doch diese Entscheidung, dauerhaft zu schweigen, hebt [sein] Werk nicht auf. Im Gegenteil, sie verleiht dem, was abgebrochen wurde, rückwirkend zusätzliche Kraft und Autorität.“ (Sontag 2011: 13f.) Wittgenstein betreibe eine „als Kunstform praktizierte Philosophie“ (ebd., 14), deren Ziel sich vielleicht nur dadurch erreichen lasse, dass dieser „Kunst eine Absage erteilt wird.“ Wittgensteins Schweigen versteht Sontag als eine Übung in Askese in „einem Reich der Meditation, der Vorbereitung auf geistiges Reifen, als Prüfung“. Sie meint, Parallelen in der zeitgenössischen künstlerischen Praxis zu erkennen. Gerade die Performance- und Happening-Kunst zeige die positive Möglichkeit der Destruktion, die Chance zum Neuanfang (Jaspers 2020: 163ff.). Wittgensteins radikale Lebensentscheidungen (Verzicht auf das ererbte Vermögen, Wahl einer praktischen Tätigkeit, Wechsel des Wohnorts) imponieren ihr. Sontag selbst nimmt mit längeren Reisen verbundene Projekte oder Partnerwechsel wiederholt zum Anlass, um sich in neuen Rollen zu erproben. Ähnlich wie in Nietzsche, über den sie in den 1960er-Jahren an der Columbia Universität Vorlesungen hält, sieht sie auch in Wittgenstein ein Modell zur ästhetischen Lebensführung, für eine *ars vivendi*, die das Leben als Versuchsanordnung, als Experiment begreift (Jaspers 2016: 43).

Wittgensteins Postulat „Alles was überhaupt gedacht werden kann, kann klar gedacht werden. Alles, was sich aussprechen lässt, lässt sich klar aussprechen“ (TLP: 4.116), wird von Sontag psychologisch und soziologisch hinterfragt: „Warum, wann und unter welchen Umständen“ würde jemand *alles* in Worte fassen wollen, selbst wenn er es könnte? Und: „Gibt es überhaupt jemanden, der ‚alles was sich überhaupt sagen lässt‘, sagen *will*?“

Im Schweigen meint sie ein Maximum an Integrität und Ernsthaftigkeit zu erkennen und zirkelt damit wie Wittgenstein den Bereich der Metaphysik ab: „Wie Sprache im Schweigen auf ihre eigene Transzendenz verweist, so verweist das Schweigen auf seine eigene Transzendenz – auf ein Sprechen jenseits des Schweigens.“ (Sontag 2011: 30)

2. Essayistisches Schreiben an der Grenze zur Poesie

Sontag zählt Ludwig Wittgenstein wie Friedrich Nietzsche zu den Antisystematikern, und in Wittgensteins autobiografisch motiviertem und sich bisweilen an der Grenze zur Poesie bewegendem Schreiben erkennt sie ein Vorbild für ihr eigenes Werk. Mit Verweis auf den rumänischen Philosophen Emil Cioran – und unter Bezugnahme auf Kierkegaard, Nietzsche und wiederum Wittgenstein – spricht sie von dem „Risiko der Metamorphose“, das diejenigen eingegangen seien, die ihre philosophischen Gedanken in Form von Parabeln, Gedichten oder Erzählungen, als „Aphorismus, Anmerkung oder Notiz“ artikulieren (Sontag 2011a: 14). Der klassische akademische Diskurs sei „zerbrochen“, das Schreiben an der Grenze der Poesie bleibt als einzig adäquate Form der Weltbeschreibung. Damit berührt Sontag einen wichtigen Punkt in Wittgensteins Selbstverständnis. 1933 hatte er notiert: „Philosophie dürfte man eigentlich nur dichten“ (VB 1984: 483), und an anderer Stelle schreibt er: „O, warum ist mir zumute, als schrieb ich ein Gedicht, wenn ich Philosophie schreibe?“ (MS 133). Gerade sein autobiografischer Schreibstil, nach Sontag „aphoristisch, lyrisch“ sowie sein Selbstgespräch in Tagebüchern und Notizheften faszinieren die Autorin noch in den 1970er- und 1980er-Jahren. Ihr Buchbestand zu Wittgenstein wächst in dieser Zeit bedeutend an und auch die Biografien über ihn arbeitet sie systematisch durch. Die Idee, einen Essay über das aphoristische Denken zu verfassen, führt sie nicht zu Ende. Doch die Art und Weise wie Wittgenstein alltägliche Beispiele für seine Reflexionen auswählt, hat auch Sontag in mehreren ihren Essays verfolgt. Wittgensteins Erkenntnis, dass jedes alltägliche Ding die ganze Welt repräsentiert (vgl. TB 1984: 178), könnte als Maxime über ihrem Schreiben stehen, das sich oft dem vermeintlich Randständigen (wie dem Katastrophenfilm oder Phänomenen wie „Camp“) widmet.

Sontags Essay „One Culture and the New Sensibility“ (2009a) schließt ihren einflussreichen Band *Against Interpretation* (1966) ab und fasst diesen in gewissem Sinne zusammen. Wittgensteins „Alle Erklärung muß fort, und nur

Beschreibung an ihre Stelle treten“ (PU: 109) sowie sein Imperativ: „denk nicht, sondern schau!“ (PU: 66) scheinen die zentralen Thesen dieses Buches vorwegzunehmen, geht es ihr doch vorrangig darum, sich von inhaltlichen Interpretationen zu befreien, um die unmittelbare sinnliche Wahrnehmung und deren Beschreibung in den Vordergrund zu rücken. In ihrem Aufsatz über die „neue Erlebnisweise“ versucht die Autorin die literarisch-künstlerische und die naturwissenschaftlich-technische Betrachtungsform zu vereinen. Hohes und Niedriges, Kunst und Nicht-Kunst, lassen sich nicht länger unterscheiden. Zu den Trägern der neuen Wahrnehmungsweise zählt Sontag neben Malern, Architekten, Regisseuren und Musikern auch Soziologen, Neurologen und Philosophen. In ihrer namentlichen Aufzählung findet sich neben John Cage, Buckminster Fuller oder Claude Lévi-Strauss auch Ludwig Wittgenstein. Diese Protagonisten reflektieren nach Sontag „eine neue, offene Betrachtung der Welt und der Dinge der Welt.“ Man fühlt sich an Wittgensteins Tagebuch erinnert, in dem es heißt: „Als Ding unter Dingen ist jedes Ding gleich unbedeutend, als Welt jedes gleich bedeutend“ (TB 1984: 178). Damit kann jedes Ding, auch das vermeintlich Entlegene oder Abwegige, als ein Exempel der Welt dienen.

3. Kennerschaft in Theorie und Praxis

Sontag fühlt sich in den 1960er-Jahren von der Form, in der Wittgenstein seine Beispiele wählt, besonders angezogen. In ihrer Bibliothek finden sich Ausgaben der TB 1961, LA 1966, Z 1967 und CPE 1967. Entscheidend bei der Betrachtung und Beurteilung von Kunst und anderen ästhetischen Phänomenen ist nach Wittgenstein die Kennerschaft. Ob es um die Beurteilung einer Beethovenschen Sinfonie oder den Schnitt eines Mantels oder eines Anzugs geht (vgl. LA 1968), ist für Wittgenstein unerheblich. Sontag führt diesen Gedanken weiter, indem sie ein Rauschenberg-Gemälde mit einem Song der Popband *Supremes* in Verbindung bringt. In den US-amerikanischen Feuilletons sorgte dieser vermeintliche Vergleich 1966 für Furore. Tatsächlich hatte sie nicht die Werke, sondern die Art der Wahrnehmung verglichen: Wenn die Kunst als eine Form der Schulung unserer Gefühle und der Programmierung unserer Sinneswahrnehmung verstanden wird, dann könnte das Gefühl, das von einem Bild Rauschenbergs evoziert wird, von der gleichen Art sein, wie jenes, das ein Lied der ‚Supremes‘ erweckt. (Sontag 2009a: 353).

Etwas wird nicht zum Kunstwerk, weil es besonders erbaulich ist oder weil es von einer Künstlerin oder einem Künstler erschaffen wurde, sondern weil es als solches betrachtet wird. Das Ästhetische ist keine Eigenschaft der Dinge, sondern eine Zuschreibung, eine Wahrnehmungsform, eine Haltung. Um wahre Kennerschaft zur Beurteilung dieser Phänomene zu erwerben, genügt es nicht, die Dinge intellektuell zu durchdringen, sondern es empfiehlt sich, diese praktisch, im eigentlichen Sinne „tätig“ zu erfahren. So erweiterte Wittgenstein sein Gespür für Proportionen und „schulte die Art, wie man Dinge sieht“ (Drehmel/Jaspers 2011: 35), als er seiner Schwester ein Haus baute, und er entwickelte ein tiefes Verständnis für Musik (und Grammatik) durch das kunstvolle Pfeifen klassischer Musikstücke (Jaspers 2011). Susan Sontag hatte zwar kein universitäres Studium der Filmwissenschaften absolviert (die *Film Studies* begannen sich erst in den 1970er-Jahren zu etablieren), aber als Cineastin ging sie beinahe täglich ins Kino und nahm Ende der 1960er-Jahre die Gelegenheit wahr, selbst Filme zu drehen. So erwarb sie sich sowohl als Rezipientin wie als Praktikerin eine große Film-Kennerschaft. Diese schloss neben einem ästhetischen Verständnis auch moralische Werturteile ein. Wittgenstein beschrieb die ethische Betrachtung als ein Fragen nach der rechten Lebensweise (LE 1968: 78). Für Sontag ist diese Perspektive mit jedem ästhetischen Diskurs untrennbar verbunden. Als sie dreißig Jahre nach dem Erscheinen von *Against Interpretation* auf ihre frühen Essays zurückblickt, erkennt sie sich selbst als „streitbare Ästhetin und [...] kaum verhohlene Moralistin“ zugleich (Sontag 2001: 349).

4. Ethik und Ästhetik sind eins

Wie für Wittgenstein sind auch für Sontag ethische und ästhetische Reflexion unmittelbar verbunden. Es gibt keine ewig gültigen Werte, das Gute, Wahre, Schöne ist nicht statisch, sondern, ähnlich wie Moden – so Wittgenstein in seinen Vorlesungen zur Ästhetik (LA 1968: 25f.) – immer im Wandel, kontextabhängig, den individuellen Umständen, zeithistorischen Gegebenheiten und kulturellen Prägungen unterworfen. Sontag hat ihre eigenen Urteile wiederholt revidiert und angepasst. Prominentestes Beispiel ist vielleicht ihre wechselnde Haltung in der Auseinandersetzung mit Person und Werk Leni Riefenstahls zwischen 1966 und 1975: Während Sontag Mitte der 1960er-Jahre in *Against Interpretation* noch eine Auseinandersetzung mit dem formal beeindruckenden Œuvre Riefenstahls – unter Berücksichtigung dessen

propagandistischer Implikationen – anregt (Sontag 2009:34f: „Nennt man Leni Riefenstahls *Triumph des Willens* und *Olympia* Meisterwerke, so heißt das nicht, Nazipropaganda mit ästhetischer Nachsicht glossieren. Die Nazipropaganda läßt sich nicht wegleugnen. Daneben aber ist noch etwas anderes in diesen Filmen enthalten, etwas, das wir zu unserem eigenen Schaden ablehnen.“), lehnt sie dies knapp zehn Jahre später unter veränderten gesellschaftspolitischen Bedingungen grundsätzlich ab (vgl. Sontag 2003).

Wittgensteins viel zitiertes „Ethik und Ästhetik sind Eins“ aus dem TLP (6.421) könnte aus Sontags Feder stammen, fordert sie doch, auch wenn sie über vermeintlich Abseitiges wie „Camp“ schreibt, stets eine moralische Ernsthaftigkeit ein. Tatsächlich hat Sontag den Paragraphen 6.421 in ihrem Tagebuch 1970 festgehalten, zusammen mit der Idee, einen Essay über Wittgensteins Einfluss auf die zeitgenössische Kunst zu verfassen (was sie, wie beim geplanten Essay über die Aphoristik, nicht tut). Wittgenstein hatte das Verhältnis von Kunst zur Ethik wie folgt bestimmt: „Das Kunstwerk ist der Gegenstand sub specie aeternitatis gesehen und das gute Leben ist die Welt sub specie aeternitatis gesehen“ (TB 1984: 178). Ding und Welt, Kunst und Moral stehen also in einer Art Abhängigkeits- oder Abbildverhältnis zueinander. Die „geistige Reifung“, die Sontag in einer ästhetischen Lebenspraxis sucht und bewundert, berührt beide Sphären. Kunst versteht Sontag daher als „spirituelles Projekt“ unserer Zeit, in dem die modernen Künstler wie ehemals die Mystiker nach Transzendenz und an die Grenzen des Bewusstseins streben. Beispielhaft steht hierfür John Cage und seine Komposition 4'33 aus dem Jahr 1952. Schweigen sei hier nicht als Stille im Sinne einer Abwesenheit von Etwas zu interpretieren, sondern als ästhetische Erfahrung. Kunst ist nach Sontag niemals nicht-intentional, ohne emotionale Resonanz. Das Schweigen wird zum Teil der künstlerischen Rhetorik. Hier ließe sich ein Bogen zu Wittgensteins Unterscheidung von Zeigen und Sprechen schlagen, die er im *Tractatus* entwickelt hat, und nach der das Klar-Aussprechbare den Raum des Unsagbaren, des Mystischen oder Ethischen, abgrenze und somit nur indirekt aufzeigen könne. Eben dieses „Sprechen jenseits des Schweigens“ ist es, das Sontag in ihrer Auseinandersetzung mit Kunst, Literatur und popkulturellen Phänomenen immer wieder aufzuspüren sucht.

Wittgenstein als Vorbild, sein Leben und Werk, schärfen Sontags Blick für eine neue Sensibilität für die alltäglichen Dinge, für die Übertragung philosophischer Erkenntnisse auf künstlerische Konzepte und für einen selbstbewussten eigenen Schreibstil, der Offenheit, sowie ein Changieren zwischen Theorie und Poesie als Stärke begreift. „Und eine Sprache vorstellen heißt, sich eine Lebensform vorstellen.“ (PU: 19) notiert Susan Sontag am 26. Juni 1966 in ihrem Tagebuch (Sontag 2013: 184). Ihre Lebensform, ihr Habitus, war der einer Moralistin und Ästhetin, die ihr Leben als Kunstform praktizierte. Ihr Vorbild Wittgenstein reflektierte sie dabei auf vielerlei Ebenen.

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Nonsense and Human History

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Abstract

I build on Hans Sluga's recent discussion of the place of history and temporality in Wittgenstein's work through a discussion of the austere conception of nonsense. Central to the early Wittgenstein's thought was the notion of an elucidatory recognition of nonsense, and as Moore (2003: 186) remarks, such a judgement of nonsensicality is a "judgement concerning the history, to date, of some particular sign." I explore this idea by relating the austere view of nonsense-recognition to Collingwood's conception of the method of the historian, as expounded in his *Human Nature and Human History*. I locate an interesting congruence between various aspects of Collingwood's account and the *Tractatus's* conception of judgements concerning nonsensicality, with particular reference to Collingwood's distinction between the inside and outside of an event. I suggest that there seems to be a good sense in which the nonsense-recognition which undergirds Tractarian elucidation manifests a form of historical understanding.

1. Introduction

Hans Sluga is struck by the *Tractatus's* almost complete silence about history and time (2017: 417). His avowedly modest intention in his (2017) essay is "to single out some of Wittgenstein's characteristic thoughts on time and history in order to determine what can be done with them" (2017: 420.) My yet more modest intention here is to discuss a further point in the *Tractatus*, not discussed by Sluga (or indeed by Glock (2006)) at which Wittgenstein's thoughts edges towards historical matters, and which suggests a role for historical understanding in Wittgenstein's early thought. I therefore aim to go some short way towards extending Beaney's (2006) notion of historical elucidation in Frege's work to Tractarian elucidation.

The idea of a judgement that some proposition is nonsensical occupies a central role in the *Tractatus*. Wittgenstein tells us just before the end of his book that we come to understand him when we recognise that his propositions are nonsensical, and that it is in this revelation of nonsensicality that the elucidatory character of his propositions consists (§6.54.) Picking up on a remark from Moore (2003), I here examine the sense in which recognition of nonsensicality, austere understood, might be seen to manifest a form of historical understanding. I end by raising a parallel between the *Tractatus's* view of judgements of nonsensicality and Collingwood's view of history as expounded in his 'Human Nature and Human History' (2005 [1936.]

2. Austerity about nonsense

So-called resolute readers have stressed that, in the *Tractatus*, nonsense is only ever simple lack of sense (see e.g. Diamond 1991, chapters 2 and 3.) Conant (2002: 380-381) distinguishes mere from substantial nonsense, and austere from substantial conceptions of nonsense. Mere nonsense is “simply unintelligible – it expresses no thought”, while substantial nonsense results from placing separately intelligible symbols into illicit configurations. The substantial conception is so called because it recognises substantial nonsense. On the austere conception, there is only mere nonsense (Conant 2002: 380.)

Note that few would describe themselves as advocates of the substantial conception, so construed. Hacker, the arch traditionalist, “emphatically rejects” a reading which “attributes the illegitimacy of the sentential combination to the fact that the meanings of these expressions cannot be so combined.” (Hacker 2003, pp. 2-3; quoted by Sullivan 2003 in this connection.) The substantial conception is not so much an interpretive device foisted on us by advocates of some form of traditional reading, but rather arises quite naturally from reflection on certain problematic examples, such as I discuss below.

The *Tractatus* seems indeed to present what Conant calls an austere conception. Wittgenstein tells us that nonsense is what results when one fails to “make some arbitrary determination” regarding the meaning of a sign, not from use of a symbol in a context in which it is impermissible (§5.473.) Nonsense is not, that is to say, the result of combining meaningful symbols in a manner which their meanings disallow. The idea of substantial nonsense seems to stand in conflict both with Wittgenstein’s context principle (§3.3) and with his remark at §5.473 that “In a certain sense, we cannot make mistakes in logic.” (I will try not to venture any further into this particular dispute. See the essays by Diamond, Conant and Hacker in Crary and Read (2000) for further discussion.)

If nonsensicality results not from the impermissible use of a symbol but from a failure to determine meaning at the level of the sign, the ground of a recognition of such nonsense, it seems, must concern mere signs. Recognition of nonsense must, that is, consist in a recognition of nothing more mundane

than that that the producer of the nonsense has failed to bestow a meaning of some of the signs out of which they have constructed it (cf. §6.53.)

Sluga identifies §6.54 as a point at which the *Tractatus* shifts from “the timeless present that dominates most of [the text] to [a] genuinely temporal moment” (2017: 418.) But I think the reader encounters genuine temporality at least one proposition earlier, at §6.53. There, Wittgenstein describes the correct method of philosophy as one according to which one abstains from saying anything other than propositions of natural science, and otherwise breaks one’s silence only to correct errant attempts at metaphysics. In its latter critical task, that is, philosophy is reactive; the philosopher lies silently in wait until a time at which their interlocutor tries to say something metaphysical, at which point they respond by demonstrating to the interlocutor that they have failed to assign meanings to some of the signs which compose their would-be metaphysical proposition. Temporality enters the picture here, firstly, through this this reactive structure.

But what additionally makes §6.53 a “genuinely temporal moment” is its expression of the austere conception of nonsense-recognition. The idea of substantial nonsense is the idea of a sort of nonsense, recognition of which would consist in recognition that a symbol has been mistakenly deployed; deployed in a way that its meaning somehow prohibited. That recognition would thus involve a reflection on the relevant concepts, and such reflection, we can grant, has nothing particularly historical or empirical about it. But in resolving to countenance only austere nonsense, one resolves to understand recognition of such nonsense as involving a judgement about whether some sign has been given a meaning. And this is in part a matter of arbitrary linguistic convention (cf. §3.322.) Signs are repeatable (“‘A’ is the same sign as ‘A’” (§3.203)) and perceptible (§3.32); they appear at times and in places. To determine that a particular occurrence of a sign has not been given a meaning might require concerted investigation into the relevant conventions. It will certainly involve, as A.W. Moore puts it, a “judgement about the actual history, to date, of some particular sign”, a judgement of the form: “‘No meaning has so far been given to this sign.’” (Moore 2003: 186.) There is, therefore, clearly a good sense in which recognition of nonsensicality, on the austere conception, involves a kind of historical understanding.

A problem for the austere conception is that there are cases of apparent nonsense which are hard to construe as instances of this general conception. In reflecting on such cases, our eventual judgement that they fail to express a sense seems not to be grounded in a judgement about signs, but one about the meanings of symbols. Moore's example is "It is five o'clock at the North Pole". Most need to reflect momentarily on what it is for it to be five o'clock somewhere on the earth before accepting that the rules for determining what time it is at each point on the earth yield no result in this case. That is, a judgement that the sentence is nonsense seems to be a judgement that meaningful symbols have been put together in a nonsense-yielding way. Such cases might seem to suggest that nonsense-recognition consists in reflection on sempiternal concepts after all (which in turn puts something of a dampener on the idea that these matters open a door through which historical matters find their way into Wittgenstein's early thought.)

Moore's recommended response to such cases involves the thought that linguistic rules determine when sense is made, but that they do not "except by default" determine when sense is not made. The most we can say on the basis of reflection on the relevant concepts is that according to the rules for applying *those* concepts, "no meaning attaches to the sentence" (2003: 186.) The judgement that a proposition in question is nonsense *simpliciter* is more ambitious, purporting as it does to rule out the possibility that such a configuration makes sense according to *any* rules, since it involves a claim about what rules there happen to be. A judgement of nonsensicality is therefore "always empirical, provisional, and metalinguistic" (Moore 2003: 186.)

The resulting view can be construed as one according to which a judgement that a proposition is nonsensical (at least in cases of non-obvious nonsense) has two parts. It involves, on the one hand, a provisional and empirical judgement about the history of a particular sign. But where we are confronted by an initial illusion of sense (such as in the case of Wittgenstein's own propositions), recognition of nonsensicality involves identification of the concepts which produced that illusion (for "where illusions of sense are concerned, there are always relevant concepts" (Moore 2003: 187)) and recognition that the rules attaching to those concepts determine no sense in the present case.

Objections can be mounted regarding just how austere this view is (see Moore 2003: 187ff. for discussion.) In what follows, however, I will merely draw attention to an interesting and, I hope, clarifying congruence between the resulting view of nonsense-recognition and R.G. Collingwood's conception of the historian's method.

3. Collingwood on discerning the thought in an event

In his 'Human Nature and Human History', Collingwood is concerned in part with the demarcation of the discipline of history. He begins with a brief discussion of the Enlightenment idea of a science of human nature. The approach to investigating self-knowledge of the sort we find in Locke, Hume, Reid, and even Kant, contends Collingwood, foundered and broke down because it was "distorted by the analogy of the natural sciences" (*The Idea of History*: 207; cf. *Tractatus* §§4.11-4.1122, particularly the reference to Darwin.) The shape of such thinkers' approach was understandably influenced by the "new birth of physical science" in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (p. 207) and just as the new physics figured for them, writes Collingwood, history figures for his contemporaries – "history occupies in the world of to-day a position analogous to that occupied by physics in the time of Locke: it is recognized as a special and autonomous form of thought, lately established, whose possibilities have not yet been completely explored." Thus some have been led to assert that "all reality is historical" (p. 208.)

These optimistic historicists have hit upon something right, according to Collingwood, namely that while the methods of science are appropriate to the study of nature, "the right way of investigating mind is by the methods of history" (p. 208.) But the claim that all fields of enquiry are best understood as history, thinks Collingwood, is a mistake. He rejects, for instance, the idea that evolutionary theory has shown that natural processes are really historical processes (cf. *Tractatus* §4.1122 on the irrelevance of Darwinian theory to philosophy.) According to the working historian, and to the conception to which Collingwood subscribes, history's remit begins and ends with human affairs. Thus the archaeologist, who thinks of artefacts in terms of the human purposes they once served, is engaged in history, while the palaeontologist, "arranging fossils in a time-series, is not working as an historian, but only as a

scientist thinking in a way which can at most be described as quasi-historical” (pp. 210-211.)

In defending the non-arbitrariness of this distinction, Collingwood presents his positive characterisation of the historical method. That method relies on a distinction between the inside and the outside of a past event. The outside of an event comprises every aspect of it “which can be described in terms of bodies and their movements: the passage of Caesar, accompanied by certain men, across a river called the Rubicon at one date, or the spilling of his blood on the floor of the senate-house at another.” To the inside of an event belongs everything about it which one can only capture “in terms of thought” – “Caesar’s defiance of Republican law, or the clash of constitutional policy between himself and his assassins”. An action, on this picture, “is the unity of the inside and the outside of an event.” Historians are interested in actions, and so in both the insides and outsides of events. While historians might “begin by discovering the outside of an event”, their aim is then to work their way into the action from the outside, “to discern the thought of its agent” (p. 212.) Events in history are “things which the historian looks, not at, but through, to discern the thought within them” (p. 213.)

It is this last idea of Collingwood’s, the idea of looking through an event to discern the thought within it, that I want to suggest yields a clarifying perspective on elucidatory recognition of nonsense in the *Tractatus*. In Collingwood’s description of the historian’s role, we can locate each element of an elucidatory recognition of nonsense, as outlined above. The historian begins with the outside of an event, that part of it which can be understood in terms of the movements of bodies, and works their way into the thought through which the event is made intelligible. The event’s outside, we might say following *Tractatus* §3.32, is what can be perceived of the past action which the historian attempts to understand; the Tractarian analogue of Collingwood’s ‘outside’, then, is the sign. The reader of the *Tractatus* seems to begin already *inside*; they are confronted with propositions apparently expressive of thoughts, and work their way to a recognition that these propositions express nothing. They thereby arrive at the outside, though with a clarified understanding of that outside. In order to accommodate the appearance of substantial examples of nonsense, Moore makes use of the idea that wherever we have an illusion of sense, we have relevant concepts which explain that

illusion, even if those concepts are not themselves what ground the judgement of nonsense. This extension of the account, which might have seemed to vitiate the historical character of nonsense-recognition, seems rather easily aligned with the historian's task as conceived by Collingwood; one begins with the outside of the event (in this case some speaker's offering some nonsensical proposition) and works one's way into an understanding of its inside; not in this case a thought, but the concepts which led the speaker to think their proposition capable of expressing some thought.

4. Conclusion

Collingwood had, to be sure, a rather particular conception of the discipline of history. He famously considered metaphysics to be a sort of history, for example. Given the apparent strangeness of his conception, the parallel I draw in this essay might be seen merely as illustrating the wide scope of that conception, rather than telling us anything interesting about the things which fall under it. But my point is not just that on Collingwood's idiosyncratically broad conception of what counts as historical understanding, the understanding that a proposition is nonsensical counts as historical understanding.

My suggestion, rather, is that recognition of nonsensicality (some among which recognitions are elucidatory) austere understood as recognition that an arbitrary determination of the meaning of some sign happens not to have been made, and thus that where we thought we had perceived a thought, there was none, is interestingly and clarifyingly seen as something like the reverse of the historian's way of proceeding, as presented by Collingwood. Collingwood's historian begins at the outside of an event, and tries to discern the thought within it; the reader of the *Tractatus* begins at what seems to be the outside of a thought, and learns to discern the lack of thought within.

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"In the Beginning Was the Deed": On the Limits of Language in Later Wittgenstein

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Abstract

The aim of my talk is to discuss a way in which Wittgenstein explores the limits of language in his later thought. I shall suggest that we can see him engaged in the activity of making the limits of language clear from inside at two points—in MS119 and *On Certainty*—, when he appeals to Goethe's phrase "In the beginning was the deed". I shall argue that what is involved in this activity is the recognition of certain uses of language as reactions (or deeds), i. e. by recognizing a use of language as a reaction, we recognize a limit of language from within. First, I look briefly at two ways of understanding of the notion of limits of language in the *Tractatus*. Then, I discuss Bernard Williams reading of OC §§401-402. I argue that Williams is wrong in taking Wittgenstein's reference to Goethe as espousing a view of the primacy of practice. I bring out some problems with Williams's reading by looking at an exchange between Norman Malcolm and Rush Rhees on the status of primitive reactions. Finally, I give a reading of Wittgenstein's appeal to Goethe in MS119 in reference to Bertrand Russell's paper "The Limits of Empiricism".

I

In the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein wanted to draw a limit to the expression of thoughts from within, i.e. in language (cf. TLP: 9, 4.114ff, 4.51). One of the main debates in the reception of the *Tractatus* in recent decades can be formulated as a dispute over the understanding of Wittgenstein's notion of the limits of language. According to the dominant family of interpretations – these interpretations are usually referred to as traditional or ineffabilistic readings (cf. Bronzo 2021: 51) –, the notion of the limits of language is meant to indicate that while the limits of language constrain our expression of thoughts by setting limits to the meaningfulness of propositions, there *is* something inexpressible beyond those limits. The inexpressible cannot be put into words as any attempt at doing this would violate the criteria of meaningfulness, it can only be shown. Thus, this group of interpretations appeals to the distinction between saying and showing as crucial for Wittgenstein's enterprise in the *Tractatus*. Insofar as there are some ineffable truths about reality excluded by the limits of language from the sayable, we can get a grip on them only in virtue of their manifestations (cf. TLP 6.522). As Peter Hacker put it: "Wittgenstein's claim is, or at least seems to be, that by the very nature of language, or indeed of any system of representation whatsoever, there are things which cannot be stated or described, things of which one cannot speak,

but which are in some sense shown by language." (Hacker 2000: 353). This understanding of the limits of language has been challenged by a family of interpretations known as the resolute readings. On the resolute reading, the limits of language are not constraining our expression of thoughts in any way, as there is no quasi-propositional content excluded from the sayable on the account of violating the logical syntax of language. The inexpressible, instead of being something on the other side of the limits, is rather – as Juliet Floyd put it – “a fiction, an illusion produced by an overly simplified conception of human expression” (Floyd 2007: 177). Wittgenstein’s exploring of the limits of language is understood here as an activity of making the limits of language *clear* from inside.

II

Bernard Williams takes Wittgenstein’s reference to Goethe’s phrase “Im Anfang war die Tat” in §402 from *On Certainty* as espousing a view of the primacy of practice (Williams 2008). Let me put this remark in a broader context. In a sequence of remarks to which §402 belongs, Wittgenstein challenges Moore’s claim that we can *know* certain group of propositions about physical objects (cf. OC §389). In a nutshell, Wittgenstein wants to bring out that in an ordinary case, there is in principle no justification for propositions like, e.g. “I know that that is a tree”, which accomplishes more than the very proposition “That is a tree” itself. What is puzzling is that insofar as these are empirical propositions, it seems that it should be possible to state grounds justifying our expressing them (i.e. answering questions like ‘How do you know that that is a tree?’). But after looking closer at possible justifications, it turns out that they cannot do the work. (I should mention that one important kind of justification that Wittgenstein rules here out is an appeal to perception. In OC Wittgenstein’s refutation of perception as possible evidence for this kind of empirical propositions is directly addressed to Moore’s argument in the “Proof of the External World” (cf. OC: 250). In the last section, I discuss Wittgenstein’s rejection of this kind of grounding of empirical propositions in reference to his criticism of Bertrand Russell’s ideas.) Given that, Wittgenstein considers whether these empirical propositions could be in turn conceived of as hypotheses, and our drawing consequences from them would show that we *know* them. But he is dissatisfied with this either. First, it seems that in this

way we could imagine an infinite number of hypotheses from which we supposedly draw consequences – “And don’t I know that there is no stairway in this house going six floors deep into the earth, even though I have never thought about it?” (OC §398). Second, our drawing consequences would rather only show that we *accept* the hypothesis. And the propositions in question are not propositions which we merely accept. Wittgenstein continues with hesitation saying that he is “inclined to fight windmills, because [he] cannot yet say the thing [he] really want[s] to say” (OC §401). But he begins the next remark resolutely, saying what he wants to say: “I want to say: propositions of the form of empirical propositions [*Erfahrungssätze*], and not only propositions of logic, form the foundation of all operating with thoughts (with language). (...)”. And in the following one he comments on that: “In this remark [§401] the expression ‘propositions of the form of empirical propositions’ is itself thoroughly bad; the statements in question are statements about material objects. And they do not serve as foundations in the same way as hypotheses which, if they turn out to be false, are replaced by others. (...and write with confidence ‘In the beginning was the deed.’)” (OC §402). Wittgenstein suggests in these two remarks that it is confusing to regard the statements about material objects, like e.g. ‘That is a tree’, as empirical propositions or propositions of the form of empirical propositions, and that we should rather conceive them as the unmoving foundations of our language games (cf. OC §403). Yet, it is rather unclear, how the quotation from Goethe added at the end of §402 in brackets hangs together with the rest of the remarks.

Let me now get back to Williams. Williams assumes that in the sequence §§401-402 Wittgenstein advances a view of the primacy of practice and, further, appeals to Goethe in order to remind us that the primacy of practice is not “the primacy of descriptions of practice” (Williams 2008: 24). He attributes to Wittgenstein an idea that when one is investigating the grounds of our beliefs, the limit one comes across are our practices. But *representing* these practices *as* grounds of our beliefs is in principle impossible, because any description of the way in which language is grounded in practice would itself be grounded in practice. Therefore, any description trying to represent practices as grounds of certain propositions, would be incomplete insofar as it could not at the same time describe the way in which it itself is grounded in practice. Thus, Williams argues that our beliefs are meaningful only in virtue

of a historically comprehended set of practices, but the very relation between beliefs and practices "cannot fully be theorized or captured in reflection" (Williams 2008: 25). Although in his essay Williams is not interested in the semantic meaning of a proposition, but in the meaningfulness of a set of propositions as expressing e.g. liberal political beliefs, his argument is based on his reading of Wittgenstein as presenting a general view on the relation between language and reality according to which language, theories, beliefs, etc. are grounded in practices. It seems that in his reading of OC, Williams takes the quotation from Goethe at the end of §402 as a *continuation* of thoughts expressed by Wittgenstein in previous remarks. He reads Wittgenstein as saying that insofar some empirical proposition form the foundation of all operating with thoughts, there is still something deeper, something more fundamental. Williams thinks that Wittgenstein brings it out by quoting Goethe. Thus, on this reading, quotation from Goethe continues Wittgenstein's suggestion by pointing out the grounding of the statements about material objects in deeds, actions, and practices.

Williams's reading falls in with the first understanding of the limits of language. The limits of language are constrains. Beyond those limits there are practices and, in particular, the very relation between language and practices, which we cannot put into words. Insofar as our "powers of reflection on this relation are limited" (Williams 2008: 24), Williams takes this relation to be something unsayable. But it is a mistake on William's part to separate language from practices. One of the central concepts of Wittgenstein's later vision of language, the concept of language game, is intended as bringing out the intertwining of language and activities. Elsewhere, Wittgenstein expresses this directly: "We talk and act. That is already presupposed in everything that I am saying" (RFM, VI, §17).

III

In this section I want to look at an exchange between Malcolm (Malcolm 1996) and Rhee (Rhee 2005) on the status of primitive reactions. The relation between primitive reactions and language games can be considered one case of the more general issue of the relation between language and practice.

According to Malcolm, one of the important themes present in Wittgenstein's later work is that „language did not emerge from some kind of ratiocination” (OC §475). Malcolm claims that with this remark Wittgenstein “is trying to call attention to something that underlies all language-games” (Malcolm 1996: 82). He suggests that this something underlying all language-games, indeed underlying all rationality of human life, is instinctive behavior. He reads Wittgenstein as attributing two general roles to instinctive behavior. First, our learning of first words is “an outgrowth of unthinking, instinctive behavior”. Second, he suggests that “something of the same kind permeates and surrounds all human acting and all use of language, even at sophisticated levels” (Malcolm 1996: 81). Instinctive behavior is conceived of as something that *underlies* all rational actions and uses of language and, therefore, something that itself lies beyond being justified or unjustified (cf. OC 358f).

Malcolm bases his reading of Wittgenstein on five different kinds of examples. The first three examples focus on cases in which certain linguistic expressions are a kind of *replacement* for unlearned, instinctive reactions. These are: 1) the first person immediate expressions of sensations, emotions, feelings, attitudes, intentions [*Äusserungen*], 2) our responses to other's pain- or fear-behavior, 3) the use of the word ‘cause’ and other causal expressions. The last two examples, on the other hand, are intended to show that instinctive behavior belongs in an important way to our use of language in general. These are: 4) the first learning of names of objects and later use of these names in language games, 5) going on in the *same* way in case of following a rule.

Let's take a look at one of Malcolm's examples. In remark §244 from PI Wittgenstein considers relations between words and sensations and gives an example of a child who „has hurt himself and [...] cries; then adults talk to him and teach him exclamations and, later, sentences. They teach the child new pain-behaviour.” (PI §244). Malcolm thinks that this remark represents a shift from non-conceptual, non-linguistic, instinctive pain-behaviour to linguistic expression of pain being a new pain-behaviour. And, according to Malcolm, our possession and understanding of concepts grows out of such reactions by using words symbolizing these concepts along with or in place of unlearned reactions. However, Wittgenstein's move is much more complex. What Malcolm seems to ignore is that in the remark §244, the linguistic expression of

pain is granted a double qualification. On the one hand, as a use of language, it belongs to the order of language, but on the other – precisely because it has replaced instinctive pain-behavior – it belongs at the same time to the order of primitive reactions. While Malcolm wanted to draw our attention to the transition from the non-linguistic to the linguistic, if we recognize the double qualification of such uses of language, it should be rather said that Wittgenstein's aim is to *blur* or at least *nuance* the contrast between the non-linguistic and the linguistic. When Wittgenstein says in §244 that the parents are teaching a child the words 'I am in pain' when he cuts his finger, he says that they are teaching him a new pain-*behaviour*. After all, we should keep in mind that language game is a behaviour (see Z §545).

Rhees pointed out further problems with Malcolm's approach. First, he argues that on Malcolm's reading it seems as if Wittgenstein, instead of describing language, was putting forward a theory explaining the origins of language. Rhees notes that while Wittgenstein did write that language did not emerge from ratiocination, he did not suggest that it emerged from somewhere else. Second, he claims that non-linguistic primitive reactions may have an important role but only *within* a language game. Thus, it is a mistake to conceive them as the foundation of our language as it would suggest that primitive reactions are something that *cannot* be misunderstood. On Rhees's view, we can understand a reaction as such-and-such a reaction only when it is seen as already belonging to some language game.

Rhees wants to direct our attention to the fact that the use of both words and gestures presupposes mastery of a certain technique, which we have to learn. And it is only within a technique that words and gestures have meaning. Malcolm thinks that he makes a gesture with which he points to non-conceptual instinctive behaviour situated *beyond* the language game. But the possibility of such a gesture is an illusion. Everything Malcolm can *meaningfully* point to is *within* the space of language games he has mastered. When parents teach a child the word 'pain' by replacing his primitive reactions with this word, from the parents' perspective, the child's primitive reactions already belong to a language game with the word pain.

Rhees says that there is only one remark, which seems to support Malcolm's reading – the one in which Wittgenstein appeals to Goethe.

IV

Let me now move to a sequence of remarks "Ursache und Wirkung: Intuitives Erfassen". The background of Wittgenstein's reflections is Bertrand Russell's article "The Limits of Empiricism" (Russell 1935-1936). In this article Russell considers the relationship between empirical knowledge and sense data. He reaches a conclusion troublesome for empiricism, that this relationship involves a kind of causal relation. He argues that the basis of empirical knowledge consists in the possibility of perceiving a causal relation between that knowledge and what we perceive. For instance, the sentence 'There is a cat there' is a sentence "perceived to be caused by something perceived" – a cat (Russell 1935-1936: 137). Russell claims that the kind of causality involved here is causality that we are immediately aware of. Wittgenstein begins his manuscript with a similar example, in which it seems that we come to know the cause by intuition: "I am frightened, because he looks so threatening" (Wittgenstein 1993: 371). Wittgenstein agrees with Russell that there are cases of causality where we do not rely on observing regular sequences of events. But Russell's explanation of these cases in terms of 'being immediately aware of' is misleading as it suggests that there are propositions that rest on themselves (cf. WCL: 16ff). Thus, Wittgenstein intends to re-describe these cases in terms of 'reactions to the cause' - we call the cause what we react to - and suggests that "one root of the cause-effect language game is to be found [...] in our looking out for a cause" (Wittgenstein 1993: 373). In one of the concluding remarks of this section of the manuscript Wittgenstein appeals to Goethe: "The origin and the primitive form of the language game is a reaction; only from this can more complicated forms develop. Language – I want to say – is a refinement, 'In the beginning was the deed.'" (Wittgenstein 1993: 395). Malcolm took this remark as saying that our language games emerged from reactions. I think that he missed the point. I want to suggest two things. First, this remark should be read in the context of one of the preceding remarks: "What we are doing here above all is to *imagine* a basic form [of language game]: a possibility, indeed a *very important* possibility. (We very often confuse what is an important possibility with historical reality.)" (Wittgenstein 1993: 377). This remark cuts off any reading on which Wittgenstein is taken to be making a conjecture that *non-linguistic* reactions

are the historical origin of our language games. Second, Wittgenstein is asking us in this remark to look at the origin and the primitive form of language game as reactions. A reaction can be a non-linguistic glance or gesture, but it can also be a use of language (cf. PPF: §289). Therefore, Wittgenstein asks us here to recognize certain uses of language as reactions that cannot be further explained.

V

Williams and Malcolm take a perspective external to language in an effort to point out what language is grounded in. Rhees, meanwhile, adopted a perspective internal to language by drawing our attention to the variety of logical roles played by the means of our language. It is from this perspective that he criticized Malcolm that instinctive behavior cannot be taken as a basis for words in a language game, for it only has meaning within language games. An analogous argument can be made in case of Williams: practice cannot be taken as the basis for our sentences or beliefs, for the only meaning it can have is within language. Any ineffable meaning tied to practices or the way language is embedded in practices is nothing else but a fiction. My approach in this paper can be seen as an extension of Rhees's perspective. I've tried to show that in his later philosophy Wittgenstein is engaged in an activity of clarifying the limits of our language from within. And one thing involved in this activity consists in distinguishing various functions our words and sentences may have. The group of utterances that Wittgenstein wants to draw our attention to when he appeals to Goethe in OC and MS119 are utterances whose character resembles reactions or deeds. These utterances 1) are not representations of reality, yet they are meaningful, 2) cannot be further explained. What is important is that in recognizing them – i.e. in recognizing a use of language as a reaction – we recognize a limit of language from within.

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Acknowledgement

This paper is a result of the research project "Ludwig Wittgenstein and Social Normativity" (no. 2019/33/N/HS1/03103) financed by the National Science Center, Poland.

I wish to thank an anonymous reviewer for bringing *Whewell's Court Lectures* to my attention.

Topological interpretation of Wittgenstein's Logical Atomism and Perzanowski's Theory of Analysis and Synthesis

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Abstract

In this paper I consider some of Wittgenstein's theses contained in his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* concerning the ontology presented there. The work on logical atomism is a joint work of Russell, Wittgenstein and to some extent Whitehead. The present paper is a continuation of the research contained in (Kaczmarek 2019a and 2019b). In the second half of the 20th century, some formal interpretations of Wittgenstein's concept emerged. The proposal of Wolniewicz, through which the basic theses of the *Tractatus* are interpreted by means of the lattice of elementary situations as well as the proposal of Perzanowski, who proposed his combinational ontology are examples of this. Both theories were inspired by the ontology of Leibniz and Wittgenstein. Perzanowski, within the framework of his theory, defined the basic concepts of Leibniz's and Wittgenstein's ontology, including: situation (state of affairs), possible world, co-possibility, God, monad and others. In the paper we show that Wittgenstein's approach can be put in the language of lattice theory, but also in the language of general topology. The topological approach allows us to consider an atomistic ontology and one in which we have no atoms. I call lattices constructed from topological spaces in which atoms can be indicated and spaces in which atoms are not present hybrid lattices. In the final section, I will give a fragment of the topological account of combinational ontology and some theorems of topological ontology in the hope that they shed some light on how to understand and interpret the theorems of Wittgenstein's ontology.

1. Logical atomism and ontology.

Logical atomism is a joint work of B. Russell and L. Wittgenstein ((Russell 1918), (Wittgenstein 1921)). This is evidenced by Wittgenstein's acknowledgment in the Preface of the *Tractatus* and addressed to Frege and Russell. This does not mean, of course, that Russell's and Wittgenstein's logical atomism are identical. They differ in many aspects (cf. Wolniewicz (1999: 194-195)). Wittgenstein's *TLP* proposes, among other things, an ontology of logical atomism in theses 1-2,063 (compare Glock's position in (Glock 1996), entry: *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*). Of course, it is impossible to discuss these theses, so I will point out the most important ones and, at the same time, those to which I will refer in later sections of the work.

1 The world is everything that is the case.

1.1 The world is the totality of facts, not of things.

1.2 The world divides into facts.

1.21 Any one can either be the case or not be the case, and everything else remain the same.

2 What is the case, the fact, is the existence of atomic facts.

2.01 An atomic fact is a combination of objects (entities, things).

2.0124 If all objects are given, then thereby are all possible atomic facts also given.

2.013 Every thing is, as it were, in a space of possible atomic facts. I can think of this space as empty, but not of the thing without the space.

2.014 Objects contain the possibility of all states of affairs.

2.02 The object is simple.

2.021 Objects form the substance of the world. Therefore they cannot be compound.

2.022 It is clear that however different from the real one an imagined world may be, it must have something—a form—in common with the real world.

2.023 This fixed form consists of the objects.

2.04 The totality of existent atomic facts is the world.

2.05 The totality of existent atomic facts also determines which atomic facts do not exist.

2.06 The existence and non-existence of atomic facts is the reality. (The existence of atomic facts we also call a positive fact, their non-existence a negative fact.)

2.061 Atomic facts are independent of one another.

2.062 From the existence or non-existence of an atomic fact we cannot infer the existence or non-existence of another.

2.063 The total reality is the world. (Wittgenstein (1921), trans. C. K. Ogden)

Let us emphasize that the concepts of fact, state of affairs, atomic fact, world as a totality of facts and logical space are central to this ontology. The world as well as the merely conceived world must have a common form. And this form is founded by objects: simple objects that form the substance of the world (cf. 2.021, 2.022, 2.023).

2. Wolniewicz and the interpretation of the ontology of the *Tractatus* in a theory of lattices

In (Wolniewicz 1982 and 1985), compare also (Wolniewicz 1999), a lattice was proposed by means of which the interpretation of the basic theses of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* was given. The exact axioms of this lattice will be omitted here while we present below an example of such a lattice given in (Wolniewicz 1999), among others.

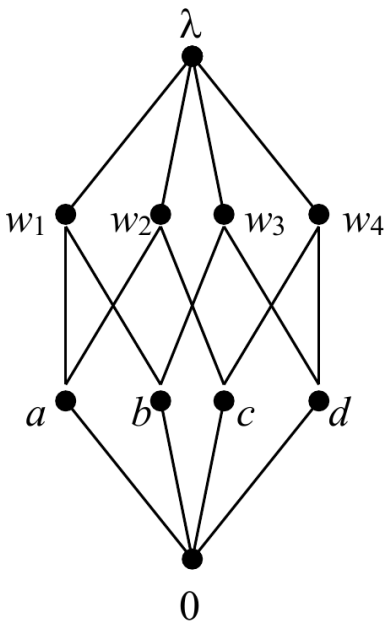


Figure 1. A lattice with signature $(2, 2)$ refers to dimension $D_1 = \{a, d\}$ with 2 elements and dimension $D_2 = \{b, c\}$ with 2 elements. Source: (Wolniewicz 1999: 30)

The set $\{a, b, c, d\}$ is a set of atoms, i.e., simple states of affairs (simple and compound states are called elementary situations by Wolniewicz). If we assume, for example that “it’s cold” = a , “it’s wet” = b , “it’s dry” = c and “it’s warm” = d , respectively, then $\{a, d\}$ and $\{b, c\}$ are two logical dimensions of temperature and moisture. Wolniewicz assumes that the number of dimensions is finite but the number of atoms in a given dimension D is arbitrary (finite or infinite). Every lattice of elementary situations SE has two improper situations: the impossible situation λ and the empty one 0 ($0 \neq \lambda$). Wolniewicz assumes, additionally, that the set $ES' = SE - \{\lambda\}$ is a set of possible elementary situations, and $CES = ES - \{0, \lambda\}$ is a set of contingent situations. The set $\{w_1, w_2, w_3, w_4\}$ is a set of possible worlds (called also a logical space).

Obviously, for any situation $x: 0 \leq x \leq \lambda$. If we want, for example, to interpret thesis 1.2, we only need to consider the worlds of w_2 and w_4 to see that in the former a is a fact, while in the latter it is not, 'and everything else remains the same'.

3. Lattices and topological ontology

In short, topological ontology is a fragment of formal ontology (comp. (Kaczmarek 2008)), which uses the concept network and theorems of general topology. In (Kaczmarek 2019a) I generalized Wolniewicz's approach by showing that it is possible and worthwhile to construct a lattice in which there are an arbitrary (including infinite) number of dimensions and in each dimension an arbitrary number of atoms (atomic situations). I have given this by passing to lattices constructed from topological spaces. This is because it is easy to see that if - for example - we replace 0 into \emptyset , a into $\{a\}$, b by $\{b\}$ and w_1 by $\{a, b\}$, then a pair

$$(\{a, b\}, \{\emptyset, \{a\}, \{b\}, \{a, b\}\})$$

is a topological space. Hence, the **Figure 1** can be replaced by:

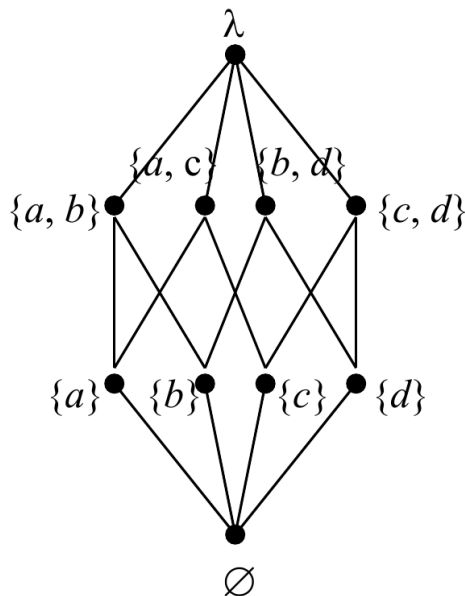


Figure 2. A lattice with four maximal topological spaces. Source: Author

Recall that a pair (X, T_X) is called a topological space when X is any set and T_X is a family of sets that satisfies the conditions: a) \emptyset and X belong to T_X , b) any union of sets from T_X also belongs to T_X , and c) a finite intersection of sets from T_X belongs to T_X . The topological space (X, T_X) is called an anti-discrete one, if $(X, T_X) = (X, \{\emptyset, X\})$. If any subset of X belongs to T_X , then (X, T_X) is called a discrete topological space. The pair $(\{a, b\}, \{\emptyset, \{a\}, \{b\}, \{a, b\}\})$ is an example of discrete topology. It is possible to prove:

Fact 1. Every Wolniewicz's lattice is isomorphic with some lattice composed of finite discrete topological spaces.

It is a well-known fact that Wittgenstein had trouble to provide an example of a simple sentence that 'hits' an atomic state of affairs. Hence, in (Kaczmarek 2019a: 410-412, I considered lattices consisting of topological spaces that have no atoms. I called such lattices hybrid lattices. In this paper, I propose that the function of atoms is performed by the bases of ontological spaces. We then obtain the following fact of topological ontology:

Fact 2. In a Wolniewicz lattice, any elementary situation is the supremum of some set of atomic situations (comp: **Axiom 8** in (Kaczmarek 2019a: 399)), while in a hybrid lattice, any situation is the supremum (union) of some sets from the basis.

Remark. A family \mathbf{B} of sets is a base of a topological space (X, T_X) if and only if any set A of T_X is a union of some sets of \mathbf{B} .

This means that in the hybrid approach some possible worlds are represented by topological spaces with atoms and others by spaces without atoms, but the above **Fact 2** is always true. Wittgenstein's problem with indicating an atomic state of affairs is perhaps related to the observation that (my hypothesis) some parts of our world (universe) are 'atomic in its nature' and others are not. An example of a hybrid lattice can be visualized in the following way (comp. (Kaczmarek 2019a: 412)).

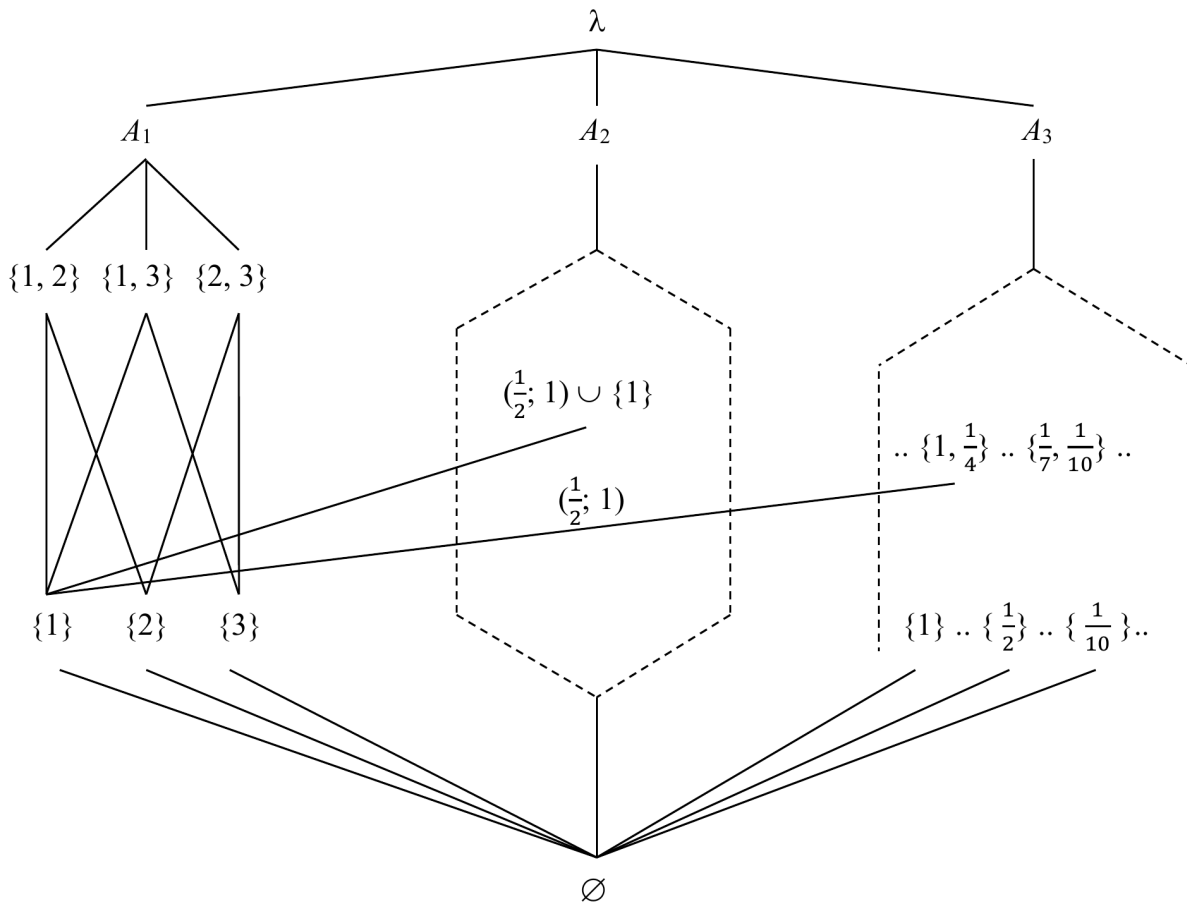


Figure 6. Hybrid lattice of topologies, where $A_1 = \{1, 2, 3\}$, $A_2 = (0, 1>$ and

$$A_3 = \left\{ \frac{1}{n} ; n \in \omega \right\} \cup \{2\}$$

Source: The author

4. Theory of analysis and synthesis. Combination ontology

Between 1989 and 2004, Perzanowski developed his combination ontology (CO), including the theory of analysis and synthesis (AS).

Perzanowski personally (Perzanowski 1989: 290) writes about the basic concepts of AS and CO as follows:

Note that this list includes the basic concepts of Leibniz's ontology: co-possibility, possible worlds, eminent existence, God, and before that, monad (= element) and complex; as well as the concepts of Wittgenstein's ontology: situation, possible world, possibility (= making possible), hence, and form, and before that, object (= element) and configuration (= complex). This is so for good reason. Indeed, the ontology presented here

arose from thinking - in temporal order - about the ontology of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* and Leibniz's *Principles of Philosophy*.

Combinational ontology is based on the so-called analysis and synthesis (AS) theory. Its primary concepts are: being simpler (in context: object x is simpler than object y - symbolically: $x < y$), analyzer α , which, acting on any object y , gives the totality of (simpler) objects obtained by breaking down (i.e., analyzing) y , and synthesizer σ , which in turn, acting on any object y , gives the totality of objects obtained by assembling (i.e., synthesizing) objects obtained by analyzing y (i.e., objects belonging to $\alpha(y)$).

On the basis of these concepts, Perzanowski introduces further concepts: superelement, element, complex, ontological universe, etc. Thus, we have:

- (a) object x is a superelement when there are no objects simpler than it,
- (b) x is an element when any object simpler than it is equal to x or is a superelement,
- (c) x is a complex when it is not an element (and therefore a superelement).

The set of all elements constitutes the so-called ontological universe or substance (of the considered universe of objects), while the set of all elements simpler than a given object x is called a substance of object x . Thus constructed the totality of objects **OB** (i.e. superelements, elements and complexes), together with the primary concepts $<$, α , σ , constitutes the ontological universe (**OU**).

An important role in combinational ontology is played by the so-called modal ontologic sensu stricto (**MO**), i.e., the theory of three operators **MP**, **MI** and **ON** expressing basic ontological modalities and allowing to express the relationship between any two objects. The primary concepts here are:

MP(x, y) =_{df} x makes y possible,

MI(x, y) =_{df} x makes y impossible,

ON(x, y) =_{df} x and y are ontically neutral.

The first two concepts are used to express possible or impossible combinations between objects, while the third is used to express the ontological neutrality of objects (their assembly is then not a relationship, but a loose composition).

Then, using only the MP operator theory, we can define:

- (O1) An object is coherent iff (definitional equality) is made possible by its substance.
- (O2) Objects x and y are co-possible iff they make each other possible.
- (O3) The object is founded (or: the object exists ontically) iff there is an object that makes it possible.
- (O4) Object x exists eminently in object y iff there is an object z simpler than y that makes x possible.
- (O5) Object x is central (or: is God) iff x makes possible every object.
- (O6) Object x is a situation iff is a complex that is made possible by the substance of the universe under consideration.
- (O7) Object x is a possible world iff due to the order of "being simpler" ($<$) x is a maximal object.
- (O8) Any x is ontically possible when it is made possible by some possible world.
- (O9) Two objects are ontically equivalent when they make possible the same object (objects) and are made possible by the same object (objects).
- (O10) Two objects are of the same ontic type when they are ontically equivalent.

5. Some conclusions of topological ontology

Question 1

Let us begin with some remarks on the interpretation of ontology from the Tractatus.

Referring to Chapters 2 and 3 of this paper, a maximal topological space in a lattice built of topological spaces is a counterpart of a possible world. The elements (sets) of each topological space are called - after Wolniewicz - elementary situations. In Wolniewicz's works, the term elementary situation is supposed to be an intermediary between Wittgenstein's "Sachverhalte" and "Sachlage." Wolniewicz, however, specifies: "'Sachverhalte" are those elementary situations which are atomic and "Sachlagen" are certain sets of the former' (comp. Wolniewicz (1999: 11)). I adopt this standpoint. In addition - following the paper of Łoś (1960) - Wolniewicz introduces the notion of

realization: a realization is any maximal set of all elementary situations in a lattice \mathbf{K} (e.g., realization $R_i = \{a: a \in \mathbf{K} \text{ and } a \leq w_i\}$). Using the topological approach, I identify a realization with a maximal topology. Since Wolniewicz proposes to identify one of the possible worlds with the world representing the real world, so the realization defined through this world will consist of the real elementary situations themselves, i.e., facts (equivalent to Wittgenstein's *Tatsachen*). Of course, in the topological approach proposed here, the facts are the elementary situations of the selected topological space, which we treat as the space representing the real world. All atomic elementary situations that do not belong to the selected topological space are states of affairs but are not facts.

In the *Tractatus* theses (2.0123 to 2.023), Wittgenstein outlines his approach to, among other things, the form of the object (2.014 and 2.0141) and the form of the world (2.022, 2.023 and 2.0231). Note that Wolniewicz's lattices do not talk about objects at all, while in the topological approach, where the elementary situation is understood as a set, the objects are the elements of the set. However, when we speak of a set in the sense of set theory, an element of a set has no internal qualities. Thus, if the substance of the world were composed of such objects, then in the absence of their (the objects') internal qualities, one cannot speak of the form of the object and thus of the form of the world. Topologists, however, when considering topological spaces, also consider such spaces whose universes contain, for example, numbers or functions or ideals, etc. (cf. Zariski's topology). Thus, considering Figure 2, I can understand the set $\{a\}$ as one in which the element a is the equivalent of a sphere in three-dimensional space (e.g., $x^2 + y^2 + z^2 = 4$). Then such an object already has certain internal properties, e.g., the radius of this sphere is 2. The totality of such internal qualities (according to 2.0123, 2.01231, 2.014 and 2.0141) constitutes the form of the object, while the totality of the forms of all objects of the substance of the world constitutes the form of the world (2.023, 2.0231 and 2.026). It is clear that the sphere defined above enters into such and not other external relations (configurations), e.g. with the sphere $x^2 + y^2 + z^2 = 16$.

The reviewer of my paper proposal pointed out to me many interesting issues and difficulties. I partly tried to describe them above. The reviewer also pointed out that there are many interpretations of Wittgenstein's thought, and

I should address them by indicating where my proposal lies in this spectrum. He wrote: 'For me, the ultra-realistic interpretation is one out of several, ranging from therapeutic interpretations to interpretations that allow TLP both philosophical substance and continuity with his later work. A paper like this (that is my paper - JK) should, or so I think, at least hint at where in this spectrum of interpretations it should be located. I will respond as follows. I am not a historian of analytic philosophy but a modest formal ontologist, and I think that appropriate hints as to the place of my proposal will be indicated, perhaps, by others. I am unable to do so. However, taking into account the classification of different types of situation ontologies (S-ontologies) proposed by Wolniewicz (cf. Wolniewicz (1999: 61), I can say that the topological approach creates the possibility of studying S-ontology, which is: separated, pluralistic, atomistic (but also non-atomistic), next genuinely pluralistic (like Russell's one) and dimensions binary (like Wittgenstein's ontology) but also dimensions arbitrary.

Question 2

Consider the following problem. Here we have seen that the possible world can be interpreted as a maximal topological space in a given lattice. Let's assume that the relation of being simpler ($<$) is a set theory inclusion, analysis (operator α) is understood as indicating the basis for the topological space, and synthesis (operator σ) of objects is the union of some of them or the union of all of them. Then, we obtain some new facts (I'm only listing some, not all).

Fact 3. Let B_1 and B_2 be two different bases of the same topological space. Then B_1 and B_2 are ontically equivalent. Moreover, each basis can be treated as a substance of the given topological space (possible world)

Fact 4. A possible world can be made possible by different bases (i.e. by different substances).

Fact 5. Let L be a lattice composed of topological spaces. Moreover, let FB be a family of bases such that at least one base of a given topological space belongs to FB . Then FB makes possible every situation in the lattice and every possible world of this lattice.

Conclusion. Based on (O5) FB is God.

Question 3

Note that in Leibniz's ontology, God is understood as the so-called central monad, and therefore a monad. A monad, on the other hand, is simple and **FB** is a complex. Thus, the problem arises how to give an interpretation of the central object, which at the same time, in the spirit of Leibniz, would be a simple object, using topological tools. I can see such a solution but it goes beyond the tools of general topology.

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Acknowledgement

This paper is sponsored by the National Center of Science, Poland: Grant - 2017/27//B/HS1/0283

Name. Assoziationen zum Verständnis von Geschlechtern mit Wittgenstein

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Abstract

Strukturähnlichkeiten zwischen philosophischer Methode und therapeutischem Vorgehen bilden den Hintergrund einiger Überlegungen angesichts der plötzlichen Einführung eines neuen Namens während einer psychoanalytischen Kur. Der Gebrauch des neuen Namens betrifft das Geschlecht der gleichermaßen benennenden wie benannten Person. Sie erlebt den anlässlich der Geburt verliehenen Vornamen und das vom frühen Soziumkreis zugeeignete Geschlecht als unpassend. Der neue Name steht für den Satz: Ich habe kein weibliches und kein männliches Geschlecht. Mit dem neuen Namen wird ein etablierter Sprachgebrauch kritisiert, korrigiert und gleichzeitig negiert. Der geschlechtsneutrale Name lässt sich als ein Insistieren darauf verstehen, dass der Sprachgebrauch nicht zu reglementieren ist. Doch worauf kann sich ein neuer Name stützen? Das Geschlechtskongruenzerleben der Person mit neuem Namen steht meinem Unbehagen gegenüber, einen neuen, verwirrenden Sprachgebrauch verordnet zu bekommen. Es werden mithilfe von einzelnen Beispielen von Wittgenstein Argumente gesucht, um das Unbehagen einerseits besser zu verstehen. Andererseits wird ein Perspektivenwechsel vorgeschlagen, der dem Unbehagen weniger Platz lässt.

„Sie haben mich gegendert.“ D. hat mich in den ersten Jahren der psychoanalytischen Kur mehrfach mit diesem Vorwurf konfrontiert. D. versteht darunter meine versehentliche Bezugnahme auf das zugeordnete Geburtsgeschlecht in grammatischen Satzkonstruktionen wie Anreden in elektronischen Nachrichten oder in Nebensätzen von Deutungen. In der Regel verwende ich in Analysen in meinem Reden selten oder nie geschlechtsfixierende Ausdrücke („Sie als Mann“ oder „Sie als Frau“). Es kommt eher aus Versehen vor, dass ich eine Formulierung wie „Sie, die dies oder das erlebt“ oder „Sie, der dies oder das wünscht“ verwende. In elektronischen Nachrichten ist die Frage des *Genderns* in konventionellen Formen der Anrede allerdings nicht so leicht zu umgehen. Neben der Auslassung des Namens in der Anrede bieten sich Formen wie „Hallo Vorname Nachname“ oder „Guten Tag Vorname Nachname“ an, – in der deutschen Grammatik weniger leichtfüßig als in der englischen.

Im Rahmen ihrer Behandlung hat die Person D. den Vornamen geändert und von der Umgebung gefordert, man dürfe sie statt mit dem, anlässlich der Geburt verliehenen Vornamen von nun ab nur noch mit „Fran“ anreden. Da ich mit meinen Patient*innen nicht per Du bin, betraf mich diese

Ankündigung nur für die oben genannte Sonderform einer Anrede in den Emails. Doch mir passte etwas daran nicht. Ich hatte den Eindruck, dass ich in ein Geschehen verwickelt werden sollte, in das ich mich nicht sofort inkludieren lassen wollte. Seither beschäftigen mich Fragen nach dem Funktionieren des Namens, nach den Vorgängen eines Namenswechsels und den Zusammenhängen zwischen Name und Geschlecht. Mein eklektischer Blick auf Überlegungen von Wittgenstein zum Namen dient einerseits dazu, mein Unbehagen (jenseits von psychoanalytischen Übertragungs- und Gegenübertragungsdynamiken) als ein philosophisch relevantes Unbehagen zu verstehen. Andererseits enthält dieser Blick auch den Versuch, das Unbehagen zu überwinden, ein Verständnis des Namenswechsels zu gewinnen, das diesen bejahren kann.

Die Fragen, die mit dem Gendern, der Zugehörigkeit und der Nichtzugehörigkeit zu Cis- oder Trans-Formen von Geschlechtern verbunden sind, werden gegenwärtig breit diskutiert (z.B. Nelson 2021, Gamero Cabrera 2022, Gérardin-Laverge 2022, Lobo 2022, Treviño-Tarango 2022). Die Aufmerksamkeit für epistemische, hermeneutische oder testimoniale Ungerechtigkeiten, denen sich Angehörige bestimmter wie unbestimmter Geschlechter ausgesetzt fühlen, steht in Verbindung mit umfassenden politischen Perspektiven, die im Folgenden keine Rolle spielen werden. Strukturähnlichkeiten zwischen philosophischer Methode und therapeutischem Vorgehen werden vorausgesetzt (vgl. PU 1971: §133), um „feine[] Verhäkelungen“ im Denken wie „unter der Lupe“ (Ms 114: 76) in einer Situation zu betrachten, in der sich ein Sprachgebrauch mit und gegen Absichten von Sprechenden etablieren soll.

1 Geschlecht mit Namentäfelchen

Die Einführung des Namens Fran, eine Art zweiter Taufe, erinnert an einen „okkulten Vorgang[]“ (PU 1971: §38), was ihn freilich nicht vom ersten verliehenen Namen bei der Geburt unterscheidet. Denn jedes „Benennen erscheint als eine seltsame Verbindung eines Wortes mit einem Gegenstand“ (ebd.). Ich soll den Namen Fran, der zunächst auftaucht wie ein „Namentäfelchen“ (PU 1971: §26), das sich jemand umhängt, lernen und ihn in der Folge richtig gebrauchen. Zu diesem Zweck bekomme ich von der sowohl

benennenden wie benannten Person über lange Zeit Situationen von außerhalb der Behandlung geschildert, in denen sich ihrer Ansicht nach Menschen als zu dumm oder zu unsensibel erweisen, um den neuen Namen und seine Bedeutung zu verstehen.

Fran ist ein Eigenname, ein Personennamen. Als solcher gilt er Wittgenstein nicht als einfacher, eigentlicher Name. Wie Nothung, das im Nibelungenlied Balmung heißt, ist Fran ein neuer, ein erfundener Name. Und wie Nothung, Siegfrieds Schwert in Richard Wagners Oper, ist Fran ein zusammengesetzter Name, der für eine Analyse durch Worte zu ersetzen ist, „die Einfaches benennen“ (PU 1971: §39). D. ersetzt Fran durch eine Erklärung. Ich bekomme gesagt, dass Fran für ein Ich steht, das programmatisch von einem Satz begleitet wird, der lautet: Ich, Fran, habe kein weibliches und kein männliches Geschlecht.

Mir fällt es schwer, einen Namen zu verwenden, „dessen Bedeutung ich nicht kenne“ (PU 1971: §79): Fran umfasst einerseits so viel und andererseits so wenig an Bedeutung – so viel, weil er als Eigenname ausdrücklich mit einer neuen geschlechtlichen Konnotation eingeführt wird und so wenig, weil diese Konnotation im beigefügten Satz inhaltlich gleichzeitig negiert wird. Als Neologismus und in seiner Kürze erinnert der Eigenname „Fran“ an Wittgensteins Frage, welchen Sinn ein Ausdruck wie „bububu“ haben könnte. „Kann ich mit dem Wort »bububu« meinen »Wenn es nicht regnet, werde ich spazieren gehen«?“ (Ts 227a: 30). Kann jemand mit „Fran“ meinen, er/sie/es habe kein weibliches und kein männliches Geschlecht? Genügt ein neues Namentäfelchen, um einen neuen Sprachgebrauch mit so weitreichenden Konsequenzen zu etablieren? Was wird alles ungesagt vorausgesetzt oder auch mitausgedrückt, damit „Fran“ bedeuten kann, was D. vorgibt? Mein Unbehagen lässt sich folgendermaßen präzisieren: Mit dem Ausdruck Fran wird gleichzeitig kritisiert, korrigiert, negiert. Und mir fehlen vor allem Kriterien, die den veränderten Sprachgebrauch stützen könnten.

Der Name Fran ist eine Kritik. Er schneidet mit dem Programm, das er vermitteln soll, in Sprachgewohnheiten und in vielfach unthematisierte, langfristig habitualisierte Wahrnehmungen hinein. Mit dem zum Verschwinden zu bringenden, alten Namen wird dem zugeordneten Geburtsgeschlecht, das im Falle von D. nicht intersexuell war, die Bedeutung

entzogen. Die verlorene Bedeutung hing, wie es beim Geburtsgeschlecht üblich ist, an optischen Eindrücken (Ultraschallbilder von Organsystemen, äußerer Phänotypus des Geschlechts). Fran ist nicht nur ein Eigenname mit einer ausgesprochenen Bedeutung, sondern eine Kurzform für eine Kritik an einer zweiwertigen Einteilung der Geschlechter. Weiblich oder männlich – ein Drittes ist nicht vorgesehen. Mit dieser Kritik könnte sich D. auch auf Wittgenstein beziehen, der darauf hinweist, dass ein solches Ausschließen eines Dritten den Überblick eines Gottes voraussetzt (vgl. PU 1971: §352). D. stellt mit Fran eine gängige Form des Sprechens infrage, die sich implizit auf einen derartigen Überblick stützen möchte.

Der Name Fran ist eine Korrektur. Die frühe Geschlechtszuweisung, die geschlechtertheoretisch als *Sex* einer Person bezeichnet wird, ist nicht der einzige Anknüpfungspunkt für D.s Geschlecht. Sondern der zuerst verliehene Eigenname ist auch der Name für das, was einer Person vor, bei und nach dem ersten Akt der Namensgebung von Anfang an und im Laufe der weiteren Entwicklung vom engen Soziuskreis (vgl. Laplanche 2008: 120) an *Gender*, d.h. an Geschlechtsrolle, zugeschrieben wurde. Diese Zueignung umfasst explizite, inexplizite und – psychoanalytisch gesprochen – vor allem rätselhafte Botschaften. D. wendet sich korrigierend an die eigenen Eltern und andere in der Kindheit nahestehende Personen und klärt sie über einen grundlegenden Irrtum auf. Diese Korrektur erfolgt mit Verweis auf ein eigenes Empfinden einer Kongruenz zwischen der Bezeichnung und der eigenen Wahrnehmung des Geschlechts.

Fran ist näher durch eine Negation bestimmt, die sich auf die Attribuierung zweier Geschlechter bezieht. Zum besseren Verständnis wäre zu klären, worauf sich die Negation richtet: Weist D. das Geschlecht in jeder Hinsicht zurück? Oder ist vor allem ein weibliches oder männliches Attribut des Geschlechts angesprochen? Das Negierte gilt als das einzige Bestimmungsstück des Namens. Wittgenstein hat für Moses und für einen verstorbenen Mann namens N. überlegt, unter welchen Bedingungen Sätze über sie noch sinnvoll sind (vgl. PU 1971: §79). Wieviele nebensächliche Eigenschaften dürfen fehlen, ohne dass Moses oder N. ihre Bedeutung verlieren? Daher lautet die Frage an Frans programmatischen Satz: Sind beide – Geschlecht und die Attribute weiblich und männlich – gleichermaßen nebensächlich? Für Wittgenstein kommt es darauf an: Nur dann, wenn ich das Geschlecht und die genannten

Attribute für nebensächlich halte, kann Fran eine existierende Person kennzeichnen. Jeder Satz und jede Anrede, in welchen „Fran“ vorkommt, sind logisch betrachtet, Unsinn, solange ich die Prädikate Geschlecht oder weiblich und männlich als wesentlich für die Person ansehe (vgl. ebd).

D.s Kritik an gängigen zweiwertigen Einteilungen des Geschlechts ist im Hinblick auf eine zentrale, den Sprachgebrauch regulierende Instanz einleuchtend. (Dass sich D. mit der Namensänderung in die Position einer solchen Instanz begibt, muss einer späteren Untersuchung vorbehalten bleiben.) Wittgenstein betont, dass es (zumindest von der Philosophie her) nicht möglich ist, einen Sprachgebrauch zu reglementieren (vgl. PU 1971: §81). Das ist ein Argument gegen mein Unbehagen und eine darin enthaltene Versuchung, lieber festzuhalten an Gewohntem als neue Namen zu lernen. Es ist auch ein Argument gegen eine Betrachtungsweise, in welcher für jeden Eigennamen die „Idee“ des Geschlechts „als Brille auf [meiner] Nase [sitzt]“ (PU 1971: §103).

2 Geschlecht wie Schmerz

Nun vermittelt eine Reglementierung nicht nur Einschränkungen für den Sprachgebrauch. Sie ermöglicht auch Verständigung. Die Namenskorrektur macht mich hinsichtlich der Möglichkeit, mich zu verständigen, unsicher. Woran soll ich mich halten, um zu wissen, was ein neuer Ausdruck oder ein Satz bedeuten? So wie Wittgenstein nach den Regeln fragt, die sagen, „ob man so etwas“, was eben noch ein Sessel war, jetzt aber verschwunden ist, „noch ‚Sessel‘ nennen darf“ (PU 1971: §80), so sind auch Regeln des Gebrauchs von Ausdrücken wie „Geschlecht“, das weder „weiblich“ noch „männlich“ und möglicherweise sogar verschwunden ist, unklar.

Aber lassen sich überhaupt Regeln angeben für etwas, was jemand über das eigene Geschlecht sagt? Im Zentrum von Kritik, Korrektur und Negation mit dem neuen Namen steht die Erklärung einer Kongruenzempfindung zwischen Bezeichnung und Wahrnehmung des eigenen Geschlechts. Der neue Name und die damit verbundene Prädikation eines (Nicht-)Geschlechts führt zu einigen Aspekten, die Wittgenstein unter dem Titel Schmerz diskutiert. Meine unbehagliche Position, in die mich Fran mit der Namensersetzung bringt, ähnelt der Position, in die jemand einer Person gegenüber geraten kann, die

Schmerzen hat. So wie ich den Schmerz einer anderen Person nicht selbst haben kann (vgl. PU 1971: §253), so ist es mir auch nicht möglich, ein Geschlecht und dessen Erleben von jemanden anderen zu haben. Nur aus Analogien, die sich in den Äußerungen von jemanden über das eigene Geschlechtsempfinden darstellen, ließe sich – wie beim Schmerz aus Schmerzäußerungen – erschließen, ob jemand anderer ein ähnliches, vergleichbares Erleben des Geschlechts hat wie ich. Ich bin dabei auf Äußerungen von D. angewiesen. Unbehagen bereitet mir an dieser Stelle, dass D. mir gegenüber unbedacht auf visuelle Eindrücke zurückgreift, um unser beider, angeblich gleiches Geschlechtskongruenzerleben zu verknüpfen. Wie könne ich, so die Frage, die ich doch auch kein weibliches oder männliches Geschlecht hätte, mit meinen großen Ohrringen so tun, als wäre ich weiblich?

Die Zueignungen des frühen Soziuskreises bilden den Kontext, in welchem ein Kind lernt, das eigene Geschlecht zu benennen und sich dazu passend zu verhalten, so wie es lernt, ein entsprechendes Schmerzbenehmen an den Tag zu legen und einen Schmerz als Schmerz zu bezeichnen. Den Schmerzen können auch neue Namen gegeben werden. Wittgenstein betont, dass solche Namen für Schmerzen nicht kontextfrei aufkommen. Es findet sich in der Sprache ein „Posten [], an den das neue Wort gestellt wird“ (PU 1971: § 257). Für D.s Fran-Bezeichnung und den zugehörigen Satz über das Nicht-Geschlecht sind freie Stellen in der Sprache vorhanden. Sie gehören allerdings zu einem Sprechen, das von der Grammatik her binär gestaltet ist. Damit hängt wohl zusammen, dass meine großen Ohrringe und ihre behauptete Nähe zu einem weiblichen Geschlecht hineingeraten in einen Regulierungsversuch des neuen Sprachgebrauchs. Eine Klarheit über D.s Geschlechtskongruenzerleben lässt sich infolge des etablierten sprachlichen Rasters nicht leicht gewinnen.

Fran und der mit dem Eigennamen verknüpfte Satz „Ich habe kein weibliches und kein männliches Geschlecht“ sind keine Beschreibungen von überprüfbaren Tatsachen in einer miteinander geteilten Realität. Es werden erinnerte und nicht erinnerte Erfahrungen, Fantasien, körperliche Lust- und Unlustzustände D.s zu einer Formulierung über ein fehlendes Kongruenzerleben zusammengesetzt. Der vorgestellte Ort, die seelische Verankerung der Aussage, scheint geeignet, ihr ein besonderes Gewicht zu

verleihen. Denn wenn überhaupt jemand wissen kann, ob Fran zum fehlenden Kongruenzerleben passt, dann müsse es doch D. sein. Weshalb der Mitteilung also misstrauen?

Mit Wittgenstein ist die Selbstverständlichkeit einer Mitteilung seelischen Erlebens zu bezweifeln (vgl. PU 1971: §363). Was D. andeutet über eine Kongruenzempfindung, soll bei mir als eine Vorstellung ankommen. Ich soll im Anschluss an die Mitteilung „wissen“, was die Vorstellung enthält (ebd.).

Aber es macht keinen Sinn zu fragen, was die Vorstellung einer solchen Empfindung ist oder was mit ihr in einem Kopf „geschieht“ (PU 1971: §370). Die Empfindung der Kongruenz zwischen der Geschlechtszuschreibung und der Wahrnehmung des eigenen Geschlechts lässt sich nämlich analog zum Schmerz als der Käfer betrachten, den jeder mit sich in einer Schachtel trägt und nicht herzeigt (vgl. PU 1971: §293). Es muss offenbleiben, ob die Schachtel überhaupt einen Käfer enthält. Entsprechend könnte für D. an der Stelle der Kongruenzempfindung ebenso nichts stehen. (Wörtlich genommen, besagt Fran für D. übrigens genau dies, dass nämlich D.s Schachtel eines kongruenten Geschlechterlebens leer ist, sich an diesem Posten im Sprachspiel nichts findet.)

Auch das Nichts in der leeren Schachtel löst das Problem, wie darüber gesprochen werden kann, nicht. „[Die Empfindung] ist kein Etwas, aber auch nicht ein Nichts! Das Ergebnis war nur, dass ein Nichts die gleichen Dienste täte wie ein Etwas, worüber sich nichts aussagen lässt“ (PU 1971: §304). Das Geschlechtskongruenzempfinden „fällt [...] als irrelevant aus der Betrachtung heraus“ (ebd.). Die Bedeutung, für die das Empfinden steht, ist für eine Unterscheidung von Sinn und Unsinn der Aussage nicht belastbar.

3 Geschlecht lesen

Mein aus verschiedenen Quellen gespeistes Unbehagen hindert mich, einzustimmen und gemeinsam mit D. die Grammatik der – bis vor Kurzem noch weitgehend unbezweifelt als gemeinsam angesehenen – Sprache argwöhnisch zu betrachten und an der Abschaffung der Kategorie Geschlecht oder dessen weiblicher und männlicher Eigenschaft mitzuwirken. Für D. ist das in ihrer Kur nicht ohne Folgen. Denn mit dem Geschlechtskongruenzempfinden ist es wie mit der Röte einer Vorstellung. Für

meine Vorstellung von Rot ist das, was der andere, der ebenfalls eine Rotvorstellung hat, sagt und tut, ein Kriterium. Daran kann ich mich halten. Ich allein kann aber kein Kriterium für Rot entwickeln (vgl. PU 1971: §377). Und so kann D. allein kein Kriterium für Fran und dafür entwickeln, kein (weibliches oder männliches) Geschlecht zu haben. D. ist auf meine Äußerungen angewiesen, um den neuen Namen sprachlich zu verankern.

Aber braucht D. meine Zustimmung, um den Namen Fran sinnvoll einzusetzen? Nein. Diese Annahme ist falsch. Zum einen würde ich mich über meine Wichtigkeit für D.s Sprechen täuschen. D. ist ja keineswegs die einzige Person, die mit einem geschlechtsneutralen Namen bemüht ist, ein Sprachspiel neu zu gestalten. Sie kann sich auf eine anwachsende Vielzahl anderer Sprecher*innen stützen, die in diesem Spiel mitspielen. Zum anderen kann D. den neuen Namen auch ohne Erfüllung rechtfertigender Kriterien verwenden: „Ein Wort ohne Rechtfertigung zu gebrauchen, heißt nicht, es zu Unrecht zu gebrauchen“ (PU 1971: §289).

D. erfindet einen neuen Namen, ein neues Sprachspiel (vgl. PU 1971: §27). Solch ein Name lässt sich als ein Farbmuster ansehen, das D. mir zeigt, als „ein Muster dessen, was der Andere sagen soll“ (PU 1971: §16). Für mich als angesprochene andere Person ist der Weg zu einem behaglichen Gebrauch des neuen Namens allerdings viel länger und vor allem ein anderer, als ich es in meinem Versuch, mein Unbehagen durch logische Überlegungen loszuwerden, vorausgesetzt habe. Es gilt etwa am Tonfall zu unterscheiden, zu beachten, um welche Art von Satz es sich handelt (vgl. PU 1971: §21). Es braucht eine Einschätzung, ob sich im jeweiligen Vorkommen dieses neuen Namens vor allem eine Frage, eine Prophezeiung, eine Meldung, eine Behauptung, ein Befehl, ein Geständnis, eine Prüfung oder vielleicht ein „Rätsel“ (vgl. PU 1971: §23) ausdrücken. Im Hinblick auf D.s aufgegebenen alten Namen habe ich außerdem zu berücksichtigen, dass Sprachspiele nicht nur „entstehen“, sondern auch „veralten“ (ebd.).

Für das weitere Sprechen komme ich nicht drum herum, den Gebrauch des neuen Namens zu lernen. D. schlägt vor, dass das Geschlecht vor allem richtig zu lesen sei. Fran soll das Lesen von D.s Geschlecht erleichtern. Wittgenstein verweist auf die musikalische Seite des Lesens (vgl. PU 1971: §22, §156). Lesen heißt, etwas Notiertes verlauten lassen (vgl. PU 1971: §156), was auf

unterschiedliche Weise geschehen kann. Ich kann die Noten einzeln wie Buchstaben lesen, ohne dass daraus ein Musikstück wird. Ich kann sie auswendig vortragen, mechanisch ohne Verständnis des Gelesenen. Der Vorwurf des Genders trifft mich dort zu Recht, wo ich die Noten gewohnheitsmäßig und insofern wie eine, in einem binären Notationssystem abgerichtete „Lesemaschine“ (PU 1971: §157) interpretiert habe. Das Französischspiel ist anderer Art. Wie manche Notation zeitgenössischer Musik enthält es unbekannte Noten und Zeichen, die D. und ich gemeinsam lesen, interpretieren und für die Arbeit in der Kur nutzen können. Kann ich wissen, wann es mir gelungen ist, das Spiel auf die richtige Weise lesend mitzuspielen? Ja, denn dann wird es ein anderes Lesen sein. Es lässt sich daran erkennen, dass mir „[d]ie Worte, die ich ausspreche, in besonderer Weise [kommen].‘ [...] Sie kommen von selbst“ (PU 1971: §165).

In dem von D. initiierten Sprachspiel ist für ein Unbehagen kein Platz. „Unser Fehler ist, dort nach einer Erklärung zu suchen, wo wir die Tatsachen als ‚Urphänomene‘ sehen sollten. D.h., wo wir sagen sollten: dieses Sprachspiel wird gespielt“ (PU 1971: §654).

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Interne Relationen. Der *Tractatus* als Brücke zwischen Bradley, seinen Kritikern und der aktuellen Ontologie

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Abstract

In diesem Beitrag soll gezeigt werden, wie in Wittgensteins *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* (TLP) das Thema ‚Interne Relationen‘ aus einem Binnenstreit über einschlägige Thesen Francis Bradleys herausgehoben, originell auf den Punkt gebracht und so zu einem wichtigen Gegenstand der aktuellen Ontologie gemacht wird. Um dies darzulegen, sind die entsprechenden Passagen aus dem TLP zu sichten. Zuvor aber müssen wir uns der Einführung von internen Relationen bei Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, widmen, bzw. deren kritische Auslegung in Moores einschlägigen Publikationen und bei Russell, in erster Linie seinen *Principia Mathematica*, berücksichtigen. Dann soll, ausgehend von Wittgenstein, die Relevanz interner Relationen für die gegenwärtige Ontologie angezeigt werden: Interne Relationen sind unverzichtbar für eine konsistente ontologische Weltbeschreibung. In diesem Artikel müssen wir uns auf Grundlinien beschränken, noch dazu gesehen aus einer bestimmten Perspektive, somit ohne jeden Anspruch auf eine vollständigere Darlegung der Einführung und der kritischen Diskussion des Themas. Auch die Gegenüberstellung von internen zu externen Relationen kann nicht geleistet werden. Ziel ist Wittgensteins Brückenfunktion zwischen der Britischen Philosophie des frühen 20. Jahrhunderts und der aktuellen Ontologie.

1. Interne Relationen in Bradleys *Appearance and Reality* (AaR)

Grundanliegen von AaR ist, Paradoxien aufzuzeigen, die unsere alltägliche Welt der *Erscheinungen* prägen. Die Erscheinungswelt ist uns als Ort alltäglicher Praxis vertraut, bei genauerer Analyse stellt sie sich allerdings, aufgrund der Paradoxien, als „theoretically unintelligible“ (AaR: 21) heraus. Will man die Realität adäquat interpretieren, muss man den „Schleier“ der Erscheinungswelt überwinden und zu einer „wahren“ Einstellung zur *einen*, absoluten *Wirklichkeit* (an sich) kommen. Bemerkenswert für unser Thema *Interne Relationen* ist, dass sie sowohl im Aufweis besagter Paradoxien als auch bei der Darlegung eines metaphysischen *Monismus* spezifisch eingeführt werden.

Beginnen wir bei Ersterem: In Buch I, Abschnitt III, wird die Differenzierung in Relationen und nicht-relationale Qualitäten als eine zentrale, die Erscheinungswelt prägende Paradoxie vorgestellt. Dort kommt auch der Begriff „interne Beziehung“ erstmals vor (AaR: 26).

Nach Bradley sind Qualitäten durch einen Doppelaspekt charakterisiert, und zwar im Hinblick auf Relationen. Jede Qualität kann als Fundament von Relationen aufgefasst werden. Die Tatsache z.B., dass ich 176cm groß bin, ist Fundament der Relation kleiner-als, in der ich zu sehr vielen Objekten stehe. Dann aber muss eine Qualität auch als durch Relationen fundiert verstanden werden. Denken wir an Farbqualitäten, etwa Orange, das notwendig als Resultat einer Differenzierungsrelation zu anderen Farben, etwa Gelb und Rot, aufzufassen ist.

Der besagte Doppelaspekt jeder Qualität besteht nun darin, Fundament und Fundiertes von Relationen zu sein. Diese beiden Aspekte aber stehen in etwas, das Bradley zunächst eher leichtfertig eine *interne Relation* nennt. *Innerhalb* jeder Qualität besteht diese Beziehung. Das Paradoxe ist, dass diese interne Relationen die ihnen mutmaßlich zukommende Funktion nicht erfüllen können. Das wäre die Zusammenfügung zur Einheit von innerlich komplexen Qualitäten. Jeder Aspekt von Qualitäten, der Fundament-Aspekt und der Fundiertsein-Aspekt, kann nämlich als solcher wiederum als Qualität erachtet werden, auf die sich die gegebene Analyse beziehen lässt. Das Ergebnis ist ein letztlich infiniter Regress: „[...] with an internal relation A's unity disappears, and its contents are dissipated in an endless process of distinction“ (AaR: 26).

Die innere Einheit von Qualitäten wird also durch einen solchen Doppelaspekt im Hinblick auf Relationen zerstört. Interne Relationen sind die tragischen Hauptakteure dieses Dramas, dessen Auslöser die Differenzierung zwischen Qualitäten und Relationen ist, die man auch als extern bezeichnen könnte.

Die Paradoxie von Relationalität in der Erfahrungswelt ist jedoch nicht das Letzte. Die Realität „an sich“ besteht ja gerade unabhängig von der Erfahrung. Diese ist für Bradley *eine*, umfassende *Ganzheit*. In dieser einen Ganzheit kann es keine ontologisch relevanten Elemente, keine Teil-Entitäten, geben. Das schließt innere strukturelle Differenzierung nicht aus. In diesem monistischen Szenario können wir eine neue Verortung interner Relationen vornehmen. Zum einen dadurch, dass ihr Gegenstück, das sind externe Relationen, von vornherein irrelevant sind. Worauf sollten sich externe Relationen auch beziehen, wenn letztlich nur *eine* Ganzheit existiert? Zum anderen werden interne Relationen auch positiv charakterisiert. Bradleys Monismus schließt strukturelle Differenzierung der einen Wirklichkeit nicht aus, somit auch nicht

jede Pluralität, folglich Relationalität, solange gewährleistet bleibt, dass Relationen nur *in* oder aufgrund der einen Wirklichkeit bestehen. Das Intern-Sein der Relationen besagt somit, dass sie strikt von der einen Ganzheit *abhängig* sind, somit keinesfalls den Status von selbständigen Entitäten beanspruchen können. Sie sind Aspekte oder Merkmale der einen Ganzheit: „Plurality and relatedness are but features and aspects of unity“ (AaR: 125). Daraus folgt, dass Relationen, so verstanden, stets mit einer qualitativen *Modifikation* ihres Trägers einhergehen. Dies schließt nochmals externe Relationen aus, für die nach Bradley gilt, dass sie ihre Relata gerade nicht modifizieren. Das Fazit: „[...] any attempt to maintain the relations as merely external must fail.“ (Ebd.)

2. Russell und Moore als Kritiker Bradleys

Beginnen wir mit Russell, der Erörterung interner Beziehungen in seinen *Principles of Mathematics* (PoM). Zwei Kontexte sind hier relevant, weil sie sich auf Bradley beziehen und maßgeblich für die Entwicklung des Themas *Interne Relationen* sind: §§ 212-216, in denen es um asymmetrische Relationen geht, bzw. §§ 426f, in denen sich Russell mit Raum bzw. Raumpunkten beschäftigt.

Russell spricht Bradley eine „monistic view“ zu, die jede Relation zwischen zwei Relata *a* und *b* als Eigenschaft *R* einer Ganzheit, bestehend aus *a* und *b*, auffasst (PoM: 221, 224), jedenfalls als eine der Ganzheit rein interne Instanz. In diesen Abschnitten weist Russell darauf hin, dass eine solche generelle Reduktion aller Relationen auf rein interne die *Asymmetrie* mancher Relationen nicht gewährleisten kann, z.B. der Relation kleiner-als. In einer monistischen Analyse wird die Sachlage, dass *a* kleiner als *b* ist, durch „kleiner-als (*a*, *b*)“ wiedergegeben; dass *b* kleiner als *a* ist, aber durch „kleiner-als (*b*, *a*)“. Die Ganzheiten, das ist der springende Punkt, (*a*, *b*) und (*b*, *a*) aber sind exakt dieselben. Somit besteht kein Unterschied zwischen „kleiner-als (*a*, *b*)“ und „kleiner-als (*b*, *a*)“. Diese Analyse kann lediglich einholen, *dass* in einer Ganzheit eine Differenz von Größen besteht. Wie diese aber verläuft, bleibt offen. Somit gilt: „the distinction between an asymmetrical relation and its converse, is one which the monistic theory of relations is wholly unable to explain“ (PoM: 225).

Russell sieht es als „Ausweg“ für Monisten an, dass die einzig wirkliche Ganzheit ein Absolutes ist, das in einem eigentlichen Sinne keine Teile aufweist (PoM: 226). Das Problem dabei: Über eine absolute Ganzheit ohne Teile kann man keine affirmativen Aussagen machen. Denn jede wahrheitsfähige affirmative Aussage erfolgt in Form einer Prädikation, also in einer Behauptung in Subjekt-Prädikat-Dichotomie. Auf eine absolute Ganzheit bezogen, setzte das aber eine echte Differenzierung voraus, zwischen ihm selbst (Subjekt) und eben seinen Eigenschaften (eingeführt durch Prädikate), damit auch das Bestehen von *Relationen* zwischen dem Absoluten und diesen Eigenschaften (vgl. PoM: 448). Diese aber müssen *extern* sein, was die Behauptung ihres Nicht-Bestehens widerlegt.

In *External and Internal Relations* (EIR) bekundet Moore zunächst, dass es ihm schwerfällt zu verstehen, was mit der Leugnung von externen Beziehungen überhaupt gemeint sei (EIR: 40). So besteht die Auseinandersetzung mit Bradley zunächst in verschiedenen Rekonstruktionsversuchen seiner Thesen. Im Fokus dabei: „No relations are purely external“ im Begründungszusammenhang mit „All relations [...] modify or make a difference to the terms between which they hold“ (ebd.). Ein wörtliches Verstehen dieser Modifikation implizierte, dass jede Relation kausal in ihren Relata eine Änderung bewirkt, so wie ein Stück Wachs schmilzt, wenn man es in Beziehung setzt zu einer Flamme (EIR: 42). Als allgemeine Behauptung, wie sie von Bradley zur generellen Leugnung externer Beziehungen vorgetragen wird, ist die Aussage falsch. Es gibt offenkundig Objekte, die durch das Eintreten in Beziehungen keine Änderung in diesem Sinn durchmachen (EIR: 43). Wenn ein Objekt a zu einem Objekt b in die Beziehung kleiner-als tritt, ändert sich a dadurch nicht, zumindest nicht wie Wachs durch kausale Einwirkung.

Wir müssen, um Bradleys Behauptung Sinn zu geben, die Modifikations-These selbst modifizieren. Sie hat überhaupt nur dann Chancen auf Erfolg, wenn man nicht weiter von Relationen spricht, sondern von relationalen *Eigenschaften*, um von den Letzteren zu behaupten, sie können einem Träger nicht zukommen, ohne in diesem irgend eine Differenz zu erzeugen, wobei Moore folgende Formulierung dafür vorschlägt: „in the case of every relational

property, it can always be truly asserted of any term x which has that property, that any term which had not had it would necessarily have been different from x “ (EIR: 47).

Auch diese wohlwollende Interpretation kann allerdings das Erklärungsziel „No relations are purely external“ nicht erreichen. Als Gegenbeispiel führt Moore mereologische Relationen bzw. relationale Eigenschaften an. Nehmen wir einen Kreis, der zur einen, oberen Hälfte rot, zur anderen, unteren Hälfte aber gelb ist. Dann entsteht im gesamten Gebilde eine Differenz, wenn die Beziehung zu einem seiner Teile wegfällt. Das Umgekehrte gilt jedoch nicht. Die untere, gelbe Kreishälfte ist die gleiche, ob sie nun als Teil des Ganzen aufgefasst wird oder nicht. Somit haben wir ein Beispiel einer relationalen Eigenschaft, nämlich Teil einer Ganzheit zu sein, die sogar bei wohlwollendster Interpretation die Modifikations-These als falsch erweist. Damit wird das „Dogma interner Beziehungen“, wie Moore auch sagt, widerlegt. Es gibt *relationale Eigenschaften*, nämlich Teil einer Ganzheit zu sein, die in ihrem Träger keine Differenz erzeugt. Das tut umso weniger *die Beziehung* zwischen dem Teil und der Ganzheit. Somit modifiziert diese Beziehung zumindest ein Relatum nicht. Bradleys Begründung für das Intern-Sein aller Beziehungen ist hinfällig.

3. Interne Relationen im TLP

Wenn wir uns Wittgensteins *Tractatus* zuwenden, wollen wir darlegen, wie er Bradley rezipiert, weiterentwickelt und für kommende Theorienbildungen fruchtbar macht. Dass er damit interne Relationen aus der Auseinandersetzung zwischen Bradley und Russell bzw. Moore heraushebt, ergibt sich daraus ebenfalls (vgl. dazu Macha 2015, part II).

Wittgenstein greift im TLP manche Elemente der Thesen Russells und Moores zu internen Relationen auf. So führt Wittgenstein, wie Moore, die Differenzierung zwischen internen *Eigenschaften* und internen *Relationen* als nicht strikt ein. In TLP 4.123 spricht Wittgenstein von einem „schwankenden Gebrauch“ dieser Begriffe. Das entspricht bei Wittgenstein der Einführung sowohl von „interne Eigenschaft“ wie von „interne Relation“ im Kontext der Ausführungen zu sogenannten „formalen“ Eigenschaften bzw. Relationen in TLP 4.122. Formale *Eigenschaften* sind Eigenschaften der Struktur von

Tatsachen. „In demselben Sinne“ kann man in diesem Zusammenhang, sprich hinsichtlich struktureller Merkmalen von Tatsachen, auch von „formalen *Relationen*“ sprechen. Zu *internen* Eigenschaften bzw. Relationen ist es nur noch ein kleiner Schritt, der in einer terminologischen Festlegung besteht: „Statt Eigenschaft der Struktur sage ich auch ‚interne Eigenschaft‘; statt Relation der Strukturen ‚interne Relation‘.“ (Ebd.)

Von Russell scheint Wittgenstein eine Bestimmung interner Relationen aus den *Philosophical Essays* zu übernehmen. Dort charakterisiert Russell interne Relationen als „grounded in the natures of the related terms“ (160), was besagt, dass die Relata interner Relationen so sind, dass sie nicht ohne die Beziehung gedacht werden können. Wenn wir z.B. die Farbqualität Hellblau annehmen, so liegt es in deren „Natur“, heller als Dunkelblau zu sein. Heller-als ist in diesem Sinn eine interne Beziehung. Diese Bestimmung finden wir nun auch in TLP 4.123: „Eine Eigenschaft ist intern, wenn es undenkbar ist, dass ihr Gegenstand sie nicht besitzt. (Diese blaue Farbe und jene stehen in der internen Relation von heller und dunkler eo ipso. Es ist undenkbar, dass *diese* beiden Gegenstände nicht in dieser Relation stünden.)“ Eine interne Eigenschaft bzw. interne Beziehung ist nach Russell und Wittgenstein so durch ihre Träger bzw. ihre Relata determiniert, dass Letztere ohne diese Eigenschaft bzw. Relation nicht gedacht werden können. Im Hinblick auf Relationen geht dies so weit, dass sich der „nichts anderes als“-Reflex einstellen mag: Für das Bestehen der internen Beziehungen heller bzw. dunkler braucht es nicht mehr als das Vorliegen zweier unterschiedlicher Farbqualitäten.

Mit beiden, Moore und Russell, kommt Wittgenstein in der Ablehnung eines einfachen Reduktionismus von externen auf interne Relationen überein. Ebenso ist Wittgenstein kein Reduktionist im Sinne des „Dogmas interner Beziehungen“ (Moore). Allerdings, und darin geht Wittgenstein über beide Referenzautoren hinaus, wird ein solcher Reduktionismus im TLP deshalb abgelehnt, weil er eine Lösung eines Problems ist, das sich, bei richtigem Verstehen, erst gar nicht ergibt. So „erledigt sich nun die Streitfrage ‚ob alle Relationen intern oder extern‘ seien“ (4.1252), wenn man einsieht, dass interne Relationen „zwischen möglichen Sachlagen“ bzw. „zwischen den sie darstellenden Sätzen“ bestehen (4.125); wobei wir unter „Sachlage“ eine komplexe oder molekulare Struktur von Sachverhalten verstehen dürfen (vgl. Glock 2000: 332). Was auch immer externe Relationen sein mögen, es ist klar,

dass sie auf solche Struktur-Merkmale nicht reduziert werden können. Die Annahme einer Reduktion ist weder wahr noch falsch, sondern schlicht sinnlos.

Inwiefern lässt sich Wittgenstein nun auch auf Bradley beziehen? Eine erste naheliegende Antwort ist, dass er externe Beziehungen zwar nicht auf interne reduziert, sie im TLP aber weitgehend ignoriert. Jedenfalls haben externe Beziehungen im Gefüge des TLP, im Unterschied zu den internen, keine tragende Funktion. Überall dort, wo Beziehungen echte theoretische Relevanz haben, werden sie explizit als interne deklariert, etwa die Abbildungsbeziehung zwischen Sprache und Welt in 4.104, sowie logische Beziehungen in 5.131 (Wahrheitswertbeziehungen) bzw. in 5.21ff (logische Operationen zur Erzeugung von komplexen Sätzen).

Ein weiterer Aspekt ist, dass interne Beziehungen im TLP jedenfalls nicht selbst als Sachverhalte oder echte Teile derselben aufgefasst werden. Konsequenterweise können sie selbst nicht durch Sätze abgebildet werden: „Das Bestehen solcher interner Eigenschaften und Relationen kann aber nicht durch Sätze behauptet werden [...vielmehr] zeigt es sich in den Sätzen, welche jene Sachverhalte darstellen“ (4.122). Das erinnert an Bradleys monistische, besser holistische Interpretation von internen Relationen, derzufolge diese nicht selbständig als etwas, als Entität bestehen, sondern nur „in“ oder „durch“ eine umfassende Ganzheit. Diese Ganzheit wird bei Wittgenstein freilich nicht im Sinn von Bradleys Absolutem verstanden, sondern als Sachverhalt bzw. als Sachlage in eingeführtem Sinn.

Interne Beziehungen sind auch bei Wittgenstein so strikt von einer Ganzheit *abhängig*, dass sie keinesfalls den Status von Entitäten beanspruchen können. Wittgenstein führt allerdings Bradleys Monismus oder Holismus vom Absoluten weg hin zu einem Holismus der Sachverhalte. Dennoch, und das ist im TLP wie bei Bradley klar, kann keine systematische Weltbeschreibung auf interne Relationen verzichten. Bradley schließt ja strukturelle Differenzierung der einen Wirklichkeit nicht aus, somit auch nicht Pluralität, welche interne Relationalität erfordert. Analoges kann im TLP festgestellt werden: Sachverhalte haben eine innere Struktur, den „Ort“ interner Relationen. Diese Struktur zu erfassen, ist unumgänglich für eine Beschreibung der Welt.

Im Folgenden soll skizziert werden, wie die zentralen Elemente der Charakterisierung interner Relationen im TLP maßgeblich für ihre Etablierung in der aktuellen Ontologie sind. Dabei können wir uns auf (i) das *Gegründetsein*, (ii) die *Nicht-Darstellbarkeit* in Sätzen und (iii) die *Unverzichtbarkeit* interner Relationen konzentrieren.

4. Interne Relationen in der aktuellen Ontologie

Um die Relevanz interner Relationen im Sinne der TLP-Kriterien in der aktuellen Ontologie anzudeuten, soll auf zwei repräsentative Autoren verwiesen werden, sowie auf zwei „puzzles“, deren Lösung auf (i)-(iii)-Beziehungen angewiesen ist.

So definiert Kevin Mulligan interne Relationen folgendermaßen; „[...] a relation is internal with respect to objects a, b, c etc., just if, given a, b, c etc., the relation must hold between and of these objects“ (Mulligan 1998: 344). Das Vorkommen mancher Objekte ist hinreichend, natürlich auch notwendig dafür, dass die fraglichen Relationen bestehen. Wittgensteins Kriterium (i) des Gegründetseins wird dadurch explizit zur Geltung gebracht. Jonathan Lowe nennt Mulligans interne Relationen ausdrücklich „founded or *grounded* relations“. Er erachtet sie als „entirely determined by their relata“. Entscheidend ist, dass beide, Mulligan und Lowe, diese Relationen als „no additions to reality“ auffassen, wie Lowe festhält (Lowe 2006: 46). Die „no addition to reality“-These besagt jedenfalls, dass besagte Relationen keine eigenständigen Entitäten sind. Sie machen keine Tatsachen aus, wie es Eigenschaften zusammen mit jenen Dingen tun, die sie charakterisieren. Das beeinflusst die semantische Interpretation der sprachlichen Ausdrücke, durch die jene interne Relationen repräsentiert werden, was unmittelbar Wittgensteins Kriterium (ii) betrifft. Nichtsdestotrotz, und damit kommen wir zu (iii), sind diese internen Beziehungen unumgänglich für eine systematische ontologische Weltbeschreibung. Der Verweis auf zwei eingangs erwähnten puzzles mag das belegen: die kleiner-als Beziehung und die Beziehung der Charakterisierung zwischen Dingen und ihren Eigenschaften.

Um bei kleiner-als zu beginnen, zeigt sich, dass seine Interpretation als gegründete Nicht-Entität die einzige Möglichkeit ist, es in eine systematische Beschreibung der Welt zu integrieren. Das ergibt sich aus dem Versuch, das

Gegenteil anzunehmen: Wenn wir eine nicht-gegründete zweistellige kleiner-als-Entität zwischen zwei Objekten a und b annehmen würden, müssten wir auch zweistellige kleiner-als-Entitäten zwischen a und allen jenen Objekten annehmen, die größer als a sind. Das aber sind nicht nur infinit, sondern auch *unbestimmbar viele*; zumal nicht nur klar identifizierbare Objekte größer als a sein mögen, sondern auch Teile von Objekten, Summen, Agglomerate, ohne klare Kompositions- und Identitätsbedingungen. Die einzige Chance, eine solche prinzipiell unüberschaubare, und somit einer systematischen Weltbeschreibung entgegenstehende Vermehrung von relationalen Entitäten zu entkommen, ist, am Status von kleiner-als als interner Relation im Sinne von (i)-(iii) festzuhalten (vgl. Kanzian 2016: 173f).

Auch Charakterisierung muss als interne Relation aufgefasst werden. Genau dann, wenn ein Objekt x die Eigenschaft F hat, ist es der Fall, dass F x charakterisiert. Das Standardargument gegen Charakterisierung als nicht-gegründete zweistellige Entität ist, dass in diesem Fall auch etwas erforderlich wäre, um die relationale Entität mit ihren Relata, mit x und mit F, zu verbinden. Fassten wir diese Relationen zweiter Stufe als weitere zweistellige Entitäten auf, so lässt sich ein *infiniter Regress* nicht vermeiden. Denn auch die Relationen zweiter Stufe müssten mit ihren jeweiligen Relata verbunden werden. Oder sollten wir die Relationen zweiter Stufe als Nicht-Entitäten auffassen? Das stoppte den Regress, ließe aber die Frage offen, warum wir nicht auch den Relationen erster Stufe diesen Nicht-Entitäten-Status zubilligen (vgl. Mellor/Oliver 1997: 16).

Die einzige Möglichkeit, dieser paradoxen Situation zu entkommen, ist Charakterisierung als interne Relation im Sinne von (i)-(iii) zu erachten. Charakterisierung zeigt sich in „x ist F“-Tatsachen, ohne selbst eine Tatsache zu sein, oder eine Tatsache zu konstituieren, die wir in einem Satz abbilden könnten. Die begrifflichen Voraussetzungen dafür finden wir in Wittgensteins *Tractatus*: einer manchmal unterschätzten Brücke zwischen der Britischen Philosophie des frühen 20. Jahrhunderts und der aktuellen Ontologie.

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Acknowledgement

Dieser Artikel ist eine ins Deutsche übersetzte, gekürzte, überarbeitete Version von Christian Kanzian, Internal Relations. In: *Wittgenstein's Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Ed. by Andreas Georgallides. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle Upon Tyne 2021, 47-60.

Bemerkungen zu Waismanns „Diktat für Schlick“

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Abstract

This contribution refers to Friedrich Waismann's "Dictation to Schlick". Earlier I had the opinion that Ludwig Wittgenstein had dictated this text, which Georg Henrik von Wright gave, in "The Wittgenstein Papers", the number D 302. A research article by Joachim Schulte "Waismann as spokesman for Wittgenstein" changed my mind. I am now convinced that it was Friedrich Waismann, who dictated it, although Friedrich Waismann was using many manuscripts by Ludwig Wittgenstein. I compared the "Dictation to Schlick" with the two Ludwig Wittgenstein Nachlass manuscripts MS 114ii and MS 115i, and I came to the following conclusion: It was 1933/1934, when the dictation took place. I will now show that the text was dictated by Friedrich Waismann to Moritz Schlick and to Rose Rand within 1934-36, and that there are many texts which form the basis of the "Dictation to Schlick"; I will show, that the version of the so-called "Dictation to Schlick", that was published — from Friedrich Waismann's Nachlass — by Antonia Soulez and Gordon P. Baker, is a later version elaborated by Friedrich Waismann himself.

Einleitung

Ludwig Wittgenstein kam 1929 nach Cambridge zurück; man hat die Zeit von 1929 bis 1936 als „Mittlere Periode“ bezeichnet. Zu dem Zeitraum 1933/34 bemerkt Georg Henrik von Wright: „Klar ist, daß Wittgenstein hier den Versuch unternimmt, ein Buch zu schreiben und seinen damaligen philosophischen Standpunkt in geordneter und zusammenhängender Form darzulegen.“ (von Wright, 1986, 60) Damals entstand auch das „Diktat für Schlick“, sorgfältig vorbereitet von Ludwig Wittgenstein, verfasst von Friedrich Waismann.

Es sind fast dreißig Jahre, dass ich mich – einmal mehr, einmal weniger – mit dem „Diktat für Schlick“ beschäftigt habe: Ich habe 1994 begonnen, mich mit dem Diktat zu beschäftigen; diese Arbeiten wurden jedoch erst später veröffentlicht (Keicher, 1998). Es war der Vergleich mit den Manuskripten MS 114ii/MS 115i, der damals meine Datierung des „Diktats für Schlick“ auf die Jahre 1933/34 begründete (Keicher, 2000).

Dieser Beitrag soll das „Diktat für Schlick“ in Erinnerung rufen. Jede Autorin und jeder Autor wird mit nur wenigen Literaturangaben zitiert. Tatsächlich liegen mir durchaus weitere Bezugnahmen vor. Das Ziel ist nicht die *philosophische* Rezeption des „Diktat für Schlick“, in der das „Diktat für Schlick“ *bona fide* Wittgenstein zugeordnet wird (Schulte, 2011, 237). Es geht

mir ebenfalls nicht darum, ob Waismann Teile des Diktats für Publikationen verwendet hat. Mein Arbeitsgebiet ist der Nachlass Wittgensteins.

1 Was ist das „Diktat für Schlick“?

1.1 Die Geschichte des „Diktats für Schlick“

Wittgenstein und der Wiener Kreis (McGuinness, 1984) enthält zahlreiche Gespräche zwischen Wittgenstein und Schlick, die Waismann notierte; diese Gespräche reichen vom 18. Dezember 1929 bis 1. Juli 1932; ein Konflikt zwischen Wittgenstein und Carnap trat dazwischen und die Aufzeichnungen wurden beendet (Carnap, 1931). Wittgenstein traf selbstverständlich, seit 1932, noch Schlick und Waismann persönlich. Mit Waismann plante Wittgenstein sogar eine gemeinsame Publikation.

Im Jahre 1933 äußerte Wittgenstein seine Unzufriedenheit über einen Beitrag von Richard Braithwaite zu seiner aktuellen Philosophie. Wittgenstein erschien zu einer eigenen Publikation geradezu verpflichtet (Keicher, 1998, 57). Die Entstehung des „Diktats für Schlick“ muss in diesem Zusammenhang gesehen werden.

Das „Diktat für Schlick“ entstand vermutlich in Wien, in einer oder mehreren Sitzungen, mit oder ohne Publikum, an denen Waismann, Schlick und wahrscheinlich auch Rose Rand teilnahmen; Waismann verfügte über Kopien oder Abschriften von Wittgenstein und sehr wohl über selbst Geschriebenes, Schlick hatte ein Schreibheft dabei.

1.2 Die Datierung des „Diktats für Schlick“

Das Treffen, das zum „Diktat für Schlick“ führte, hat von 1934 bis 1936 stattgefunden. Das Jahr 1936 ist der Tod von Moritz Schlick. Juha Manninen hat das Treffen – und zwar mit Rose Rand als Protokollantin – auf das Jahr 1935 datiert (Maninnen, 2011, 251).

1.3 Die werkgeschichtliche Einordnung des „Diktats für Schlick“

Das „Diktat für Schlick“ reiht sich in Manuskripte und Typoskripte des Wittgenstein Nachlasses bis 1934 ein, die mit einem ähnlichen Satz, wie z.B. das sog. „Big Typescript“, TS 213, und MS 114ii/MS 115i, beginnen: „Versteht man einen Satz oder ist es erst ein Satz, wenn man es versteht?“. Es folgen

zwei „Zwischentitel“: „Verstehen eines Satzes analog dem Verstehen einer Melodie als Melodie“ (S. 2) und „Verstehen eines Genrebildes“ (S. 8); in den letzten beiden Dritteln fehlen diese „Zwischentitel“.

1.4 Der Brief von Waismann an Schlick

In einem Brief von Waismann an Schlick, vom 9. August 1934, in dem die schwierige Lage einer gemeinsamen Publikation mit Wittgenstein besprochen wird, heißt es:

Allein es zeigte sich, dass Wittgenstein gleich mit dem Anfang nicht einverstanden war und erklärte, so könne doch das Buch nicht beginnen. Das seltsame ist, dass gerade dieser Anfang von ihm stammt. Er hatte mir nämlich zu Ostern, als er den Plan des Ganzen entwickelte, vor allem erklärt, wie er sich den Anfang vorstellt und sogar auf einem Bogen Papier ziemlich ausführliche Bemerkungen niedergeschrieben, – eben die Sätze, an denen er jetzt Anstoß nahm. Als ich ihm das sagte, wollte er es durchaus nicht glauben, bis ich zum Glück den Bogen fand und ihm nun schwarz auf weiß zeigen konnte, dass diese Sätze von ihm sind.

Waismann to Schlick, 9.8.1934 (Iven, 2015, 160f.)

In Waismanns Nachlaß findet sich – nach Auskunft von Christoph Limbeck-Lilienau – kein „Bogen Papier“. Zwischen Ostern 1934 und Sommer 1934 gab es also eine neue Ausrichtung Wittgensteins, die – indirekt – mit dem „Diktat für Schlick“ verbunden war.

1.5 Das „Diktat für Schlick“ in unterschiedlichen Nachlässen

Im Folgenden erhält der Leser eine Aufstellung unterschiedlicher Nachlässe, die das „Diktat für Schlick“ enthalten, jeweils mit Nachlassnummern und kurzen Angaben dazu.

Ludwig Wittgenstein Nachlass, *Trinity College, Wren Library*, Cambridge (UK)

D 302 Sog. „Diktat für Schlick“, Typoskript, 32 S., sog. „Waismann Exemplar“

Georg Henrik von Wright Nachlass, *von Wright Archiv*, University of Helsinki (FIN)

D 302 Sog. „Diktat für Schlick“, Typoskript, 32 S.,
Bemerkungen des Abschreibers

Friedrich Waismann Nachlass, *Bodleian Library*, Oxford (UK):

Sog. „Diktat für Schlick“ Typoskripte, Zettel, textidentisch oder weniger
textidentisch mit sog. „Diktat für Schlick“, in
Teilen des Nachlasses, u.a. in „Ältere Reste“,
Überschriften Waismanns

Moritz Schlick Nachlass, *Wiener Kreis Archiv, Noord Hollands Archief*, Haarlem (NL)

183, D.1 Heft „Wittgenstein“, 37 S., Stenogramm „Stolze-
Schrey“

183, D.3 Typoskript, Transkription von D.1, 32 S.

Rose Rand Nachlass, *University of Pittsburgh Library System*, Pennsylvania (USA)

RR 11-16-3 Heft „Wittgenstein Manuscript I.“, Stenogramm
„Gabelsberger“, circa 66 S.

Das „Diktat für Schlick“ im Wittgenstein Nachlass ist dem Waismann Nachlass entnommen und es wird indirekt von Oakes und Pichler als sog. „Waismann Exemplar“ bezeichnet (Oakes / Pichler, 2023, 264).

2 Die Textgeschichte des „Diktats für Schlick“

2.1 Die „Cornell Copy“

Die 1969 in Europa fertig gestellte und an die *Cornell University* in New York (USA) transferierte Verfilmung des damals bekannten Wittgenstein Nachlasses, auf Mikrofilm, seither als „Cornell Copy“ bezeichnet, enthält die Diktate D 301-302, jedoch *nicht* die Diktate D 303-310 (Cornell, 1969). Die "Cornell Copy" enthält, mit den 32 Seiten des D 302 in maschinenschriftlicher Fassung, eine Bemerkung des Abschreibers (Keicher, 1998, 73f.).

2.2 Die Werkausgabe bei Suhrkamp und die Wiener Ausgabe

Von der *Werkausgabe* ist *Wittgenstein und der Wiener Kreis* aufzuführen; hier gibt B. McGuinness indirekte Angaben zum „Diktat für Schlick“ (McGuinness, 1984).

Die von M. Nedo im *Springer Verlag* und bei *Vittorio Klostermann* herausgegebene *Wiener Ausgabe* enthält keine Planung des „Diktats für Schlick“ (Nedo, 2019).

2.3 Die BEE und Wittgenstein Source

In der 2000 veröffentlichten *Wittgenstein's Nachlass: The Bergen Electronic Edition* auf CD-ROMs (BEE, 2000) wurde das „Diktat für Schlick“ in einer von der „Cornell Copy“ *abweichenden Version* veröffentlicht. Es handelte sich dabei um ein Typoskript, 32 Seiten, das *nicht* den Vermerk des Abschreibers enthält; es ist das sog. „Waismann-Exemplar“ (Oakes / Pichler, 2023, 264).

In der *BEE* waren die Diktate D 301-310 vollständig verfügbar; das Diktat D 306, eine Transkription des Stenogramms aus dem Schlick Nachlass, war veröffentlicht. Die *BEE* lief ab circa 2010 nicht mehr auf herkömmlichen Computern und der Vertrieb der *BEE* wurde von *Oxford University Press* eingestellt.

Auf der *Website* von *Wittgenstein Source* *fehlt* – so wie in der *BEE* – die Version, welche den Vermerk des Abschreibers enthält; das D 306 ist jedoch veröffentlicht.

3 Die Wittgenstein Forschung zur Autorschaft des „Diktats für Schlick“

3.1 Peter Keicher (1998): *Wittgenstein und Schlick*

Die erste Einordnung des D 302, „Diktat für Schlick“, wurde von mir erarbeitet. Das Typoskript, das mir vorlag – es war kein *Stenogramm* –, enthielt, auf einem Deckblatt, die folgende, vermutlich von Rush Rhees, handschriftliche Information:

Diktat für Schlick. This typescript was found among Waismann's papers. Dictated by Wittgenstein, probably to Waismann. Date: 1932-1933.

Dem Typoskript selbst steht voraus: „Wittgenstein. From among Waismann's papers; labelled Diktat für Schlick.“ Das Stück enthält, auf Seite 28a, die Bemerkung des Abschreibers.

Danach wäre es also *nicht* Waismann, dem *Wittgenstein* das „Diktat für Schlick“ diktierte, sondern Schlick. Dies war – damals – eine Entdeckung. Ich fand auch das zweiseitige D 306, das die Transkription eines Teils von Schlicks Stenogramm des „Diktats für Schlick“ darstellt.

3.2 Mathias Iven (2009): Wittgenstein und Schlick

Mathias Iven hat das „Diktat für Schlick“ ebenfalls als ein Diktat von *Wittgenstein* an Schlick dargestellt und auf September 1933, in Istrien, datiert (Iven, 2009). Iven hat dabei aus meinem Beitrag zitiert (Keicher, 1998). Im September 1933 hatte Wittgenstein das MS 114ii noch nicht abgeschlossen und das MS 115i noch nicht einmal begonnen.

3.3 Juha Manninen (2011): Waismann und Schlick

Juha Manninen, aus Finnland, hat Rose Rand als Protokollantin belegt. Seine These ist, dass das „Diktat für Schlick“ eine „presentation by Waismann for Schlick's seminar early in 1935, in this sense a dictation *für Schlick*, although not by Wittgenstein“ sei (Manninen, 2011, 251).

3.4 Joachim Schulte (2011): Waismann und Schlick

Für Joachim Schulte ist es, in „Waismann as spokesman for Wittgenstein“, eindeutig klar: Es war *Waismann*, der das „Diktat für Schlick“ verfasste (Schulte, 2011, 237f). Schulte belegt dies mit *Waismanniana*, z.B. seinem Gebrauch von „Traktat“, „Epigramm“, „psychomechanisch“, „Über einen Leisten schlagen“, die „Woge“ und „Das Nichts nichtet“ (Schulte, 2011, 239f). Schulte 2011 enthält auch eine ausgezeichnete Darstellung des philosophischen Inhalts, so z.B. zum Begriff des „Bedeutungskörpers“ (Schulte, 2011, 226f).

3.5 Michael Oakes und Alois Pichler (2023): Wittgenstein, Schlick und Waismann

Michael Oakes and Alois Pichler haben zweimal (2013 und 2023) versucht, die Autorschaft des „Diktats für Schlick“ mit Hilfe der Stilometrie zu klären. In beiden Fällen ist das Ergebnis, dass es nicht auszuschließen ist, dass das

„Diktat für Schlick“ ursprünglich auf ein *Diktat* Wittgensteins an Schlick zurückgeht.

4 Die Bucheditionen des sog. „Diktat für Schlick“

4.1 *Antonia Soulez*: Dictées de Wittgenstein à Waismann et pour Schlick

Antonia Soulez publizierte die französische Version des sog. „Diktat für Schlick“ 1997 (Soulez, 1997), ein Jahr vor meinen „Untersuchungen“ zum Diktat (Keicher, 1998). Ich war überrascht, denn das Diktat war *nicht* dasjenige, über das ich gearbeitet hatte.

In der von Waismanns Schriften ausgehenden Veröffentlichung (...) findet sich eine durchgehende Reihe von Zwischenüberschriften, die meines Erachtens nicht nur den ursprünglichen Charakter des Diktats verstellt, den Schwung des Textes unterbricht und die kompositorische Entwicklung durch Zwischentitel zerstückelt. (Keicher, 1998, 67)

Die „Zwischentitel“ stammten – offenbar – von Waismann. Da die Edition von Soulez schnell besorgt wurde, lagen nicht immer die von Waismann gewählten „Zwischentitel“ vor. Gordon P. Baker – ein älterer, verdienstvoller Herr – war unter Druck gesetzt; er plante die Veröffentlichung in Englischer Sprache (Baker, 2003). Soulez hat die zweite Auflage, mit Verlagswechsel, ihrer Buchedition im Jahr 2015 publiziert (Soulez, 2015).

4.2 *Gordon P. Baker*: The Voices of Wittgenstein

Die englische Version des sog. „Diktat für Schlick“ (Baker, 2003) entsprach *nicht* meinem Dokument des Diktats. Gordon P. Baker – 2002 verstorben – stellte fest:

In one case ('Diktat für Schlick'), external evidence suggests the text to be a typescript of a dictation to Waismann of material that Ludwig Wittgenstein wished to transmit to Moritz Schlick; this probably dates from December 1932. (Baker, 2003, xvi)

Schulte kritisierte, der Text sei „a dictation to Waismann“, zurecht als fehlerhaft und die Datierung „this probably dates from December 1932“ als nicht begründet (Schulte, 2011, 240). Es ist Schulte außerdem zuzustimmen,

dass das „Diktat für Schlick“, wie es bei Soulez und Baker publiziert ist, *kein* Diktat darstellt; es ist die *Ausarbeitung* eines Textes, mit „Zwischentiteln“, die *nicht* von Wittgenstein stammen, sondern von Waismann.

4.3 Die Buchedition des sog. „Diktat für Schlick“ von Antonia Soulez

Was hat Soulez als sog. „Diktat für Schlick“ publiziert? Schulte wollte kein „Szenario“ des eigentlichen Diktats darlegen (Schulte, 2011, 240). Baker sieht die *verstreute* Form als möglichen *Aufschluß* dafür, wie die erste Gestalt des Diktats zu sehen sei; Schulte hält, umgekehrt, *Rückschlüsse* auf Waismanns Kenntnisse von Wittgenstein für möglich.

This story has the advantage of explaining the fact that the parallels between this document and Wittgenstein’s writings can be found in such extremely diverse parts of the source material: as a first step, Waismann used a fair but surveyable number of different passages to piece together short texts; and as a second step these short texts were employed to produce the *Diktat*, thus stirring up the elements of the earlier mixtures to manufacture a new patchwork.

(Schulte, 2011, 240)

Soulez hat, nachdem sie – „as a first step“ – die „Älteren Reste“ in Waismanns Nachlass rezipiert hatte, tatsächlich – „as a second step“ – ein *verstreutes* „Patchwork“ vom sog. „Diktat für Schlick“ publiziert. Auch *zeitlich* könnte Waismann alles dies auch noch *nach* dem „Diktat für Schlick“ bewerkstelligt haben, sogar noch *deutlich* nach 1936.

5 Neue Aspekte für die Wittgenstein-Nachlass Forschung

5.1 Die Stenogramme „Gabelsberger“ und „Stolze-Schrey“

Von den Stenogrammen war die „Stolze-Schrey“ in Deutschland damals geläufig, und die „Gabelsberger“ war es in Österreich. Diese Stenogramme waren für Tagebücher *und* für *philosophische* Manuskripte von *besonderer* Bedeutung. Schlick verwendete die „Stolze-Schrey“, Waismann und Rose Rand verwendeten die „Gabelsberger“.

5.2 Das Ende der „Mittleren Periode“

Der bereits oben zitierte Brief von Waismann bildet einen Blick *von außen*, auf die Ansichten Wittgensteins.

Er hat ja die wunderbare Gabe, die Dinge immer wieder wie zum ersten Mal zu sehen. Aber es zeigt sich doch, meine ich, wie schwer eine gemeinsame Arbeit ist, da er eben immer wieder der Eingebung des Augenblicks folgt und das niederreißt, was er vorher entworfen hat.

Waismann to Schlick, 9.8.1934 (Iven, 2015, 161)

Waismann entging ein entscheidender Punkt, denn spätestens das *Braune Buch*, eine Vorform der *Philosophischen Untersuchungen*, war für Wittgenstein ein Neuanfang.

Zusammenfassung

Das „Diktat für Schlick“ hat eine lange *europäische* Geschichte hinter sich, die mit der *Cornell University* und der *University Pittsburgh* auch die USA umfaßt. In den 1990ern bis in die 2000er Jahren wurde das „Diktat für Schlick“ als ein Werk *Wittgensteins* angesehen, dann wurde, ab 2011, argumentiert, dass das *Diktat* von *Waismann* diktiert wurde. Der Titel des „Diktats für Schlick“ ist - in einem gewissen Sinne - ein Konstrukt der Wittgenstein-Forschung, denn z.B. im Rose Rand Nachlass würde niemand das Stück so bezeichnen.

Als ich in den 90er Jahren über das „Diktat für Schlick“ schrieb, war mir Schlicks „Stolze-Schrey“, Waismanns und Rose Rands „Gabelsberger“, das später in der BEE veröffentlichte Diktat und G. H. von Wrights Kopie des Diktats *unbekannt*. Im Jahre 2015, dem 650sten Jubiläum der Universität Wien, fand an der Universität Wien die Ausstellung *Der Wiener Kreis* statt; mein damaliges Arbeitsgebiet war vor allem der Nachlaß Wittgensteins (Limbeck / Stadler, 2015). Die vorliegende Darstellung weist Ähnlichkeiten und Unterschiede auf, zum von Iven verfassten Kapitel *Diktate im Wittgenstein Handbuch* (Iven, 2020) und zur erwähnten Darstellung von Oakes und Pichler (Oakes / Pichler, 2023).

Die Erforschung des „Diktats für Schlick“ steht erst am Anfang. Klare Aussagen sind erst nach der Einsichtnahme der Schriften am Moritz Schlick Nachlass in

Haarlem (NL), am Friedrich Waismann Nachlass in Oxford (UK) und im Rose Rand Nachlass in Pittsburgh (USA) möglich. Als ein Grenzfall des Wittgenstein Nachlasses ist die Erforschung des „Diktats für Schlick“ für die Konzeption einer *Gesamtausgabe Ludwig Wittgenstein* in elektronischer Form oder in traditioneller Buchform durchaus wünschenswert.

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Acknowledgement

Für Unterstützung danke ich Herrn Dr. Christoph Limbeck-Lilienau, University of Toronto, Kanada.

Further Affinities between Wittgenstein and Newman

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Abstract

The extent of John Henry Newman's influence on Wittgenstein's later works, and particularly on *On Certainty*, has been the topic of some debate in recent years. After a brief overview of the issue of direct influence, I will discuss some deeper affinities between both of both thinkers, going beyond epistemological anti-foundationalism and including a general orientation towards practice and an interest in the limits of philosophical language. While the epistemological aspect is evident in Newman's concepts of real and notional assent, I suggest that the broader metaphilosophical points can be seen in his discussion of their correlate objects, the concrete and the abstract. Finally, I will discuss how these different issues come together in Newman's conceptions of rationality and the 'illative sense', where the most immediate contrasts with Wittgenstein become apparent, and suggest some possible paths for compatibilizing the different views. With this, I hope to show how a deeper study of Newman in his own terms may be helpful interpreting Wittgenstein, or of interest to Wittgensteinian philosophers in general.

1. Direct Influence

We may, as a starting point, establish some of the arguments for the direct influence of Newman's work on Wittgenstein. The most explicit point of contact, and only written mention of Newman by Wittgenstein, is the passage used as the opening paragraph of *On Certainty*, alluding to "a curious remark by H. Newman" (OC 1; for an argument that this is a reference to John Henry Newman, see Kienzler 2006:118, 135-5). While this may appear slim, Newman was a recurring topic of discussion between Wittgenstein and his students between 1936 and 1949, as recorded independently by Drury, Malcolm, Smythies, Geach and, at the latest and most extensive, Bouwsma (1986:33-7). From these various notes, we can know for sure that Wittgenstein read Newman's philosophical autobiography, the *Apologia* (Newman 1913) in full; about his more thorough treatise, the *Grammar of Assent* (Newman 1903), there is some disagreement: Anscombe claimed in 1977 that Wittgenstein hadn't read it (FitzPatrick 1978:42), while Bouwsma's notes from 1949 record him as claiming he did (Bouwsma 1986:34). While I am inclined to think Wittgenstein must have read it at least in part, it is worth noting that many well-known points from the *Grammar of Assent* may also be found in the *Apologia*.

It scarcely needs saying that there are far more differences than similarities between the two philosophers. Most clearly, Wittgenstein disagreed with much of Newman's thought on religion, and particularly on miracles (Bouwsma 1986:34-5), and "disliked the theological writings of Cardinal Newman, which he read with great care during his last year at Cambridge" (Malcolm 1984:59). This 'great care', while seemingly puzzling, has been rightly justified with the idea that Wittgenstein would have still found much agreement with Newman, particularly with the anti-foundationalist points of his epistemology.

Thus, most recent works on Wittgenstein and Newman (see Kienzler 2006; Pritchard 2015; Venturinha 2019) have focused on these points, and particularly on Newman's proposed distinction between real and notional modes of assent. Real assent, which Newman equates to belief proper, is held as certain without the need for traditional epistemic foundations, as happens with Wittgenstein's hinge certainties. The mention of Newman in the *OC* notebooks, as well as on lectures on this topic in 1946 (PGL 120), and the use of similar examples of certainties (OC 234; Newman 1903:177-8), all come together to suggest that Newman's idea of real assent had a plausible impact on Wittgenstein's latest thoughts on epistemology.

What follows will be a proposal for deepening the study of affinities between these two philosophers beyond these immediate epistemological points. In this, I will also follow suggestions left by Pritchard, who proposes that "viewing *OC* through the lens on Newman's remarks on the structure of reason is a useful intellectual exercise" (Pritchard 2015:198); and by Kienzler (2005:128ff37), who remarks that the proximities between the *Grammar of Assent* and *On Certainty* may come through in a comparison between the works as logical, rather than epistemological. Following these threads leads us into two main areas of affinity, corresponding, respectively, to Newman's categories of concrete and abstract objects: the priority of action and the critique of logic.

2. Action and the Concrete

A first major point connecting Newman to the later Wittgenstein is his prioritization of action and practice. I will now discuss some expressions of this priority and its importance in a correct understanding of Newman's different concepts of assent. This pragmatic focus is, in fact, the grounds

proposed by Newman for his anti-foundationalist stance: “Life is for action. If we insist on proofs for everything, we shall never come to action: to act you must assume, and that assumption is faith.” (Newman 1903:95; 1907:295). As he stresses, even the attempt “to analyze our modes of thought” should still “be subservient to action.” (Newman 1907:295).

Curiously, these passages, and the theme of action as the ‘bottom’ of justification (OC 204) were already noted at the earliest stages of discussions on Wittgenstein and Newman (FitzPatrick 1978:43). While this point has lost focus on recent contributions, it cannot be overstated. Newman’s favoring of practice over theory is not only a general feature of his thought and a justification for his epistemology, but also a central point in establishing the aforementioned concept of real assent. Within the context of Newman’s philosophy, the main distinguishing mark of real assent is not its lack of traditional epistemic grounding, but rather its taking concrete objects. Newman defines the relations between real assent, the concrete, and action as such:

Real Assent then, or Belief, as it may be called, [...] does not lead to action; but the images in which it lives, representing as they do the concrete, have the power of the concrete upon the affections and passions, and by means of these indirectly become operative. (Newman 1903:89).

In other words, real assent is notable for its concrete objects, which provide reasons for acting, to use a term popularized by Anscombe. The same goes not only for concrete objects in themselves, but for their representations by the imagination, one of the central faculties in Newman’s understanding of the mind, which allows one to “believe as if I saw” (Newman 1903:102).

When discussing the concrete, Newman often puts it in contrast with the abstract, which is taken as an object not by real, but by notional assent. While the relationship between these modes of assent has been discussed by the recent comparative works on epistemology mentioned above, I suggest that such analysis is incomplete without considering the rather unique definitions of their respective objects. Though the concrete-abstract pair is a recurring

figure in the history of philosophy, Newman defines them not in ontological terms — so that concrete would equal true or particular — but in affective ones.

Belief, [...] being concerned with things concrete, not abstract [...] has for its objects, not only directly what is true, but inclusively what is beautiful, useful, admirable, heroic; objects which kindle devotion, rouse the passions, and attach the affections; and thus it leads the way to actions of every kind [...] and is thus again intimately connected with what is individual and personal. (Newman 1903:90-1).

By including both possible ontological truths and objects of affective appeal in a single category of object of belief, Newman may show a way forward for discussions on the symbolic dimension of religious belief (see Venturinha 2019:110), as well as have significant implications concerning the epistemic status of metaphor. His list of objects which may be concrete includes “motives and actions, character and conduct, art, science, taste, morals, religion” (Newman 1903:90). To these we may add poetry, which is a recurring theme in Newman’s works — most notably in his own major poem, *The Dream of Gerontius* — and serves not only as a frequent example of concrete thing, but also as the most reliable way of verbal expression of the concrete. Poetic language, then, is set in opposition to inferential language, whose limitations Newman is keen on exposing.

3. The Limits of Inference and the Illative Sense

For this final section, I will introduce Newman’s critique of inference and inferential logic, as well as the resulting conception of human reason; I will then consider how and why these might be appropriated by Wittgensteinian philosophy. In a rough analogy to Wittgenstein, Newman does not set out to “draw a limit to thinking” or “to the expression of thoughts” (TLP, Preface), but does attempt to set specific limits to logical language. Newman, rather derisively, introduces his concepts of inference and logic as follows:

Let then our symbols be words: let all thought be arrested and embodied in words. Let language have a monopoly of thought; and thought go for only so much as it can show itself to be worth in language. [...]

Ratiocination, thus restricted and put into grooves, is what I have called Inference, and the science, which is its regulating principle, is Logic. (Newman 1903:263).

We can note, here, not only a generalized dislike for the overextended reach of formalized logic, but also that Newman's critique of logical language consists in assigning to it a limited role, with no pretensions of representing the totality of thought:

[Logical inference] proposes to provide both a test and a common measure of reasoning; and I think it will be found partly to succeed and partly to fail; succeeding so far as words can in fact be found for representing the countless varieties and subtleties of human thought, failing on account of the fallacy of the original assumption, that whatever can be thought can be adequately expressed in words. (Newman 1903:264).

In this view, logic is restricted to a fundamentally instrumental role, due to its capacity for clarity in the transmission of thoughts. As a 'common measure' of reasoning, it is compared, in the *Grammar of Assent*, to the specialized notations of mathematics (Newman 1903:265-7) and, in the *Apologia*, to materials for measuring and notation: "For myself, it was not logic that carried me on; as well might one say that the quicksilver in the barometer changes the weather. It is the concrete being that reasons [...] the whole man moves; paper logic is but the record of it" (Newman 1913:265). As a human pursuit, Newman places it side by side with other "intellectual exercises of the mind" as an "instrumental art" (Newman 1903:358). Though Newman's thoughts on language are not fully developed, a further affinity could be drawn with Wittgenstein's own instrumental analogies (PI 11-2, 23).

Finally, once inference is given its limited role in Newman's broader conception of reason, we may consider what other rational faculty is set in contrast to it. It is here that we find the main apparent 'weak spot' of Newman's theory from a Wittgensteinian standpoint, namely, the illative sense. Closely related to his idea of conscience, it is responsible for the "sole and final judgement on the validity of an inference in concrete matter" (Newman 1903:345). It is a faculty of implicit reason, as Newman referred to it in earlier works (Newman 1909:251-77), contrasted with

traditionally conceived, explicit reason. It is introduced as a development, and extension, of the Aristotelian concept of *phronesis* (Newman 1903:354-5): a suggestion that much of our concrete knowledge about the world, like the aforementioned examples of certainties, are known in a manner analogous to practical knowledge, rather than via grounded demonstration. As such, part of the illative sense's assuring powers are granted by its habitual nature, and the capacity to be strengthened by exercise.

However, in religious epistemology, the illative sense gains a providentialist and revelatory dimension, made most clear in the final chapter of the *Grammar of Assent*, where Newman compares 'natural' and 'revealed' religion in an attempt to show the shortcomings of a purely natural approach (Newman 1903:384-447). In the general argument's structure, this providentialism serves as the keystone which holds an otherwise plainly anti-foundationalist epistemology in place as fully compatible with mainline Catholic thought: without it, there would be no guarantee that the concrete should coincide with traditional inferences or historically established doctrine.

It is clear that, in contrast to the other concepts discussed so far, the illative sense has no analogue in Wittgenstein's works or in modern Wittgensteinian thought. In fact, in its providential role, it would seem to fall precisely under the category of 'disliked theological writings' mentioned by Malcolm. Facing this incompatibility, I will end by considering two possible responses.

The first would be to see the providentialist side of the illative sense as conceptually inseparable from its role as implicit reason. In that case, we might consider what Newman's epistemology might look like with no illative sense at all. This is, in some sense, the approach taken by Wittgensteinian readings of Newman thus far, where the illative sense is seldom mentioned (see Kienzler 2005:129-30; Boncompagni 2022:959). Rather than complete collapse, the removal of this keystone may instead leave the *Grammar of Assent* standing on its own as an important forerunner of modern anti-foundationalist and practice-oriented epistemology.

The alternative — and my closing suggestion — would be the attempt to appropriate the concept of the illative sense without its providentialist dimension. While this has not yet been explored by Newman or Wittgenstein

scholars alike, some clear points of interest stand out. Once the providential issue is set aside, it appears that Newman's concerns in introducing the illative sense range over various points of continued philosophical importance in the nexus of relations between theoretical and practical knowledge, epistemic justification and rationality. An adequate appropriation of this notion may not only expose the interconnectedness of all these concerns, but also shine a light on the relations between the everyday certainties that Wittgenstein and Newman had in mind and the broader fields of philosophy of mind and of action.

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Acknowledgement

This paper was written as a part of the research project *Mary B. Hesse's "New Epistemology": Principles and Legacy* (EXPL/FER-FIL/0276/2021), with funding by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT).

I would like to thank Professor Nuno Venturinha and my colleagues in the Lisbon Wittgenstein Group for their comments. I owe the critique of the illative sense as providentialist to Michael Williams's talk "Moore's mistake: Wittgenstein, Knowledge and the Limits of Doubt", presented in the 3rd Hinge Epistemology Conference (Lisbon, 08/06/2022).

Wittgenstein in the Public Domain

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Abstract

In spite of not being particularly “round”, the 70th anniversary of an author’s death is particularly important. This is because, in many countries around the world, the beginning of the calendar year following that anniversary marks the expiry of the copyrights on that author’s works. This, in turn, means that as of 1 January 2022 the rights on Ludwig Wittgenstein’s writings had expired in almost every jurisdiction. This paper outlines the definitions of “copyright” and “public domain” and it briefly presents the current international landscape of copyright law, in order to clarify why Wittgenstein’s writings now qualify as out of copyright in most countries. This paper also argues for the importance of the public domain as an integral part of intellectual property law and as an institution which protects the public’s common interest in the availability of creative works outside of a strictly commercial logic. Lastly, this paper introduces the Ludwig Wittgenstein Project, a collaborative endeavour aiming to make Wittgenstein’s writings that were published in book form during the 20th century available on the internet free of charge and under a free licence.

1. Introduction. There Are Anniversaries of Many Kinds

Anniversaries seem to have the power—so to speak—to bring back the past: the more remote an event, the more prestigious the anniversary; the more prestigious the anniversary, the more worth commemorating the occasion; the more worth commemorating the occasion, the more current and relevant the event.

Anniversaries, in other words, are important because they are opportunities to celebrate or reminisce. However, some anniversaries are also important because they have a specific relevance to copyright law. In many countries, in particular, an author’s works enter the public domain at the beginning of the calendar year following the 70th anniversary of their death. This very practical, somewhat trivial circumstance has a major import from the editorial point of view.

In this paper, the expiry of the copyright term on Wittgenstein’s writings will be discussed, firstly, by introducing the legal framework which makes 70th anniversaries so special, and, secondly, by presenting the case study of the Ludwig Wittgenstein Project, a free-culture initiative aiming to make Wittgenstein’s works easily accessible online.

2. The Public Domain and Its Importance

While this is not the time and place to delve into the details of copyright law, it is a suitable context in which to briefly introduce this subject.

Copyright is a form of intellectual property. For a creative work to be copyrighted means that its author has a monopoly on its reproduction and on a set of other prerogatives which they may decide to licence, typically for a fee. Symmetrically, it is prohibited for the public to copy, resell, modify a copyrighted work without explicit permission from the author or their authorised representatives, which permission is, again, usually granted for a fee.

Apart from this relatively straightforward definition, copyright is a complex issue. Its complexity partly lies in the fact that copyright laws vary country by country and that multiple national legislations must often be taken into account at once. This has become more and more problematic since the dawn of the digital age, as national boundaries have become easier to cross from the point of view of the exchange of information, but not any less meaningful from the point of view of copyright laws and their enforcement (Fitzgerald et al. 2011: 38–40).

Some general principles of copyright, however, are widely shared by most countries in the world—including but not limited to those which have been established by the Berne Convention, an international treaty first signed in 1886 and last updated in 1971.

One of these principles is that a creative work (literary, visual, musical, etc.) is protected by copyright the moment it is created, without its author having to submit it to or register it in any kind of public or private database (Nimmer 2003: 65). Creation is sufficient for copyright to exist, and publication is usually sufficient proof of authorship for copyright to be enforced. In this respect, copyright is different from patents and trademarks.

Another principle of general validity is that copyright's duration is finite. While the duration of the copyright term varies across legislations, it is always a certain number of years after the author's death or after the publication of the work.

This means that copyright goes hand-in-hand with its complementary, the public domain (Lessig 2004: 119–120). Whereas a copyrighted work has, by default, a status whereby all rights are reserved, a work in the public domain has a status whereby no rights are reserved. A public-domain work can be copied and remixed, and the copies and derivative works can be distributed and sold without having to ask for permission or pay a fee.

In most countries, copyright on an author's works expires either 70 years after the author's death (the majority of countries in Europe and the Americas, Australia) or 50 years after the author's death (the majority of Asian and African countries); in a few cases the copyright term is shorter or longer; in yet other cases, and in particular in the US, the duration of the copyright term is not tied exclusively to the date of the author's death, but also to other factors that may include the publication date and whether or not certain formalities were respected when the work was first published.

It should also be noted that works may be ineligible for copyright protection, for example because they fail to meet the threshold of originality; that they may enter the public domain upon creation, for example in the case of works that are created as part of a US government officer's or employee's official duties; and that they may be released in the public domain in any moment by the author or by the author's heirs, who can waive their rights if they wish to do so.

The public domain ought to be considered as important a feature of intellectual property laws as copyright. The purpose of intellectual property is usually thought of as being to balance the interest of authors and the interest of the public (Lessig 2001: 1072–1073). Copyright and the public domain are supposed to work together in order for those two interests to essentially coincide: copyright ensures that the author, through the publisher (or gallery, or label, etc.), has at least a chance to earn a living thanks to their creative labour; this is also in the interest of the public insofar as a successful creator will likely be able to continue giving their audience what the audience wants from them; once the author dies and, thus, no longer needs an income, the expiry of copyright grants the public full ownership of a piece of culture which becomes available for them to enjoy and to build upon.

Within this conceptual and ethical framework, it is somewhat questionable that a work should remain copyrighted after the author's death, when it only benefits their descendants or their appointed successors (Boyle 2008: 15). While some argue that, financial matters aside, it is a good thing for the heirs to remain in control of the editorial choices that may affect a literary work's distribution as opposed as the public being able to dispose of the works freely as soon as the author passes on, there is no evidence, and not much of an argument, to prove, for example, that the quality of the editions of a book are consistently or significantly worse when they are made without the mandate of the writer's heirs; some even point out that “[c]ensorious heirs or purchasers of the copyright might prevent the reprinting of a great work because they disagreed with its morals” (Boyle 2008: 25). Additionally, the sheer duration of the copyright term seems to disproportionately favour the heirs' interest at the expense of the public's—so much so that all media that become unavailable while still copyrighted (for example, books that go out of print) are at risk of being lost and forgotten, never to actually enter the public domain (Lessig 2004: 299).

The public domain is subject to both erosion and infringement. I call “public domain erosion” the trend whereby copyright terms worldwide have consistently become longer over the last century (Nimmer 2003: 88); I call “public domain infringement” the phenomenon whereby former copyright owners attempt to discourage the free reuse of public domain works by leveraging uncertainties in the interpretation of the relevant laws, threatening court actions, or simply adding the copyright symbol where it does not belong.

Faced with this situation, those who believe that culture should be treated as a common good rather than a commodity sometimes attempt to “enforce” the public domain. This means ensuring that, when copyright on a work expires, that work is not only theoretically free to use, but also practically and *easily* accessible on the internet.

In the context of a discussion on the public domain and its importance for free culture, it is necessary to briefly introduce the Creative Commons licences—an innovative tool for sharing texts, pictures, music, and other types of creative works which became available in the early 2000s, right when sharing such media on the internet became viable from the technological point of view

(Aliprandi 2011: ch. 1). The Creative Commons organisation devised a set of six licences which fill the gap between traditional copyright (all rights reserved) and the public domain (no rights reserved) by affording creators several formulas where *some* rights can be reserved while relinquishing others. Thanks to the Creative Commons licences, whoever creates a work and publishes it may decide to grant everyone permission to reuse it for free, and without having to ask for an ad-hoc authorisation, while still requiring that some conditions be respected.

3. Wittgenstein in the Public Domain

Ludwig Wittgenstein died in 1951. 29 April 2021 was the 70th anniversary of his death, and on 1 January 2022 his works entered the public domain in those countries where the copyright term is 70 years *post mortem auctoris* (p.m.a.).

However, the fact that Wittgenstein's works had entered the public domain in those countries where the copyright term is 70 years p.m.a. did not mean, in and of itself, that they could all be lawfully published on the internet. This is because anything that is available on the internet is effectively available worldwide, regardless of national boundaries, but works that are out of copyright according to a country's laws may not be according to another's.

Even though the international copyright system has not been updated to meet the challenges of the digital age, and we therefore lack clear obligations in the context of online publishing, it is generally considered a best practice to only release web editions of works that are in the public domain both in their country of origin (as defined by the Berne Convention) and in the country where the website is based (which depends on the location of the servers, on the registration of the domain, and potentially on other factors).

A work's country of origin is, in most cases, the location where it was first published. As far as Wittgenstein is concerned, this means Germany (for works such as the TLP and the NB), the UK (for works such as the PI and the BBB), the US (for works such as the NL and the LE), the Netherlands (for the RF) and Austria (for the PDE) (Pichler, Biggs and Szeltner 2011). According to the laws of some of these countries, the 70 years p.m.a. term having expired may not be a sufficient condition for an author's works to be in the public domain. In the

UK, for example, literary works created before 1 August 1989 are still copyrighted even if the author has been dead for more than 70 years in the following cases: if the work was published before 1 August 1989 and the author died more than 20 years before publication (in which case copyright expires 50 years after publication); if the work was unpublished as of 1 August 1989 and the author died before 1 January 1969 (in which case copyright expires on 31 December 2039) (National Archives 2022: 15).

A thorough case-by-case analysis, however, which has taken all of this into account along with several more factors which it is not appropriate to list here, has led to the conclusion that a wide selection of Wittgenstein's work was indeed out of copyright in their country of origin as of 1 January 2022 (Lavazza 2023).

4. The Ludwig Wittgenstein Project

Often, when an author's works enter the public domain, many new editions and translations appear, because publishers no longer have to ask for permission from the copyright holders, nor do they have to pay royalties to them.

Similarly, the original texts tend to become available online, where they are lawfully uploaded by individuals who view the internet as a universal library where knowledge and culture should be freely accessible to all. Among the platforms that host public-domain content are the Wikimedia projects (Wikimedia Commons for scans, Wikisource for transcriptions), the Project Gutenberg, the Internet Archive, and many others.

Some of Wittgenstein's texts were already available on these sites: the TLP, for example, which entered the public domain in the US 95 years after its publication, was available on American websites both in the original language and in Ramsey's translation.

Additionally, much of Wittgenstein's *Nachlass* had been available since the 2010s on the websites of the Wittgenstein Archives at the University of Bergen, both as high-resolution facsimiles and as interactive renders of XML-TEI transcriptions. This was made possible by the generosity of the copyright

holders of Wittgenstein's writings, who agreed to let the WAB make them accessible online (Pichler 2019: 139–146).

Wittgenstein's "works"—those among his writings that were collected, edited and published posthumously as *books* by his literary executors—were bound to gradually become available online as isolated enthusiasts uploaded this or that PDF to this or that website. In 2020, the author of this paper had the idea to create a dedicated website where the effort to make Wittgenstein's works available online could be made into a coordinated and systematic one. This is how the Ludwig Wittgenstein Project was started.

The project is inspired by the values of the free-culture movement. According to its "mission statement", as listed on the site's home page, the LWP is "a multilingual website that aims to make Wittgenstein's works available free of charge and with a free licence".

The multilingual nature of the project was at its very core from the outset. Wittgenstein's own originals are written partly in German, partly in English. Because Ramsey died at a very young age, and before Wittgenstein himself, his translation of the TLP would enter the public domain at the same time as the original German. More translations would enter the public domain after the project's launch, and some might even be released under a free licence by their authors. For all these reasons, it made sense for the project to have an international, multilingual scope.

Creating and running an ad-hoc website promised multiple advantages. Compared to the option of using a platform such as the Internet Archive, it meant not merely uploading PDF files, but publishing true digital editions as HTML pages; this, in turn, implies much better searchability and accessibility, mobile responsiveness, and the user's ability to build upon the text and remix it easily. Compared to the option of using a platform such as Wikisource, it meant the possibility to also include previously unpublished translations. Additionally, whereas both the Internet Archive and Wikisource are based in the US, the new website—given both the nationality and the domicile of the website's founder—would be based in Italy, where the copyright term is 70 years p.m.a.

The LWP's website went online in December 2020. In 2021, the available texts were prepared for publication; a call for volunteers was opened; an outreach effort was started in order to raise awareness about the project and start cooperations, or at least friendly relationships, with some of the established institutions in the Wittgensteinian community, such as the WAB, Trinity College at the University of Cambridge, the British Wittgenstein Society, the Internationale Ludwig Wittgenstein Gesellschaft, the Wittgenstein Initiative. On 1 January 2022, the now-public-domain texts and the freely licenced translations were published on the website. In the following months, traffic increased steadily and many volunteers joined the project; thanks to their work, new translations were published, new features were added to the website, and a conference was organised in Milan in collaboration with the ILWG.

Thanks to a productive exchange with the BWS, a quality policy was established in summer 2022.

Between 2021 and early 2023, the LWP applied for a few grants from institutions such as the Wikimedia Italia NGO and the University of Milan, and it ran a successful crowdfunding campaign. Thanks to the money thus raised, several original translations were made and published.

Compared to the WAB's websites, which provide invaluable resources for researchers and scholars by giving them access to the *Nachlass*, the LWP aims to provide less specialised readers with user-friendly *Leseausgaben* of Wittgenstein's writings that were published as books during the 20th century. Its target audience is broader, as it extends to students and philosophy enthusiasts in general.

Compared to similar websites aiming to make a philosopher's works available on the internet, a somewhat innovative trait of the LWP is its focus on translations. Within the legal framework which was outlined in the previous section, translations remain copyrighted for decades after the *translator's* death, regardless of the copyright status of the source. This tends to make it difficult to access a public-domain work in languages other than the one in which it was written. The LWP's model of publishing new translations under free Creative Commons licences was inspired by the so-called "crowdfunding

for Open Access” model (Bullock 2018: 138–141) in the field of academic publishing: instead of paying a journal’s yearly subscription fee, universities and libraries are given the opportunity to pledge a sum which is then used to release articles as Open Access; then, all will be able to access them freely. The LWP’s translations (except for those that are made entirely on a voluntary basis) are born in a similar way: instead of buying the book, institutions and individuals are given the opportunity to award a grant or make a donation which is then used to pay a translator and release their work under a free licence; then, again, all will be able to access the work freely.

The first period of the LWP’s life has been exciting and successful, and each meeting with members of the Wittgensteinian community has given us a chance to hear valuable insights, fruitful suggestions, and constructive feedback. We look forward to continuing the work and the conversation.

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Wittgenstein, Waismann and Carnap on the Nature of Logical Syntax

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Abstract

While the *Tractatus* was intensely discussed in the Vienna Circle in the second half of the 1920s, the members of the Circle also rapidly noticed Wittgenstein's revision of central claims of his book. We show that it was especially the Tractarian claim of the independence of elementary propositions and the color exclusion problem, which led the members of the Circle to the view that a new logical syntax was necessary, a syntax going beyond the *Tractatus*. This led within the Circle to a discussion about the nature and justification of a logical syntax, especially between Carnap and Waismann. Retracing this discussion, I claim that in this debate Wittgenstein and Waismann first opted for a logical pluralism, while Carnap only later adopted a similar view, famously expressed in his principle of tolerance.

Famously, the Vienna Circle discussed the *Tractatus* in 1925-27. But while the Circle tried to understand Wittgenstein's work, the latter already was revising central claims made of his book, as became apparent in his conversations with Ramsey and somewhat later with Waismann. One such central claim was about the independence of elementary propositions. The discussions of the color exclusion problem showed that this original Tractarian claim was highly problematic. Once Wittgenstein abandoned his independence claim, this was rapidly known within the Circle. This revision also led to the view, shared by Wittgenstein, Waismann and Carnap, that a new logical syntax was needed, i. e. a syntax different from the one in the *Tractatus*. Besides the necessity of a new logical syntax, a second problem was raised: how can a syntax be justified and what should guide us in the choice of a syntax. I claim that Wittgenstein and Waismann agreed that a syntax can be freely chosen, before Carnap was convinced of such a solution. I also claim that this discussion shaped Carnap's later adoption of his principle of tolerance.

1. The Color Exclusion Problem

The *Tractatus* claimed famously that every proposition must be analyzable into elementary propositions and that elementary propositions are independent from one another. This meant that from one elementary proposition we cannot infer or exclude another elementary proposition: "the logical product of two elementary propositions can neither be a tautology nor a contradiction" (TLP 6.3751)

In relation to this independence claim, Wittgenstein discussed the problem that two colors cannot be attributed to the same place in the visual field (the color exclusion problem). This implied that the attribution of a color to a place in the visual field cannot be an elementary proposition but must be complex. As the attribution of red to a place at a time excludes the attribution of green, the proposition attributing red cannot be an elementary proposition. Ramsey had criticized this claim of the independence of elementary propositions as very implausible (Ramsey 1923: 473). In “Some Remarks on Logical Form” (1929: 168–69) and in his conversations with Waismann, Wittgenstein finally abandoned the independence claim:

I thought that all inference was based on tautological form. At that time I had not yet seen that an inference can also have the form: This man is 2m tall, therefore he is not 3m tall. This is connected with the fact that I believed that elementary propositions must be independent of one another, that you could not infer the non-existence of one state of affairs from the existence of another. (McGuinness 1984: 64)

Wittgenstein also thought that the claim of the independence of elementary propositions was linked to a basic mistake, namely to the belief that the syntactic rules defining the logical constants were independent of “the inner structure of the propositions” to which they were applied (McGuinness 1984: 74). Indeed, a truth-function of two elementary propositions (p , q) gives the truth value for all possible distributions of truth values over these elementary propositions. The truth values of the elementary propositions indicates the possibility that the fact represented by the proposition obtains or does not obtain, and whether a certain fact does obtain or not is independent of any other. But now it appeared that one fact (p : X is 1 m) excluded another fact (q : X is 2 m), although proposition $p \wedge q$ was not a contradiction. The conjunction seems to indicate a truth-possibility which turns out to be impossible (namely p : true *and* q : true). This truth-possibility forms, as Wittgenstein says, “an impossible combination” (Wittgenstein 1929: 170). Wittgenstein concluded that it is “a deficiency of our notation that it does not prevent the formation of such non-sensical constructions and a perfect notation will have to exclude such structures by definite rules of syntax” (Wittgenstein 1929: 170–71).

The consequence of this problem was that the logical syntax of the *Tractatus* was defective in that it allowed constructions which seemed to represent logical possibilities which in fact were not given, which in reality were impossible. But Wittgenstein interpreted this impossibility as a “logical impossibility”. While expressing a physical or a metaphysical impossibility still makes sense, logical impossibilities lead to non-sense. The fact that Wittgenstein interpreted all possibility (and impossibility) as logical was due to his conception of the modalities, especially his view that all modalities were logical. Soames calls this view „the tractarian collapse of metaphysical, epistemic, and logical modalities into one another” (2018: 12). Given the exclusion problem and this Wittgensteinian conception of modalities, an improved logical syntax was needed which excluded logical impossibilities, i. e. the mentioned non-sensical cases. The color exclusion problem, the dependence of elementary propositions and its consequences were repeatedly discussed in the Vienna Circle (Stadler 2015: 81–83). Carnap was well aware of the problem and he took extensive notes on Wittgenstein’s 1929 paper, which had presented the problem and the need for a new syntax going beyond the Tractarian conception (Carnap Papers, Pittsburgh: RC 102-78-05).

2. A New Logical Syntax

Given that the “logical syntax” of the *Tractatus* was insufficient, a new aim arose in the discussions in the Vienna Circle, namely to develop a new and improved logical syntax. Especially Carnap and Waismann pursued this aim. Between 1929 and 1931, Carnap and Waismann repeatedly discussed the form such a logical syntax could take. Then, just before leaving Vienna for Prague (1931), Carnap presented an outline of his own conception of a logical syntax in the Vienna Circle (Stadler 2015: 107–23).

Several questions were of focal importance in the discussions of a new logical syntax, since at least 1929: Is there only one syntax or are there several possible logical syntaxes? If several different syntaxes can be constructed, what could justify the choice of one syntax over another? Is it necessary to have a meta-language in order to formulate a logical syntax?

In his 1929 paper, Wittgenstein thought that the syntax should reflect the structure of the phenomena. For example, the syntax of our color terms should

reflect the structure of color space. Given a certain structure of the color space, we would lay down the syntactic rules which exclude the attribution of “red” and “green” to the same spatio-temporal place, while “red” and “dark” would not be mutually exclusive. Wittgenstein gave the color octahedron as a possible structure of color space (see fig. 1). Based on that phenomenal color structure, we would fix the syntactic rules of our statements about color.

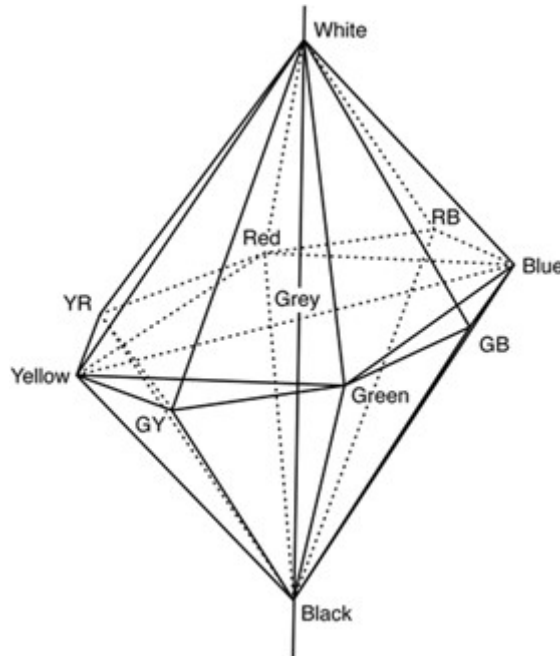


Fig 1. The octahedron of colors, as given in *Philosophical Remarks* (PR: § 221).

The octahedron gives a “conspicuous representation” (or “a bird’s eye view”) of the syntactic rules of color terms. It shows that, given these rules, the terms “green” and “red” are mutually exclusive while we can speak of a “dark” and “red” spatio-temporal region or a “light” and “red” spatio-temporal region.

Carnap seemed also to agree with the conception that the syntactic rules should reflect the structure of experience and of the phenomena: when Rose Rand collected notes about the respective positions of the different members of the Vienna Circle about the *Tractatus*, she reported Carnap’s position as follows:

The syntax depends on the form of experience. [...] A state of affairs, which consists of elements, must be designated by a language with the same numbers of degrees of freedom – e. g. a system of colors must be

designated by a system of color signs, that has the same multiplicity as the color space. (Stadler 2015: 124–25)

Somewhere between 1929 and 1931, Carnap, like Wittgenstein, thought that the syntax depended upon the structure of experience.

Still, the status of the syntactic rules was not clear. Repeatedly the question whether empirical facts can justify syntactic rules or whether they were justified by something else was raised. Schlick and Waismann had discussed the question with Wittgenstein in 1930. Several options were discussed: either the syntactic rules were justified by experience, for example the structure of color space as described by psychology, or the rules depended on the “meaning” (“Sinn”) of the terms, e. g. the meaning of “red” implied that it could not be attributed to a region which had already another color (e. g. green), or, as a further option, the syntactic rules were justified by synthetic a priori truths such as the a priori truth that red excludes green, an option attributed by Schlick to Husserl (McGuinness 1984: 76–79, see also Stadler 2015: 83). After several hesitations, Wittgenstein rejected the empirical option. Syntactic rules are not justified by certain empirical and psychological facts about the structure of the phenomena:

An octahedron with the pure colours at the corner-points e. g. provides a *rough* representation of colour-space, and this is a grammatical representation, not a psychological one. On the other hand, to say that in such and such circumstances you can see a red after-image (say) is a matter of psychology. (*This* may, or may not, be the case – the other is *a priori*; we can establish the one by experiment but not the other.) Using the octahedron as a representation gives us a *bird's-eye view* of the grammatical rules. (PR: § 1, written in 1930-31)

Syntactic rules were supposed to delimit the meaningful (sense) from the meaningless (nonsense), and what was meaningfully expressible could not be limited by the empirically given facts, for example an empirically given structure of the color space, as other structures of the color space were meaningfully thinkable. The octahedron represented therefore a certain

choice of grammatical rules which delimited what was meaningfully expressible in our use of color terms. But why choose these grammatical rules and not others?

If there is no *empirical* justification for the syntax, then how can the choice of a syntax be justified? Neither Wittgenstein, nor the other members of the Circle were attracted to a Husserlian synthetic a priori (see McGuinness 1984: 67–68 and Stadler 2015: 83). Wittgenstein and Waismann opted finally for the solution that there is *no* theoretical justification for the choice of syntactic rules. Wittgenstein expressed this clearly in his conversations with Waismann:

The essential thing is that syntax cannot be justified by means of language. When I am painting a *portrait of you* and I paint a black moustache, then I can answer to your question as to why I am doing it: Have a look! There you see a black moustache. But if you ask me *why* I use a syntax, I cannot point at anything as a justification. You cannot give reasons for syntax. Hence it is arbitrary. Detached from its applications and considered by itself it is a game, just like chess. (McGuinness 1984: 104–5)

This view of syntactic rules is connected to Wittgenstein's conception of a calculus. A calculus is defined by a series of rules that specify how to operate with (mathematical or other) symbols. A calculus does not say anything, it is just a set of rules. Syntactic rules are conceived in the same way. They specify an arbitrary calculus, which may then be more or less convenient in its application (McGuinness 1984: 126–8, 170). The calculus defined by the syntactic rules may for example be more or less convenient in its application to our chromatic experiences.

3. Waismann and Carnap on Tolerance

Waismann adopted this same conception of syntactic rules and discussed it with Carnap (and others) in the Vienna Circle. In a discussion in the Circle on February 12, 1931, in presence of Carnap, Waismann said:

The syntax cannot be justified by means of language. The rules of syntax cannot be gained from experience or by derivation. The rules of syntax are conventions [*Festsetzungen*]. A rule of syntax can be postulated,

demanded, fixed, like the axioms of mathematics. If one wanted to construct a language in the purely formal sense, then one could say that syntax is a game. The game becomes serious as soon as it is applied. (Waismann as reported in Stadler 2015: 82–83)

From the notes on the discussion in this session of the Vienna Circle, it is not clear what Carnap thought of such a pluralistic and conventionalist conception of logical syntax. But given the standard interpretation about the origin of his principle of tolerance, Carnap did not accept the idea of different conventionally chosen syntaxes before the end 1932 (almost two years after the mentioned discussion). The first signs of Carnap's pluralistic conception of logical syntax appear somewhere between September and November 1932, when Carnap writes "On Protocol-Sentences" (Carus/Awodey 2009: 97). Carnap explicitly formulated the idea in his "Principle of Tolerance" (1934: § 17). Another detailed study would be needed in order to investigate why he did not accept the idea of logical pluralism earlier or why he may have resisted the idea until then. But the idea of logical pluralism was repeatedly discussed by Wittgenstein and by members of the Vienna Circle before Carnap famously adopted for that view.

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Acknowledgement

Research for this paper is funded by the FWF within the research project "Naturalizing Meaning" (FWF: J 4502-G).

Conversations between Gödel and Wang on the *Tractatus*

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Abstract

There is an old dispute between two accounts of the nature of philosophical inquiry. Some think of it as a single method, while others consider it to involve a plurality of methods. On the former view, the philosophical system provides the arena. In choosing one method, one rejects the alternatives. On the latter view, methods are tools of the trade. Philosophy makes skillful use of all of them. The subject of this talk is the methodology of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. This topic was among the myriad topics Hao Wang discussed with Kurt Gödel. The influence of it on them is greater than is commonly appreciated. Their conversation indicates substantial agreement about the form of inquiry taken in the *Tractatus*, the only significant dispute being over a matter of degree. That is to say, on their view of inquiry the formal system is what the method comes to be, in which case there is a single method of philosophical inquiry in the *Tractatus*. The *Tractatus* provides a logical space through a minimalistic construction.

Kurt Gödel discussed the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (TLP 1921, TLP 1922, TLP 1961) with Hao Wang in 1972, mainly in April, but then in October and again in November (Wang 1996: 178–180). There was further but more limited discussion in 1975. Did it influence them? Surprisingly, yes, in several ways, but one in particular. Instead of cataloguing all the varieties of influence, and all the aspects of the *Tractatus* they consider, this talk focuses on broader, systemic issues and a basic theoretical philosophical system. The influence is revealed by taking the bare structure of the *Tractatus* and augmenting it. This idea is not a new one herein, for it was theirs. Wang seems to have introduced the idea to Gödel. Wang and Gödel each acknowledged that his own world system could be seen as an augmented version of the Tractarian world system but to different degrees. The augmentation is evidence of an influence of the *Tractatus* on their conceptions of philosophical inquiry.

Presumably, there were other conversations about the *Tractatus*. Gödel knew of Wang's brief discussions of Wittgenstein's "two philosophies" (Wang 1974: 13–14). Gödel was closely familiar with Carnap's interpretation of the *Tractatus*, with which he disagreed. Later in life, Wang had the idea that one could construct a nice philosophical system by beginning with the *Tractatus*, its world and objects, and then building that out. He thought one could give a rough sketch, a sort of minimal based account, of Gödel's philosophical system, by building out from the Tractarian backbone. Gödel did not seem to disagree

with Wang on this point. Nothing he says suggests he did not think the description apt, if minimalistic. Indeed, while their discussions are congenial, they are very different philosophers, but when it comes to Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, they are two voices singing the same tune but each in his own key.

Of course, there were many conversations on many topics both in person and later more increasingly by telephone. There was also a correspondence beginning in 1967, in three phases (Gödel 2003: 380). What Wang reports Gödel to have said is authoritative. Gödel himself read carefully what Wang wrote. He discussed and adjusted fine details with Wang. Wang himself is an authority on Wittgenstein, having published several important accounts. He is the author of the anthropomorphic view of the later Wittgenstein (Wang 1963: 39–41), a view he later broadened. Putting chronologically first things first, however, Gödel studied the *Tractatus* during his school days in Vienna (Wang 1987: 76–77). It is the first thing people ask when they hear about this topic. The Vienna Circle read the *Tractatus*, and Kurt Gödel quietly participated in that group in those days.

What is the world in the *Tractatus* with which Gödel and Wang begin? It is a barebones first order logical system with formalized operations for doing arithmetic (Rogers and Wehmeier 2012; Link 2007: 131). How did Wang come up with the augmentation idea? He had been working on the thought of the later Wittgenstein when he did his work on a formal game of dominoes which led to important results on the decision procedure for first order logic. He realized that while Wittgenstein had used language games largely in a negative way to undercut other philosophies, a language game is also a model of reality.

Wang extended the idea of a language game to a formal game and then to the computable. He was less concerned with metaphysical reality than with mathematical and computational reality (Wang 1974: 1–5). He came to see his own philosophy as the sum of Wittgenstein's philosophical system, which he thought of as an anthropological account, extended by the resources of computability. Since the interpretation of the later Wittgenstein became increasingly under debate, a more secure base for an augmented philosophy comes from the *Tractatus* than from the *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics* (RFM 1956). The augmentation of Wittgenstein's philosophy can be understood as preceding in two stages. The first augmentation is to add

computers to the Tractarian system. The result of this addition is, roughly, Wang's philosophy. The second augmentation is a bit more complex, involving concepts and Leibnizian elements, as well as principles that govern their operation. The result is something like a minimalistic account of Gödel's philosophy.

Gödel's "grand project," according to Wang, is an "enrichment" of the world of the *Tractatus*:

if we enrich the theory of the world in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* by distinguishing between concepts and objects (the monads and all sets of objects), taking perception and appetition as the primitive faculties of the monads, and using as axioms some of the Leibnizian principles and some of the rudimentary laws governing the operations of perception and appetition, we may hope to arrive at a reasonable theory which agrees with our crude intuitions [see (Link 2012: 171)] and to see, in particular, that the true propositions of logic in Gödel's sense are all true in every possible world according to such a theory. ... it seems to me possible to interpret Gödel's project in this apparently weakened sense. (Wang 1996: 10; cf. Wang 1987: 195)

In addition to adding concepts, one adds monads (Leibniz 1956: 1044) in among the objects. Monads are basic metaphysical constituents. They "have no windows," which means they are not causally interactive but admit degrees of perception. They change states using rudimentary laws (Leibniz 1956: 1045-8). The two great principles that would seem to be required are the Principle of Sufficient Reason and the Principle of Contradiction, thereby providing for the Identity of Indiscernibles (Leibniz 1956: 1049).

There is a debate about whether or not there are kinds of Tractarian objects that are not first order (Link 2016: 143), but Gödel thinks unlikely: "Is the *Tractatus* compatible with basic stuff of the conceptual sort? Probably not. If so, we must take it as a matter of counter-proof of the system" (Wang 1996: 178). Wang acknowledges that Wittgenstein in 1930 or 1931 said that the objects include particulars and universals, then remarks that "it is not so easy to accommodate the universals in his system."

The word 'logical' in the first half of the *Tractatus* "has to do with 'logical space' and logical possibilities. It prepares the ground for dealing with the propositions of logic (6.1). But our interest here is only to bring out W's sweeping elimination of thought by the move to language" (Wang 1985: 77). Further, a

more direct connection is with the central position of language occupied in W's philosophy. He puts in the center of philosophy the relation between thought and the world or, more specifically, the limit of thought, and transforms it into one about language and the world, taking logic as the key to the answer. (Wang 1985: 77)

The *Tractatus* has a dual purpose, Gödel observed in January 1972:

The *Tractatus* gives a well-rounded picture. The first philosophy is a system, the second a method. It is hard to speak of the second philosophy. The only thing in common is the rejection of metaphysics. In a stronger sense Wittgenstein refuted metaphysics. The main points are the refutation of metaphysics and the centrality of language. (Wang 1996: 178)

Gödel's project also separates into two independent parts, the monadological and the methodological. Many at this conference will agree with Wang's interest in the second part and his lack of interest in the first. He says that while the monadology is "beyond my informed concerns," the methodological part makes a "stimulating contribution." He names Gödel's "extended discussions of logic and set theory, minds and machines, and Platonism in mathematics." For Wang, what is essentially added to Wittgenstein's logical structure is concepts, concepts that are rendered as sets and studied in that theory. The inclusion of the reality of these concepts marks the intrusion of conceptual platonism into Wittgenstein's world.

With that separation in place, three methodological degrees are evident. These are degrees of philosophical systems to compare. The first degree is a bare bones first order system. The second degree adds computability to that first order system. The third degree includes conceptual platonism and a robust metaphysics. Wang positioned his system between the other two as sharing

some of the benefits of both, adding the additional benefit of the shared space, while extricating it from some of the more extreme and unwelcome features of the first and third.

Let us now consider and contrast three different philosophical systems, considering comparative strengths and weaknesses.

T1 is the base Tractarian first order theory; T2 is T1 plus computability; T3 is T2 plus second order concepts and the transfinite. Wang claimed that T3 was a minimalistic version of Gödel's conceptual platonism, and Gödel did not deny it. Obviously, T2 is an appealing minimalistic approach to philosophy that does not get hung up as much as T1 on what can be said and what cannot while avoiding the tendency of T3 to get hung up in saying too much and thereby allowing in all sorts of paradoxical talk. But T3 opens vistas not available to T2, while T1 satisfies the craving for simplicity. T1 while simple is still a single system. Wittgenstein rejects this simple system in his later writings and turns instead to base grammar, system T0. Systems of type T0 are grammar systems with basic recursions, systems of type T1 are first order logic systems, systems of type T2 are computational systems, systems of type T3 are transfinite systems of set theory. T3 does not fit with an investigation of ordinary language. T1 is not adequate for computability. Wang thought the juxtaposition of the T's would lead people to opt for T2. This is his triangulation argument. In this form of inquiry, the method is supreme.

Wang comes to think of his philosophy of substantial factualism as covering a wide spectrum from the ordinary to the formal. He sees the ordinary and the formal as limit points for philosophy. These are polar extremes that cannot both be incorporated into a single framework. They are in conflict. Yet the two extremes, Wang thinks, can be made coordinate in his system by ridding each of some of its excesses. For example, the strictly anthropological finitism associated with Wittgenstein Wang later tempers and broadens. On Wang's developed view, Wittgenstein's finitism becomes more like the finitism often associated with primitive recursive arithmetic (Link 2009: 227).

Wang uses a sort of reflective equilibrium to marry disparate elements. His systemic approach internalizes the extremes. They are unified by experience, one side being everyday experience and the other being "reflections on our

experience in specialized pursuits" (Wang 1991: 267). For Wang everyday experience is more fundamental but does not encompass all experience:

In my opinion, each of them [Wittgenstein and Gödel] is exceptionally effective in reflecting on the part of experience they choose to attend to, yet there is a natural tendency to generalize and assume that the fruits of their reflections are also valid beyond the selected part of experience. In particular, even though everyday experience is more fundamental, the specialized experience with (say) mathematics serves to magnify certain aspects of our elementary experience, thereby enabling us to see these aspects (such as the 'big jump') more distinctly. (1991, p. 267)

The argument is powerful. If one attends to experience, then specialized experience illuminates aspects of elementary experience that one might not have noticed otherwise. In response, Wang develops a new system of experience to overcome and assimilate the diversity across the spectrum of philosophy. In the face of these diverse methods, his response is to develop a new system of philosophical inquiry.

But there is another approach to philosophical inquiry. On this approach, a method is a tool of the trade. Different methods and skills are involved in philosophical research and discussion. Philosophical inquiry is the skilled use of a variety of such techniques. On the form of inquiry of the *Tractatus*, as described by Wang and Gödel, there is one and only one methodology. Fix that and accept the results. Whatever they are, they are justified by the system. The method captures what the philosopher does; however, on the other approach to inquiry, there is a plurality of methods. The choice of tools is a skill that is not predetermined. But further exploration of this pluralistic perspective on philosophical inquiry goes beyond the scope of this talk, for it is an option that neither Wang nor Gödel entertained.

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Acknowledgement

Thanks to Brian Kiniry and Joseph Wang-Kathrein. Revisions thanks to Friedrich Stadler and an incisive reviewer.

World, Reality and Negative Facts: An Attempt at Commentary and Interpretation (2.04-2.063)

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Abstract

This article discusses Wittgenstein's definition of world, reality and negative facts and proposes a possible way to stem the (alleged) contradiction that arise (or seems to arise) in sections 2.04-2.063 of the *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*. In section 2.04, Wittgenstein defines the world as the totality of existent atomic facts. In section 2.06, he defines reality as the totality of existent atomic facts and non existent atomic facts. Nevertheless, according to section 2.063, the total reality is the world. How can we reconcile these seemingly incompatible statements? According to the interpretation proposed here, the world and reality are two different things and at the same time the same thing. In Fregean terms, "world" and "reality" have different "Sinn", but the same "Bedeutung". Furthermore, it is argued that the difference between "reality" (2.06) and "total reality" (2.063) is not a trivial difference; instead, it is a difference with a substantial theoretical weight. The first expression indicates the totality of positive atomic facts and negative atomic facts. The second expression indicates the totality of positive atomic facts, negative atomic facts, positive complex facts and negative complex facts.

1. World and Reality

In section 2.04 of the *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*, Wittgenstein defines the world as follows:

[2.04] The totality of existent atomic facts is the world.

At first glance, it might seem that this assertion is nothing more than a restatement in more "technical" and rigorous terms of the content expressed by these opening remarks:

[1] The world is everything that is the case.

[1.1] The world is the totality of facts, not of things.

...

[2] What is the case, the fact, is the existence of atomic facts.

But why would Wittgenstein indulge in a pleonasm without theoretical purpose?

In fact, one only has to glance at the following sections to realize that section 2.04 is not just a superfluous recapitulation of what has been established from the very first lines of the text, but a reformulation aimed at excluding certain facts of a certain specific nature.

What Wittgenstein intends to convey here is that there are, evidently, facts that are not actually existent atomic facts. In particular, we must bear in mind that there are a very large number of atomic facts that could exist (or could have existed) but do not exist (or did not exist). After all, if we consider an atomic fact of this kind - a fact that do not happen - we are in some way imagining a different and additional fact to the existent fact. These facts are, in Wittgenstein's terminology, "negative facts".

[2.06] [...] (The existence of atomic facts we also call a positive fact, their non-existence a negative fact)

Significantly, in the first part of the section just mentioned, Wittgenstein introduces the notion of "*Wirklichkeit*":

[2.06] The existence and non existence of atomic facts is the reality [...]

On a closer inspection, this is a problematic notion. If section 2.04 and section 2.06 are juxtaposed, the result is an opposition between world and reality. The former appears to be the totality of atomic facts currently existent. The second, on the contrary, seems to consist of both the actualization and the non actualization of atomic (possible) situations. If we were to stick to these two sections alone, we could say that the world is configured as the positive core of reality, which is instead a comprehensive domain that incorporates positive and negative poles within it. Unfortunately, section 2.063 rejects this *prima facie* plausible interpretation by identifying the world with "total reality".

[2.04] The totality of existent atomic facts is the world.

[2.06] The existence and non existence of atomic facts is the reality [...]

[2.063] The total reality ["*die gesamte Wirklichkeit*"] is the world.

Section 2.04 seems to suggest that only the currently existing atomic facts properly belong to the world. But if we read section 2.06 and section 2.063 together, we are forced to conclude that the world must also include, in a

certain sense, non-existent atomic facts. But this is contradictory: how is it possible for the set of positive facts (the world) to coincide with the set of both positive and negative facts (reality)?

The answer to this question lies, perhaps, in the peculiar ontological nature of the so-called negative facts that the *Tractatus* is introducing. Although Wittgenstein speaks explicitly of negative facts, we should not be disoriented by an impulse of ontological repugnance towards non-being. By introducing the notion of negative facts, Wittgenstein is not giving ontological dignity to non-existent Meinong-like units “going about the world” (as Russell would say: 1918: 211). Rather, presumably, when negative facts are mentioned in the *Tractatus*, the following is meant. Let us assume that “xyz” is an elementary proposition. If it were true, it would be a fact that xyz; and since *ex hypothesis* we are speaking of an elementary proposition, the fact would be an atomic fact. But let’s suppose now that the elementary proposition “xyz” is false. That would mean that “¬xyz” would be true. This is what Wittgenstein has in mind when he speaks of negative atomic facts: not non-existent entities that incomprehensibly are the case even though they are not the case, but the ontological correlates of propositions that contain the logical operator of negation and that by virtue of the comparison with reality can be characterized as true (cf. *NL*: 97, 99).

For this reason:

[2.05] The totality of existent atomic facts also determines which atomic facts do not exist.

As negations of possible but not actual atomic facts, negative atomic facts are merely the flip side of positive atomic facts. It follows that, determining which of all possible atomic facts are concretely part of the world indirectly means determining which atomic facts are not. Since (a) objects - the substance of the world (2.021) - exist in every possible world (2.022) and since (b) these objects cannot actually exist in the world except in conjunction with other objects (2.0121; 2.0122), it follows that given all existent atomic facts (all the facts that exist in this specific present configuration of the existing), we can reconstruct, from the objects they contain, the list of all the atomic facts that do not exist.

This clarification allows us to stem the contradiction mentioned above. Wittgenstein would be implicitly saying, in his typically oracular style, that although the notion of the world and the notion of reality are two distinct notions, they are in fact identified with each other. We could say, in Frege's words (but bearing in mind that this distinction does not work in Wittgenstein as it does in Frege) that "world" and "reality" have different "*Sinn*", but the same "*Bedeutung*" (cf. Frege: 1892).

In a certain sense, the world is *not* identified with reality. Why? Because the world does not correspond to the sum of positive and negative facts but, rather, to the sum of positive facts alone: the world is "everything that is the case" (1) in the sense that it is, properly speaking, the totality of actually existent atomic facts. To clarify in what sense world and reality are two distinct notions, it is worth comparing them with the notion of logical space. Just as physical space is formed by physical places, logical space is formed by "logical places". According to 3.4, each significant proposition determines a logical place. Subsequently, Wittgenstein specifies that "the geometrical and the logical place agree in that each is the possibility of an existence" (*TLP*: 3.411). It follows that logical place corresponds to the atomic possible fact depicted by an elementary proposition. The metaphor can be easily extended by likening the existence of a possible atomic fact to the filling of a place in physical space with matter (cf. Frascolla: 2004): when a certain possible combination of objects exists, we can say that a certain logical place is filled with matter; when a certain possible combination of objects does not exist, we can say that a certain logical place is empty of matter. From this point of view we could say that, given the entire logical space, which being composed of objects is structurally unchangeable (2.0271), the world is nothing but the totality of matter that currently fills logical places, while reality is nothing but the current distribution of matter among logical places - a distribution in which some of them are filled with matter while the rest are left empty. Any other possible world, any conceivable configuration of reality other than the present one, differs from the latter either because some (at least one) of the logical places that are in fact filled with matter are empty in it, or because some (at least one) of the logical places that are in fact empty are filled with matter in it, or because of both.

Note that this analysis shows, collaterally, that the notion of reality is also distinct from the notion of logical space. The world is the totality of atomic facts that currently exist. Reality is the totality of atomic facts that currently exist and, at the same time, atomic facts that do not currently exist. Logical space, finally, is the horizon of all possibilities (*Möglichkeiten*) pre-contained in the nature of the objects that constitute the substance of the world. This means that, like logical space and unlike the world, reality also includes atomic facts that do *not* currently exist. But this also means that, like the world and unlike logical space, reality ‘photographs’ a *current* distribution. When we speak of reality we are still in the realm of facts, not in the realm of objects - we are still in the realm of what is the case or what is not the case, not in the realm of what forms the fixed constitution of what can be and what conversely cannot be.

In another sense, however, the world *is* identified with reality. Why? Because positive and negative facts are structurally inseparable. Indeed, on the one hand, it is impossible to conceive of positive facts apart from the possibility of their negative implications (a fact is a fact precisely insofar as it may also not be a fact); on the other hand, as emerges in sections 1.12 and 2.05, it is only and only the actual configuration of the world that determines *per differentiam* also what it is not. If the list comprising all existent atomic facts and all non-existent atomic facts is nothing but an automatic by-product of the narrower list of all existent atomic facts, then world and reality, though conceptually distinct notions, are in fact the same thing. Reality and world, we might say, mutually involve each other: the structure of the world is involved in the structure of reality because reality is the set of negative atomic facts and also of positive atomic facts; the structure of reality is involved in the structure of the world because it is (solely and only) the set of actual configurations that the world assumes from time to time - the set of positive atomic facts - that indirectly defines the domain of negative atomic facts.

2. Reality and Total Reality

At this point, we might ask: why does section 2.063 not speak of “reality” but speak of “total reality”? If we want to avoid concluding that “reality” and “total reality” are equivalent and that the expression for “total” - “*gesamte*” - is just a

purely rhetorical device aimed at conveying a generic sense of completeness, we have better take a look elsewhere.

In the next section Wittgenstein asserts that:

[2.1] We make to ourselves pictures of facts.

With section 2.1, then, the ontological examination of the *Tractatus* comes to an end: what was an attempt to decode reality that was fundamentally exempt (though not entirely: see 2.0211 and 2.0212) from considerations of the conditions of our representation immediately becomes an investigation of what we do with the facts of which the world is made up.

Consequently, to answer our question we must plausibly turn our gaze to the sections immediately preceding 2.063:

[2.061] Atomic facts are independent of one another.

[2.062] From the existence or non-existence of an atomic fact we cannot infer the existence or non-existence of another.

Given two atomic facts, no consequence follows from the hypothesis that one of them exists as to the existence or non-existence of the other, and the same applies to the hypothesis that the first does not exist.

This is clearly a reformulation of an important introductory remark:

[1.21] Any one can either be the case or not be the case, and everything else remain the same.

But what is the *raison d'être* of such a reformulation in this context - a context in which he is sketching (albeit allusively) the relations between world and reality?

The general reason why Wittgenstein imposes this requirement of mutual independence on the atomic facts lies in the fact that the renunciation of independence would amount to an unjustified restriction of the domain of possible worlds. All combinations of atomic facts are perfectly equal from a logical point of view: once the domain of atomic facts has been defined, it is the simple application of the Principle of the Excluded Middle and the

Principle of Non-Contradiction that generates the entire range of conceivable combinations. We cannot *a priori* restrict the possible distributions of matter in logical space.

Nevertheless, the reason why Wittgenstein stresses this requirement at *this* particular argumentative stage is presumably the following one. If the mutual independence of atomic facts postulated by 1.21 and claimed again by 2.061 and 2.062 did not apply, the existence of an atomic fact p could always depend on an atomic fact q . In such a case, there would be facts of a different nature than atomic facts: facts of the type “the occurrence of A depends on the occurrence of B” (where A and B denote two different atomic facts, respectively). Of course, the most obvious examples of such facts would be facts expressed by utterances that imply the notion of causality such as “A because B”. To simplify, we shall then speak of “causal facts”. Causal facts require, by definition, that the application of the dependency relation be restrictive: it only makes sense to speak of a dependency relation where this relation applies to certain pairs of facts and not to others.

Suppose, for example, that a house caught fire, that the circuit was blown, that Pierluigi dropped a still lit cigarette. Suppose, finally, that these are all atomic facts (example taken from Morris: 2008: 54). Evidently, we are right to argue that the house caught fire because the circuit blew only insofar as we would like to exclude other dependency relationships. For example, if we try to reconstruct what happened, we might be interested in excluding that the circuit blew because the house caught fire or that the house caught fire because Pierluigi dropped his cigarette. But if dependency relations exist between certain pairs of facts and not between others, then we can no longer say that the possible existence of a certain causal fact will depend exclusively on the possible existence of the atomic facts involved.

Intuitively, in fact, it could very well be the case that the house caught fire, that the circuit blew and that Pierluigi dropped his cigarette, without it necessarily being true that the circuit blew *because* the house caught fire or that the house caught fire *because* Pierluigi dropped his cigarette.

To sum up, if certain atomic facts depended on other atomic facts, there would be certain further facts (what we have called “causal facts”) whose existence

would not be determined by the mere existence or non-existence of the atomic facts. In such a case, it would not be sufficient to draw up a list of all the existent atomic facts in order to go back to the set of all the facts - both atomic and complex - that may arise in the world, because it would also be necessary to record the specific relationships of dependence that from time to time arise between certain pairs of atomic facts and not between others.

But it is precisely this that section 2.061 and section 2.062 propose to exclude. Since atomic facts are independent of one another, the problem does not arise. Determining which of all possible atomic facts are the actually existing facts does not only mean determining which facts do not exist. In fact, determining which of all possible atomic facts are the actually existing facts means, also, determining which are all facts, including complex facts. Hence, “the world is everything that is the case” (1) precisely insofar as it is the totality of existent atomic facts (2.04). Moreover, the world delimits not reality, i.e. the totality of positive atomic facts and negative atomic facts, but total reality, i.e. the totality of positive atomic facts, negative atomic facts, positive complex facts and negative complex facts. The world is *reality* because it is only and solely the world - the set of positive atomic facts - that also determines what the set of negative atomic facts is. The world is, in addition, *total reality* because it is only and solely the world - the set of positive atomic facts - that determines what the set of complex facts - whether positive or negative - can be.

This restatement of the reciprocal independence of atomic facts is also, basically, a restatement of the key-idea that shape these opening sections: the fundamental units of the world are not objects; the fundamental units of the world are mutually independent (atomic) facts. Not surprisingly, then, this restatement closes definitely the tractarian attempt to understand reality and opens the tractarian attempt to understand our representation of reality.

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Was die Nullsätze (.0/.00) in Ludwig Wittgensteins *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* zeigen

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Abstract

Bildet sich Ludwig Wittgensteins logisches System im Nummerierungssystem des *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* ab? In diesem Beitrag behaupte ich, dass dies der Fall ist, und präsentiere eine Interpretation, die erklärt, warum Wittgenstein .0/.00-Positionen verwendet, anstatt mit 0.1 fortzufahren. Mein Ansatz zeigt, dass die Sätze des *Tractatus* wie mathematische Gleichungen funktionieren: Was auf der linken Seite steht, ist gleich oder identisch mit dem, was auf der rechten Seite steht. Es gibt jedoch keine Regeln, ob und wie die eine Seite eines Satzes auf die andere reduziert werden kann. Ich verstehe die rechte Seite der Gleichung als Klärung oder Verdeutlichung der linken Seite. Der *Tractatus* verdeutlicht den ersten Satz „Die Welt ist alles, was der Fall ist“ im nächsten Satz 1.1 mit „Die Welt ist die Gesamtheit der Tatsachen, nicht der Dinge“. Wittgensteins Nummerierungssystem funktioniert so, dass n für einen Satz steht und $n.1$ für dessen Verdeutlichung. In einigen Fällen fährt Wittgenstein jedoch mit .01 fort statt mit .1. Meine Interpretation zeigt Folgendes: Wenn wir auf die logische Ebene .01 stoßen, handelt es sich um Sätze, die eine Aussage über die Existenz von etwas machen sollen – was sie jedoch nicht können. .001 wiederum steht für Sätze, die etwas über die Wirklichkeit oder Realität im Gegensatz zur Möglichkeit aussagen sollen – ebenfalls etwas, was nicht gesagt werden kann, sich aber zeigt. Nach meiner Lesart drückt das Nummerierungssystem des *Tractatus* die logische Struktur aus, indem es zeigt, dass die Sätze .0 und .00 nicht einmal „gesagt“ werden können.

Ludwig Wittgenstein wollte ein System von Sätzen über die Welt entwickeln, die ein minimales Gerüst dessen bilden, was wir über die Welt sagen können. Sätze, die genau abgrenzen, was als wahr oder falsch gesagt werden kann. Wittgenstein wollte die Logik der Sprache klar zum Ausdruck bringen, damit klar wird: „Was sich überhaupt sagen läßt, läßt sich klar sagen; und wovon man nicht reden kann, darüber muß man schweigen.“ (Wittgenstein 1984) Die philosophischen Probleme wären so entlarvt, denn sie beruhten nur auf Missverständnissen der Logik unserer Sprache. Sie sind keine Probleme, über sie muss man schweigen. Die Sätze des *Tractatus* sind hier wie logisch aneinandergereihte Punkte, aber später sagt Wittgenstein, dass sie als Pfeile verstanden werden müssen - weil die Sätze einen Sinn haben und treffen.

Wittgenstein schreibt im Vorwort weiter, der Wert der Abhandlung bestünde darin, „daß in ihr Gedanken ausgedrückt sind“. Und daß es sein Ziel war, diese Gedanken besser auszudrücken. Den zweiten Wert seiner Arbeit sah Wittgenstein darin, „daß sie zeigt, wie wenig damit getan ist, daß diese (philosophischen) Probleme (alle) gelöst sind“. An dieser Stelle des Vorworts

findet sich auch der erste Gebrauch des Wortes „zeigen“. Die Klarheit, die Wittgenstein für die Sprache der Philosophie fordert, versucht er im *Tractatus* selbst einzulösen: nur ausdrücken, was klar auszudrücken geht, nämlich Gedanken – und über den Rest, das heißt alle philosophischen „Probleme“, schweigen.

1. Lesarten der .0/.00-Sätze

Zu Beginn einige Interpretationen zur Nummerierung des *Tractatus*. Am Beginn ist Stenius' Darstellung von 1960, die im ersten Teil explizit auf die Nummerierung eingeht. (Stenius 1996) Zu den Nullsätzen hat Stenius nichts zu sagen. Zwar sieht er, dass das philosophische System Wittgensteins alle Aspekte der Beziehungen zwischen Menschen und Welt unter einem bestimmten Gesichtspunkt zusammenfassen will und dass Wittgenstein dabei die Philosophie aber als eine Ansammlung von Unsinn verdammt. Seine Sätze erläutern, dass derjenige, der ihn versteht, sie als unsinnig erkennt und „durch sie – auf ihnen – über sie hinausgestiegen ist“. (*Tractatus*-Einleitung) Stenius formuliert ein Prinzip der Nummerierung, das er der Fußnote Wittgensteins entnimmt: Die Dezimalzahlen sollen das logische Gewicht der Sätze andeuten. Allerdings kommentiert er den Satz 2.01 lediglich dahingehend, dass hier fraglich ist, welchen Satz dieser Satz kommentiert, denn Satz 2.0 gibt es nicht. Stenius' Lesart der Sätze 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 und 7 als *Forte* und der folgenden als *Decrescendos*, die auf die vorangegangenen *Crescendos* folgen, ist eine schöne musikalische Metapher, erklärt aber die Nullsätze nicht.

Verena Mayers Arbeit über den *Tractatus als System* (Vossenkuhl 2001) beschreibt, dass seit Stenius die Nummerierung als inkonsequent angesehen wird. Sie schlägt vor, den *Tractatus* als ein System von definitonischen Sätzen und daraus abgeleiteten Folgerungen zu betrachten (vgl. Mayer 2001, 12), was meiner Lesart der Sätze der Form „S ist P“ als Definition ähnlich ist. Was Mayer Substitution nennt, drücke ich mit der Analogie zur mathematischen Gleichung aus, die ja auch nichts anderes als eine Substitution ist. Mayer sagt nichts über die Bedeutung der 0-Sätze, obwohl sie sich über den Begriff „Sinn“ viele Gedanken macht. Auf S. 17 schreibt sie, der Sinn nehme eine Schlüsselstellung als Verbindungsstelle zwischen Sprache und Welt ein. Die

Unterscheidung zwischen Sinn und Unsinn bestimmt die Grenzen der Welt. Sie nähert sich einer Interpretation der Nullsätze, wenn sie feststellt, dass es eine Klasse von Sätzen gibt, die „nicht von Gegenständen, sondern von Formen (etwa den Formen der Sachverhalte oder der Sätze) handeln. Sie bilden im strengen Sinn der Definition keine möglichen Sachlagen ab. Zwar enthalten sie scheinbare Namen; diese ‚bezeichnen‘ jedoch keine einfachen Gegenstände“ (vgl. Mayer 2001, 31).

Ich zeige im Folgenden, dass Wittgenstein den Sätzen über Existenz im *Tractatus* eine Nullstelle gibt und Sätzen über Wirklichkeit zwei Nullstellen. Ich stimme mit Mayer überein, dass alle Sätze des *Tractatus* Sätze über Formen von Sachverhalten sind, weshalb sie alle als „unsinnig“ im Sinne Wittgensteins verworfen werden müssen.

Mayer gibt im Rückblick auf den *Prototractatus* (Mayer 1993) eine Genealogie des Nummerierungssystems. Sie verweist auf den von Martin Pilch (2015) nachgewiesenen verlorenen Folianten. Ein wichtiger Unterschied ist, dass der *Prototractatus* eine Erklärung für Sätze wie 2.01 und 2.001 gibt; es handelt sich um die Genese der Nummern, die nachträglich eingefügt wurden: Weil 2.1 schon vergeben war, wurde die Nummer 2.01 vergeben, weil 3.01 schon vergeben war, wurde unter 3.001 ein weiterer Kommentar zu 3 gegeben. (Mayer 1993, 112) Das Nummerierungssystem ist somit Kompositionsmethode.

Luciano Bazzocchis Interpretation (2015) der Baumstruktur geht nicht von einem linearen, sondern von einem hierarchischen Text aus, ähnlich den Hypertexten eines Softwareingenieurs (vgl. ebd., 334). David Sterns (2023) jüngster Artikel über Baumlesungen unterstreicht dies. Beide betonen, dass der *Tractatus* bisher nur linear gelesen wurde.

Ich denke jedoch, dass man automatisch beginnt, die Hauptsätze nacheinander zu lesen und dann die Untersätze in Verbindung. Ich habe in meiner Studienzeit lange vor dem Erscheinen des *Tractatus* im Baumdiagramm verschiedene Markierungen verwendet: **Hauptsätze fett**, erste Untersätze unterstrichen, *zweite Untersätze kursiv*, dritte Untersätze kursiv und unterstrichen usw. Die Nummern machen den Text des *Tractatus* übersichtlich, wie Wittgenstein selbst in einem Brief an Ludwig von Ficker im Dezember 1919 schreibt. Stern interpretiert die Sätze in Geschwister- und Eltern-Kind-

Beziehungen und macht damit den Baum zum Stammbaum; manche Bemerkungen haben viele Nachkommen. Die neue Ausgabe von Bazzocchi erlaubt es, den *Tractatus* in dieser Struktur zu lesen, aber mein Markierungssystem aus meiner Studienzeit hatte den gleichen Effekt.

Auf Seite 16 gibt Stern dann eine Interpretation der 0-Sätze, die sich auf den Familienstatus dieser Sätze bezieht: Auch er bemerkt, dass die .0- und .00-Sätze Kommentare zu einer nicht existierenden Bemerkung sind – 4.001 und 4.01 beginnen mit einer Reihe von Bemerkungen über 4 –, und meint, sie seien genau so stark wie die Reihe, die mit 4.1 beginnt. Dies erklärt aber nicht, warum es Nullsätze gibt. Meine Lesart der Nullsätze gibt ihnen einen „Sinn“, auch wenn er darin besteht, dass sie unsinnig sind und deshalb nicht ausgeschrieben wurden: Das Nummerierungssystem ist die Art und Weise, wie die Sätze konstellierte sind, und stellt selbst eine Sinnkonstellation dar, nämlich jene, dass diese Konstellation etwas zeigt, was die Sätze nicht sagen können.

2. Was die *Tractatus*-Sätze nicht sagen: Existenz

Was sagen die Sätze des *Tractatus*? Sie sollen Gedanken gut ausdrücken und dies hat mit der Logik und den Missverständnissen der Sprache zu tun. Ich werde mich mit der Logik der Sprache beschäftigen, dabei vorwegnehmen, dass Wittgenstein im Spätwerk nicht von Logik, sondern von Grammatik spricht. Auch die Entstehungsgeschichte des *Tractatus* ist äußerst merkwürdig: Wittgenstein schrieb die Sätze des *Tractatus* im Schützengraben und später als Kriegsgefangener in Monte Cassino. Das Modell eines Autounfalls bei einer Gerichtsverhandlung inspirierte Wittgenstein, den *Tractatus* so aufzubauen, dass die Sprache in ihrer Logik als Modell der Welt dargestellt wird.

Satz 1 sagt: „Die Welt ist alles, was der Fall ist“ – eine Prädikation, die aus dem Subjekt „die Welt“, dem Objekt „was der Fall ist“ und dem Prädikat „ist“ besteht. Kann man sich diesen Satz als Modell vorstellen? „Die Welt“ ist Subjekt des Satzes und dadurch definiert, dass sie alles ist, „was der Fall ist“? Aber wie stellen wir uns das vor, „was der Fall ist“? Der nächste Satz 1.11 erklärt: „Die Welt ist durch die Tatsachen bestimmt und dadurch, daß es *alle* Tatsachen sind.“ (Hervorh. i. O.) Was hier erläutert wird, ist die „Gesamtheit“. Die Tatsache wird erst ab 2. erklärt.

Vergleichen wir die Sätze des *Tractatus* mit den Sätzen der Mathematik, etwa „12 ist 5 plus 7“. Auch hier wird das, was auf der einen Seite ist, erklärt durch das, was auf der anderen Seite ist. In der Mathematik handelt es sich um eine logische Verbindung. Wenn man 5 und 7 zusammenzählt, erhält man 12. Die meisten mathematischen Sätze und Gleichungen sind von dieser Art und können ausgerechnet werden, man sieht, auf beiden Seiten das Gleiche: 12 ist 7 plus 5, 12 ist 12. Was wir erhalten, ist eine Tautologie. Dennoch ist der Satz „12 ist 7 plus 5“ keine Tautologie, obwohl er auch sagt: $12 = 12$. Auch in den Sätzen des *Tractatus* will Wittgenstein zeigen, dass es logische Verbindungen zwischen den Bestandteilen gibt und dass wir alle Sätze mit sehr wenigen Elementarsätzen aufbauen können.

Gehen wir zum zweiten Satz des *Tractatus*: „Was der Fall ist, die Tatsache, ist das Bestehen von Sachverhalten.“ Wir „rechnen“ jetzt weiter „aus“, was auf der „rechten Seite“ der Gleichung steht. Was ist das Bestehen oder die Existenz von Sachverhalten? Wittgenstein erläutert dies im nächsten Satz, der die Bezifferung 2.01 erhält. Der Satz, der hier fehlt, 2.0, ist der Satz, der die Existenz der Dinge „erklärt“. Das Bestehen oder die Existenz selbst zu erklären wäre Unsinn oder Metaphysik, und Wittgenstein setzt eine Nullstelle, die er in allen folgenden Sätzen beibehält. 2.01 erklärt, dass „der Sachverhalt eine Verbindung von Gegenständen (Sachen, Dingen) ist“. Stellen sie sich ein Modell der Welt vor, in dem alle Tatsachen durch Sachverhalte dargestellt werden, die *Verbindungen von Gegenständen* sind. Die Dinge sind nur die Bestandteile dieser Sachverhalte.

Und nun erklärt Wittgenstein zum ersten Mal, inwiefern das etwas mit Logik zu tun hat. Er sagt: „Wenn das Ding im Sachverhalt vorkommen *kann*, so muß die Möglichkeit des Sachverhaltes im Ding bereits präjudiziert sein.“ (Hervorh. i. O.) Wir können uns die Dinge gar nicht anders vorstellen als in der Möglichkeit, dass sie in Beziehungen zu anderen sind. Wir kennen einen Gegenstand oder ein Ding nur dann, wenn wir seine internen Eigenschaften kennen – nämlich zu welchem Sachverhalten er sich zusammenstellen lässt –, und nicht, wenn wir seine äußeren Eigenschaften kennen – etwa wie groß er ist oder welche Farbe er hat. Diese Möglichkeit des Auftretens in Sachverhalten nennt Wittgenstein „die Form des Gegenstandes“ (2.0141).

Wir haben ein Bild der Welt, wir sehen Dinge, allerdings nicht als Stühle oder Tische mit bestimmten Maßen und Materialien, sondern als Elemente von Sachverhalten, deren Bestehen wiederum Tatsachen sind, wobei die Gesamtheit der Tatsachen bestimmt, was der Fall ist und was nicht, und die Welt alles ist, was der Fall ist. Ich habe den Anfang des *Tractatus* hier entwickelt, um sagen zu können, was im *Tractatus* gesagt und was gezeigt wird.

Nur etwas später, in Satz 2.1, kommt es zu einer überraschenden Wendung im Text: „Wir machen uns Bilder der Tatsachen.“ Ein kompletter Perspektivwechsel. Jetzt *ist* nicht mehr das, was links ist, das Gleiche wie das, was rechts ist, sondern *wir machen* etwas. Die Tatsachen werden von uns dargestellt. Wenn die Tatsachen aus Sachverhalten bestehen, die wiederum aus Dingen zusammengestellt sind, dann ist der Satz, den wir sagen, ein Bild dieser Tatsachen. 2.12 lautet: „Das Bild ist ein Modell der Wirklichkeit.“ Hier finden sich die Ansätze zur Interpretation des *Tractatus* als Bildtheorie oder vielmehr als Bebilderungstheorie (vgl. Moser 2021, 91). Wie die Dinge im Sachverhalt, so verhalten sich die Elemente im Bild, die die Dinge darstellen.

Die Dinge und ihre Konfigurationen im Sachverhalt werden durch die Elemente im Bild „vertreten“ oder repräsentiert. Aber wie? In Satz 2.16 sagt Wittgenstein: „Die Tatsache muß, um Bild zu sein, etwas mit dem Abgebildeten gemeinsam haben.“ Wittgenstein führt weiter aus, dass zwischen Bild und Tatsache etwas identisch sein muss, damit das eine Bild des anderen sein kann. Was hier gemeinsam ist, damit das Bild die Tatsache abbilden kann, nennt Wittgenstein die „Form der Abbildung“. Das Bild bildet also die Tatsache ab, indem es mit der Tatsache die Form gemein hat. Und interessanterweise schreibt Wittgenstein weiter in 2.172: „Seine Form der Abbildung aber kann das Bild nicht abbilden; es *weist sie auf*.“ (Hervorh. A. M.)

Dieses Aufweisen ist der Anhaltspunkt für die Interpretation des Zeigens im nächsten Teil meines Beitrags. Ich habe aber noch nicht die Frage beantwortet, was das Bild, das wir uns von der Tatsache machen, aussagt. Ich muss noch hinzufügen, dass ab Satz 3. klar wird, dass dieses logische Bild der Tatsachen, auf das Wittgenstein hingearbeitet hat, der Gedanke ist. Der Anfang des *Tractatus* liefert also eine Theorie dessen, was ein Gedanke ist, indem er ihn als logisches Bild von Tatsachen charakterisiert; und Wittgenstein erklärt, Denken sei nichts anderes, als dass wir uns Bilder von Tatsachen machen,

Bilder von Sachverhalten, in denen die Dinge geordnet sind, von dem, was der Fall ist – und alles, was der Fall ist, ist die Welt.

3. Was die *Tractatus*-Sätze nicht sagen: Wirklichkeit

Satz 3 sagt: „Das logische Bild der Tatsachen ist der Gedanke“, das heißt, im Gedanken wird die Existenz des Sachverhalts vorausgesetzt. Es gibt keine Sätze 3.0 und 3.00. Satz 3.0 müsste etwas über die Existenz aussagen und 3.00 über die Existenz und die Wirklichkeit oder Realität, die im Satz abgebildet ist. In den Untersätzen von Satz 3 finden wir Satz 3.001: „Ein Sachverhalt ist denkbar‘ heißt: Wir können uns ein Bild von ihm machen.“ Satz 3.01 lautet dann: die „Gesamtheit der wahren Gedanken“ sei „ein Bild der Welt“. Oder anders gesagt: Die Gesamtheit der wahren Gedanken ist gleich einem Bild der Welt. In Satz 3.02 ist deutlich zu sehen: „Der Gedanke enthält die Möglichkeit der Sachlage, die er denkt. Was denkbar ist, ist auch möglich.“

Aber wann ist ein Gedanke, der ein logisches Bild von Tatsachen ist, wahr? Wenn er eine Prädikation ist, die etwas Wahres sagt, indem er ein Bild ist, das wir uns machen, wobei das Bild und die Tatsache die Form des Bildes gemeinsam haben. Es ist dann im Satz, so sagt es 3.1, dass der Gedanke sich sinnlich wahrnehmbar ausdrückt. Und 3.11 erklärt: „Wir benützen das sinnlich wahrnehmbare Zeichen (Laut- oder Schriftzeichen etc.) des Satzes als Projektion der möglichen Sachlage. Die Projektionsmethode ist das Denken des Satz-Sinnes.“ Hier sind wir einen Schritt weitergegangen. Wir sehen jetzt, dass das Bild, das wir uns machen, sich in Zeichen ausdrückt, die entweder als Laute gehört oder als Buchstabenschrift gesehen werden. Mithilfe dieser sinnlich wahrnehmbaren Zeichen projizieren wir den Satz auf die mögliche Sachlage, das heißt, wir machen uns ein Bild, und in der Projektion dieses Bildes denken wir den Sinn, nämlich indem wir die Form des Bildes mit der Form des Sachverhalts vergleichen und urteilen, ob der Satz wahr oder falsch ist.

So können wir etwas sagen. Diese Bildtheorie ist eine Projektionsmethode, es handelt sich nicht um ein statisches Bild, um Namen, die wie Punkte

angeordnet sind, sondern um einen Satz, der ein Pfeil ist. Wenn wir einen Satz sprechen oder schreiben, projizieren wir ein Bild auf die Tatsachen der Welt, die aus Sachverhalten besteht und in Sachlagen liegt.

Was hier nicht „gesagt“ werden kann, ist die Form der Abbildung, also gerade das, was dem Satz oder dem Bild und der Tatsache als dem Bestehen oder der Existenz von Sachverhalten gemeinsam ist. Es kann nicht vom Satz selbst gesagt werden. Wittgenstein sagt, der Satz weist sie auf. Er zeigt sie.

4. Was die *Tractatus*-Sätze zeigen: Satz-Sinn

Wenn Wittgenstein das Zeichen, mit dem wir Gedanken ausdrücken, „Satzzeichen“ nennt und den Satz das „Satzzeichen in seiner projektiven Beziehung zur Welt“, so wird deutlich, dass die Projektion, also das Bild, das der Satz ist, zum Satz gehört, nicht aber das, was projiziert wird. Der *Sinn* des Satzes ist also nicht im Satz enthalten, nur die *Möglichkeit*, ihn auszudrücken.

Man muss sich das Satzzeichen einmal nicht aus Schriftzeichen, sondern aus räumlichen Objekten zusammengesetzt denken. Dann wird klar, der Sinn des Satzes ist durch die gegenseitige räumliche Lage der Dinge bestimmt. Ob der Satz seinen Sinn aber *zeigt*, hängt noch von etwas anderem ab, nämlich von der Art der sinnlichen Zusammensetzung seiner Elemente, seien es die Dinge der Welt oder die Elemente des Satzes.

In Satz 4.022 des *Tractatus* schreibt Wittgenstein: „Der Satz *zeigt* seinen Sinn.“ (Hervorh. i. O.) Der Sinn des Satzzeichens zeigt sich uns, ohne dass er uns erklärt wird. Nun liege es auch, so 4.027, im Wesen des Satzes, dass er „uns einen *neuen* Sinn mitteilen kann“ (Hervorh. i. O.), was er mit „alten Ausdrücken“ (4.03) tut. Im Satz werde „gleichsam eine Sachlage probeweise zusammengestellt“ (4.031).

Die Feststellung, ob ein Satz wahr ist oder falsch, ist demnach nur möglich, weil der Satz vorher einen Sinn hat. Dieser Sinn wird dann bejaht oder verneint. Wenn die Sätze der Sprache als sinnlich wahrnehmbare Zeichen Bilder sind, die wir auf die Welt projizieren und die in ihrer Bedeutung wahre

oder falsche Bilder sind, dann ergibt sich der Sinn dieser Bilder oder Sätze aus den Konstellationen entweder der Zeichen im Satz oder der Dinge in den Sachverhalten.

Der Sinn des Satzes oder gar des Pfeiles, der zeigt, ist kein logischer, sondern einer, der im Zusammenstellen der Elemente des Satzes oder aber der Dinge besteht. Durch die Wahl der Nummerierung seiner Sätze hat Wittgenstein eine bestimmte sinnliche Konstellation im Satzzeichen gewählt. Die (sechs von) sieben Hauptsätze werden durch ihre jeweiligen Untersätze erklärt. Ich habe in diesem Beitrag gezeigt, dass die Wahl von .0/.00-Sätzen in Ludwig Wittgensteins sinnlichem Satzzeichen einen Sinn ergibt, allerdings nicht einen, der durch die Sätze oder die Nummerierung selbst *ausgesagt* ist, sondern der sich durch das Fehlen der Sätze, die Wahl von .0 und .00 *zeigt*.

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Wittgenstein und die Jungianische Psychoanalytikerin Jean Rhees

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Abstract

Die langjährige Ehefrau von Rush Rhees, Jean Rhees (geborene Henderson) war in London bis 1980 als Jungianische Psychoanalytikerin tätig. Die Ausbildung dazu umfasst in der Regel auch eine gründliche Freud-Lektüre. Wittgensteins machte bei ihr auf seinen Reisen zwischen Cambridge und dem Kontinent mehrfach Pause, und daher kann man vermuten, dass er ihr Know-how in puncto Psychoanalyse als Ressource nutzte. Außerdem kann man spekulieren, dass sich auch Rush Rhees bei sachlichen Unklarheiten in der Dokumentation der Gespräche mit Wittgenstein über Freud bei ihr rückversicherte, um nicht sich selbst zum reinen Mitschreiber zu reduzieren. Leider hat sich herausgestellt, dass die Quellenlage zu diesem Thema eher dürftig ist, sodass das Folgende als Spekulation bezeichnet werden muss und ich solcherart die Verantwortung dafür übernehme. Was ich aber zur Verfügung stellen kann, ist eine Klärung, dass Ausbildungskandidaten in Jungianischer Analyse durchwegs Freud lesen, und zwar obwohl Jung und Freud ja auseinander gingen. Dieses Faktum der Freud-Affinität der Jungianer ist Wissen aus der psychoanalytischen Szene.

1. Besprechung des Nachrufs auf Jean Rhees:

Obituary Notice Jean Rhees:

Jean Rhees died at her home near Cambridge on 18 May 1981, six months after she had finally retired. She was 78 years of age.

She will be greatly missed in the Society of Analytical Psychology, and most particularly in the Children's Section. She was a training analyst, and her supervisees had found her warm and supportive; she was also a good teacher and her seminars were popular and stimulating. In her younger days she had served on the various committees of the Society, including the Professional Committee, where she undertook a large amount of work, collating from the minutes the main themes that had emerged in the meetings since the earliest days of the training.

From 1965 onwards she was one of those who assisted the editors on The Journal of Analytical Psychology. She contributed several book reviews and translated two books from Italian. She was an active member of the Psychotherapy Section. Although not directly involved in the Child Analytic Training, she maintained a great interest in it and continued to attend the meetings of the Children's Section right up until the time when she left London, and she made pertinent and often unique contributions to

the ongoing discussion. It could be said that she was one of the midwives who assisted in the prolonged labour of the birth of the Child Analytic Training.

Jean had been brought up in Italy and educated at the International School in Naples. She was something of a linguist, was very musical, knew a great deal about art and had read English literature at Edinburgh. Her husband is a philosopher.

Out of this wealth of personal endowment Jean chose to express herself first as a psychiatric social worker and later as an analytical psychologist. She often talked with enthusiasm and great insight about the work she had done with evacuee children in Wales during the early days of World War II. She worked for many years at the Child Guidance Training Centre where she supervised student P.S.W.s, and she was highly regarded in P.S.W. circles.

Davidson, Dorothy (1982): Obituary Notice: Jean Rhees, in: *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 27(1):83-84.

Eine Detailanalyse des Nachrufs auf Jean Rhees:

Vorweggenommen sei, dass in diesem Nachruf Jean Rhees' Ehemann Rush nur kurz und etwas lapidar mit seinem Beruf als Philosoph erwähnt wird. Von der Ehe der beiden wird sonst nichts berichtet: „Her husband was a philosopher“. Dieses Schweigen in dem Nachruf trägt eine gewisse Auffälligkeit.

Das erwähnte „Professional Committee“, in dem Jean Rhees mitarbeitete, deutet auf Engagement und dadurch Einfluss auf die interne Organisation der Society of Analytical Psychology ein, wobei es in diesen therapeutischen Vereinen in erster Linie die Ausbildung der jungen Leute ist, die organisiert werden will.

In der Folge gehe ich, diesen Nachruf als einzige Quelle studierend, hauptsächlich auf die Frage der Kinderanalysen ein.

In diesem Punkt ist der Nachruf nämlich in sich (inhärent) widersprüchlich, und zwar entsteht ein gewisses interpretatorisches Spannungsgefüge bei der Frage, welche Wichtigkeit die Tätigkeit als Kinderanalytikerin für Jean Rhees

hatte. Die psychoanalytische Arbeit mit Kindern wurde jedoch nicht bei den Jungianischen Analytikern erfunden, sondern geht auf Innovationen der Freudianerin Melanie Klein zurück, die diese Technik entwickelte – in London in der berühmten Tavistock Clinic. Von Melanie Klein ist bekannt, dass die ihre eigenen Kinder analysierte.

Einerseits heißt es in dem Nachruf, „She will be greatly missed ... particularly in the Children’s Section [of the Society of Analytical Psychology]“, andererseits heißt es dann aber: „Although not directly involved in the Child Analytic Training, she maintained a great interest in it“. Eine Möglichkeit, diesen Widerspruch aufzulösen, besteht darin, dass sie sich zwar aus der aktiven Kinderarbeit zurückgezogen hatte, aber die Ausbildungskandidaten in diesem Metier beraten (supervidieren) konnte, weil sie eine Zeit lang direkt (selbst) in diesem Bereich gearbeitet hatte. Um eine Einschätzung in der Relevanz der Kinderarbeit für die Analytischen Psychologen (= Jungianer) zu gewinnen, müsste man die Frage stellen, wie man damit umging, dass die eigentlichen Innovatoren in einem *anderen* Verein (den Freudianern) zu finden waren, weil man ja die dadurch entstehende Abhängigkeit irgendwie gestalten musste. Man darf nicht vergessen, dass dieser andere Verein ein Konkurrenzverein war.

Zum Abschluss dieser Besprechung des Nachrufs möchte ich noch auf die Bemerkung eingehen: „Her seminars were popular and stimulating“. Der Ausdruck von den inspirierenden Situationen, die Jean Rhees als Seminarleiterin schuf, ist nicht in dem Ausmaß objektivierbar und ist daher möglicherweise der Rhetorik eines Nachrufs geschuldet. Aber daran, dass die Lehrveranstaltungen „popular“ waren, kann abgelesen werden, dass es Jean Rhees offenbar gelang, viele Leute, junge Männer wie Frauen, anzuziehen und in einer deutlichen Kontinuität der Besuche auch zu halten. Und dieser Indikator lässt einen Schluss zu, der nicht ganz unerheblich ist, nämlich den, dass das Interesse der Ausbildungskandidaten an Ausbildungsanalysen (bis zu dreimal die Woche!) und Supervisionsstunden bei Jean Rhees in ausreichendem Maße vorhanden war, um ihr eine ökonomisch sorgenfreie Existenz zu ermöglichen. Diese anstrebenswerte Situation finden nicht alle Psychoanalytiker vor.

2. Carl Gustav Jung, Jean Rhees und Sigmund Freud

Jean Rhees war bis 1980 in London im Rahmen der *Society of Analytical Psychology* als *training analyst* tätig, das heißt, sie machte Analysen mit jungen Leuten, die als Ausbildung anerkannt wurden. Dabei wird sie als „Jungian Psychoanalyt“ bezeichnet: Norman Malcolm (2001: 123). Wittgenstein hat sie mehrfach besucht – einmal hat er vierzehn Tage lang bei ihr gewohnt und ihr Blumen (eine „Hortensie“) geschenkt. Diese Zwischenstopps in London mit freundschaftlichem Austausch wären eine hervorragende Gelegenheit gewesen, das Wissen über die Psychoanalyse bei Jean Rhees, das bei ihr vorhanden war, nutzbar zu machen.

Das wichtigste Argument für diese Überlegung ist die Tatsache, dass Jean Rhees dokumentierter Maßen passabel Deutsch lesen konnte: sie übersetzte nämlich zwei Artikel von Carl Gustav Jung ins Englische. Zu diesem Zeitpunkt um 1940 existierte Stracheys maßgebliche Edition der Texte Freuds auf Englisch noch nicht. Insbesondere Freuds Traumdeutung stand erst ab 1953 auf Englisch zur Verfügung. Und die frühe Übersetzung der Freud'schen Traumdeutung von A. A. Brill gilt ja als gescheitert.

Die Frage, die in diesem Paper beleuchtet werden soll, ist inwieweit die Ressource des Kontaktes zu Jean Rhees als Quelle für Wittgenstein für das Thema „Psychoanalyse“ gesehen werden kann. Ich habe in einer Detailstudie dargelegt, dass sich Wittgenstein in seinem *Nachlass* und anderen Schriften mit über hundert einschlägigen Bemerkungen als ausgesprochen gut informiert über die Psychoanalyse zeigt. (Ohmacht, 2023). Im Lichte dieser meiner Kompilation muss man die Anmerkung von Brian McGuinness aus dem Jahr 1979, „Wittgensteins Bemerkungen über die Psychoanalyse machen insgesamt keine systematische Rezeption der Psychoanalyse aus“, neu bewerten. Das Wort „systematisch“ klingt scholastisch, ja fast ein wenig zwanghaft, und daher will ich es nicht verwenden. Kurt R. Fischer verwendet 1991 den Ausdruck von der „critical acceptance“ Wittgensteins für Freud. Ich persönlich würde sagen, Wittgenstein *assoziiert* im Nachlass zur Psychoanalyse.

Als Beispiele seien die Begriffe „Lehranalyse“ (Seite 191), „Angsttraum“ (Seite 213) und die Erwähnung von „Pierre Janet“ (ebenso Seite 213) genannt. Alle drei Zitate sind in den Gesprächen mit Drury (1987) zu finden.

Jean Rhees, die langjährige Ehefrau von Rush Rhees war analytische Psychologin. Die Ähnlichkeit des Terminus „analytical psychology“ mit dem „psycho-analytical movement“ ist auffällig und richtet sich auf den Schweizer Analytiker Carl Gustav Jung. Das Buch von John Kerr, das ja ein Wittgenstein-Zitat als Titel trägt, „eine höchst gefährliche Methode“, wird von den Jungianern als valide Historiographie dieses Zweiges der psychoanalytischen Bewegung akzeptiert, obwohl Kerr ausführlich beschreibt, wie Jung eine jahrzehntelange nebeneheliche Liebschaft mit einer ehemaligen Klientin und späteren Schülerin lebt, die beide am Burghölzli (dem sehr bekannten Krankenhaus in Zürich) wohnten.

3. Carl Gustav Jung und Alfred Adler als Deserteure von Freud

Da hier Carl Gustav Jung mit seiner analytischen Psychologie als Know-how-Geber für Jean Rhees auftritt, soll kurz seine Position in der Psychoanalyse besprochen werden.

Freud hat sich mit mehreren seiner Weggefährten zerstritten: Wilhelm Reich, Alfred Adler, Carl Gustav Jung und der Budapester Psychoanalytiker Sandor Ferenczi wären hier zu nennen. Ich gehe hier primär nur auf Alfred Adler und Carl Gustav Jung ein. Aus einer historiographischen Systematik sind aber auch die Konflikte mit Wilhelm Reich relevant, weil er für die psychoanalytische Bewegung mit seiner frühen steilen Karriere und seinem späteren Abfall ein Trauma darstellt, das dann in der Folge als Grund dafür gesehen werden kann, dass die Ausbildungskandidaten keinen verbindlichen Ausbildungsvertrag erhalten, sondern lange Zeit in Abhängigkeit gehalten werden. Aus einer wissenschaftssoziologischen Perspektive wäre ein Vergleich der realpolitischen Abhängigkeit bei einer Lehranalyse und einer Habilitation relevant. In der Tat wird die Entscheidung, ob sich jemand zum Psychoanalytiker eignet, am Ende der Analyse getroffen. (Auskunft Johannes Ranefeld, 1997)

Über Alfred Adler schreibt Freud in *Die Geschichte der Psychoanalytischen Bewegung*, er hätte zu ihm gesagt: „Glauben Sie denn, dass es ein großes Vergnügen für mich ist, mein ganzes Leben in Ihrem Schatten zu stehen?“ (Freud, 1914, 94). Dies bezeichnete Freud als Ungeheuerlichkeit. Alfred Adler ist es tatsächlich gelungen, nicht nur in Wien, sondern auch in

anderen Städten Zweigvereine für seine Individualpsychologie zu etablieren. Von Wien weiß ich, dass man sich aber später (gegen Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts) ausgesöhnt hat: die jungen Adlerianer absolvieren manche Ausbildungsschritte bei Psycho-Analytikern des *Wiener Arbeitskreises für Psychoanalyse* (WAP).

Dieses Phänomen, dass Freuds Mitarbeiter sich von ihm (oder er sich von ihnen) abwandte, wird als das Phänomen der „Desertionen“ bezeichnet: siehe Clark, 1985, 318ff.

Der generelle Eindruck, den ich in Wien über die Jungianer gewonnen habe, ist der, dass sie sich ihrer historischen Gewordenheit stellen und in ihrer Bezugnahme auf Freud (mehr oder minder offen) akzeptieren, dass er für sie – wie klarerweise auch für die Psychoanalytiker selbst – von großer Relevanz ist. Das ist für die Einschätzung der Position von Jean Rhees wichtig, weil man davon ausgehen kann, dass sie sich im Zuge ihrer Ausbildung zum analytischen Psychologen, ja sogar *training analyst* (Schwerpunkt: Kinderanalysen), mit einer gewissen Gründlichkeit und Ausgiebigkeit mit den Schriften Sigmund Freuds beschäftigte.

Ein entscheidendes Argument für die Wichtigkeit der psychoanalytischen Vereine im engeren Sinne für die Jungianer ist, dass diese das Interesse für Kinderanalysen von ihnen (vor allem von der Psychoanalytikerin Melanie Klein) gewissermaßen übernahmen.

Ein bekannter Jungianer (mit einer Ausbildung in der Schweiz) ist beispielsweise Paul Watzlawick. Bei ihm ist die Freud-Lektüre ziemlich offensichtlich.

Meine Vermutung ist also, dass Jean Rhees sich nicht nur mit C.G. Jung beschäftigt hat (wie gesagt hat sie kleine Teile der Bände II und IX seiner Gesammelten Werke ins Englische übersetzt), sondern auch Freud gelesen hat. Vielleicht lassen sich noch historiographische Spuren von internen Seminaren zu Freud bei den Londoner „Analytikern“ (so die Kurzsprechweise für die Experten in „analytical psychology“) feststellen.

4. Jean Rhees, Wittgenstein und Rush Rhees

Als Kernpunkt dieses Papers möchte ich jetzt das kooperative Dreieck besprechen, das Rush Rhees, seine langjährige Ehefrau und Ludwig Wittgenstein darstellten. Die *Gespräche über Freud* entstanden zwischen 1940 und 1946, also relativ spät, und sind allgemein bekannt.

In meiner Bearbeitung eines der Träume Wittgensteins, dem Traum vom störrischen Maultier (vom 27. April 1930), habe ich schon als Resultat gebracht, dass es vermutlich zwischen 1924 und 1927 war, dass Wittgenstein begann, die Freud'sche „Traumdeutung“ zu lesen.

Rush Rhees genoss bei Wittgenstein eine Vertrauensstellung allerersten Ranges. Man kann vermuten, dass Wittgenstein ahnte, dass Rush Rhees Protokolle von den Gesprächen der beiden fixierte, aber ihre Kooperation wurde von dem unausgesprochenen Einverständnis getragen, dass Wittgenstein diese Protokolle nicht zu Gesicht bekam. Die Erfahrungen mit Waismanns Versuchen in Wien in den 1930ern, ein gemeinsames Buch zu produzieren, waren hier maßgeblich. Das Bauernopfer, das man in Kauf nahm, bestand darin, dass die Zeitgenossen nicht über den Inhalt der Gespräche über Freud informiert wurden. Wittgensteins großes Vertrauen gegenüber Rush Rhees wurde nicht enttäuscht.

Eine der Zorntriaten Wittgensteins wegen des Durchsickerns von Informationen bekamen John Wisdom (1931, 1934), Alfred J. Ayer (*The Listener*, 1946) und Brian Anthony Farrell, der 1946 den Ausdruck vom „therapeutischen Positivismus“ in Umlauf setzte, zu spüren. Die ausführlichste Schilderung von diesem Zornesausbruch findet sich in Ayers Autobiographie (1977) auf den Seiten 304–306. Leider hat sich nicht klären lassen, ob es zwei Zornesausbrüche gab oder nur einen Zornesausbruch mehrfach (so wie 1958 bei Norman Malcolm erzählt wird).

Man muss sich in die Situation von Rush Rhees hineinversetzen, als er kurz nach Sigmund Freuds Tod am 23. September 1939 erfuhr, dass Wittgenstein mit ihm Protokolle anfertigen wollte, die zum Ziel hatten, seine Einstellung gegenüber einem völlig fernen und ausgesprochen revolutionären Psychologen darzustellen. Was für eine Verantwortung! Würde Rush Rhees diese Funktion übernehmen und dabei

- einfach Wittgensteins Aussagen ungeprüft wiedergeben oder
- sollte er versuchen, sie annähernd sachlich prüfend zu verstehen?

Erstere Variante würde bedeuten, sich zum Protokollanten degradieren zu lassen und die Verantwortung für die Sachebene, die ja von den Haltungen berührt werden würde, allein Wittgenstein zuzuschreiben. Das Objekt dieser Gespräche konnte Rush Rhees selbst vermutlich bestenfalls vom Hörensagen kennen. Aber auch Wittgenstein pflegte keine nennenswerten Kontakte zu Psychoanalytikern im engeren Sinne. Die zweite Alternative, ein Mehr an Verantwortung zu übernehmen, schien da fast ein Sachzwang zu sein.

In diese heikle Situation eines Dilemmas fügt es sich nun ganz geglückt, dass Rush Rhees' Ehefrau Jean als Jungianische Analytikerin ausgebildet war. Sie war damals knapp 40 Jahre alt, und da kann man davon ausgehen, dass die Ausbildung schon fortgeschritten war.

Ich möchte jetzt die Katze aus dem Sack lassen und eventuell die Vermutung äußern, dass Wittgensteins Entscheidung, diese Gespräche überhaupt ins Leben zu rufen und zwar so spät, dadurch gefördert wurde, dass Wittgenstein diese Konstellation um 1940 erkannte und planvoll auf sie zusteuerte. Rush Rhees würde die Möglichkeit erhalten, die eherne Regel, wonach niemand von den Zeitgenossen vom Inhalt der Gespräche über Freud informiert werden durfte, punktuell zu umgehen, um mit seiner psychoanalytisch gebildeten Ehefrau Aspekte der Sachebene der Gespräche zu erörtern. Heute würde man ein solches Vorgehen Coaching oder Supervision nennen. Diese qualitätssichernde Maßnahme war Teil eines vermutlich dennoch unausgesprochenen Planes, der insgesamt als Möglichkeit entstand, weil Wittgenstein Rush Rhees so sehr viel Vertrauen entgegenbrachte.

Man denke nur daran, dass jeder Psychoanalytiker einem strengen Verschwiegenheitsgebot unterworfen ist.

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Saying and Showing in Wittgenstein

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Abstract

Wittgenstein's TLP shifts logic toward the analysis of language, breaking with Frege's and Russell's views. Its main claim is that the business of logic consists of representing or (a) picturing reality (TLP 4.01). Nevertheless, (b) saying something about the world implies that a sentential picture must share with reality a logical form (Maury 1983, Morris 2008, Frascolla 2007). On the contrary, (c) logical propositions per se say nothing. Instead, they show the logical scaffolding of the world, which relies on (d) analytic propositions or tautologies (Baker-Hacker 1984, Dreben-Floyd 1991, Glock 2008). However, Wittgenstein also bestows (c) a metaphysical connotation since logical sentences disclose how the world could be. Scholars (Anscombe 1965, Juhl-Loomis 2010) usually overlook the implications of this possibility and adopt Wittgenstein's dismissive attitude toward analytic claims. Differently, I argue that, in TLP, (a) relies on (c). If correct, it follows that (d) is prescriptive and bears a normative connotation supporting (b).

In *TLP*, Wittgenstein identifies logic with the fundamental forms of any symbolic representations. His view breaks with tradition significantly. Instead of timeless and language-independent relations between abstract entities (Frege 1884), logic deals with the most general conditions for the possibility of representing. "The abstract logical structure of a correct conceptual notation would reveal," clarify Baker and Hacker, "the essential nature of any possible sign-system which can represent reality" (1984: 39). Unlike Frege and Russell, Wittgenstein's "logic is not an investigation into the nature of language-independent judgements, concepts and laws of thought, but an elucidation of the essential properties of symbols alone (*TLP* 6.113, 6.126)." (Hacker 2009: 41) Consistently, he reduces philosophy to the analysis of a natural language where that logical structure is at work. Therefore, ordinary language is in good logical order since to represent or depict at all; it must already have the essential structure making representation possible, namely a logical structure. So, logic doesn't improve (as Frege and Russell held) but clarifies a natural language by revealing what is hidden in the symbolism of a language itself.

This clarification consists in analyzing linguistic propositions that, for Wittgenstein, rely on a semantic structure. This latter per se says nothing but supposedly shows the logical essence of the world. In what follows, I argue that analytic propositions (dubbed as 'tautologies' by Wittgenstein) support such an essence. My claim relies on Baker-Hacker's conclusion that "All the

propositions of logic follow from operations generating tautologies out of tautologies” (1984: 44) and furthers related arguments by Anscombe (1965), Dreben-Floyd (1991), Frascolla (2007), Glock (2006), Mácha (2015), McGinn (2006), and Morris (2008), among others. Despite the differences, Wittgenstein builds on Frege’s and Russell’s claims, from which his notion of analyticity (see Williamson 2007: 54-7) ultimately derives.

[In TLP 6.1 and 6.11] Wittgenstein asserts that the propositions of logic are tautologies, say nothing, and are the analytical propositions, he is continuing the Idealist and Moore-Russell traditions of identifying the class of analytic propositions with tautologies [...] and is directly attacking Frege’s conception of logic. (Dreben-Floyd 1991: 28)

I – THE PICTURE THEORY

For Wittgenstein, the essence of representation lies in the description; namely the depiction of a state of affairs employing a proposition. So, he focuses on elementary propositions, reducible to “a sensible sentence which is logically independent of every other such sentence” (Baker-Hacker 1984: 39-40). An elementary proposition has no (non-trivial) entailments but describes the existence of an elementary state of affairs. Let’s recall that, for example, a formula P is trivial for a background formula set Γ if $\Gamma \models P$ or $\Gamma \models \neg P$ (read: Γ semantically entails (i.e., is true of) P or non- P). Otherwise, P is nontrivial for Γ (see Clark 1967). So arises *the picture theory of the proposition*, which contains the essence of all descriptions that, in turn, capture the essence of the world. Its main claim is that “A proposition is a picture of reality” (TLP 4.01).

For what is essential for a description is whatever makes possible the representation of states of affairs in reality, and whatever structural features states of affairs possess in virtue of which they can be described at all are themselves the essence (the essential form) of reality. (Baker-Hacker 1984: 40)

According to the picture theory (hereafter PT), analytic sentences are reducible to tautologies (see Glock 2010). Tautological (and contradictory) claims don’t describe anything but prescribe the rules for any descriptions. In Wittgenstein’s *TLP*, logical truths cannot be reduced to universal laws applying

to every statement. Indeed, they don't *say* anything about the world. They instead represent *tautologies* whose business is to *show* the logical "scaffolding of the world" (*TLP* 6.124). E.g., see the law of non-contradiction. So, Wittgenstein sharply separates *saying* and *showing* in any sentence. However, what does it entail? These notions need clarification.

Let's start with *saying*. Unlike Frege, Wittgenstein denies referentiality to sentences and sense to names: names have reference but not sense, and claims have sense but no reference. An elementary proposition comprises simple indefinable names denoting sempiternal objects in reality (such as spatiotemporal points or simple, unanalyzable qualities), conceived as the world's metaphysical substance. We combine names to form elementary propositions using conventional logico-syntactical rules that specify combinatorial possibilities.

To assign a given object to an arbitrary name as its referent, the logical syntax of the name must mirror the combinatorial possibilities of the object in reality, viz. its ability to combine with other such objects to constitute a state of affairs (e.g., a given spatio-temporal point's having such-and-such a quality). (Baker-Hacker 1984: 40-1)

So, the notion of *saying* presupposes that of *showing*. An object's nominal referent entails the object's combinations in reality. The logical form of that name implies specific semantics and relies on a particular syntax, although conventionally established. So, this logical syntax becomes prescriptive for (representing) those combinations. The possibility of such actual combinations depends on the syntactic normativity that underpins their mirroring semantics.

A particular mode of signifying may be unimportant but it is always important that it is a *possible* mode of signifying. And that is generally so in philosophy: again and again the individual case turns out to be unimportant, but the possibility of each individual case discloses something about the essence of the world. (*TLP* 3.3421)

Notoriously, the proposition shares its essence with the world. Wittgenstein calls this common feature between proposition and world 'the logical form' (see Maury 1983). As Morris says, "sentences have the same form as the reality they depict" (2008: 152). Indeed, "*the proposition is a picture of the*

situation,” explains Frascolla, “and is, in this sense, ‘essentially connected’ (T 4.03) with it” (2007: 12).

To give the essence of a proposition means to give the essence of all description, and thus the essence of the world. (*TLP* 5.4711)

Implicitly, determining the logical forms of names (required by the essence of a proposition) entails a standard tripartition of linguistic analysis.

(a) *Syntax* defines a set of valid formulas, e.g., ‘Wet · Rain.’

(b) *Semantics* specifies a set of models (configurations of the world) for each formula, e.g., as follows.

		Wet	
		0	1
Rain	0		
	1		

(c) *Inference rules* establish, given f , what new formulas g can be added that follow (f/g). E.g., from ‘Wet · Rain’ follows ‘Rain.’

PT’s central tenet is the isomorphic relation of proposition and reality despite the names of objects being arbitrary and their logical syntax conventional. Once conventions are fixed, “the relation between an elementary proposition and the state of affairs it depicts is essential and internal” (see Mácha 2015), namely “the proposition must be isomorphic with the state of affairs it depicts, it must have the same logical multiplicity and identical logical form” (Baker-Hacker 1984: 41). So, the combination of names adopting logical-syntactical rules represents a logical picture of a state of affairs (see McGinn 2006: 81). Such a strict isomorphism between sentence and reality shows the logical form shared by the sentence and what it depicts. So, PT supports an obtainment theory – a sentence is true iff the state of affairs it depicts obtains. Therefore, PT differs from deflationary theories in that it involves an ontology of states of affairs/facts; and it “can be transformed into a type of correspondence theory: a sentence is true iff it corresponds to, i.e., depicts an obtaining state of affairs (fact)” (Glock 2006: 345).

These theses enshrined a form of the Augustinian picture at the heart of the *Tractatus*, as a picture, not of the surface forms of language but of its underlying structure (see Bearsley 1983, Burnyeat 1987).

II - TAUTOLOGIES

PT (*TLP* 2.1-3.84) treats a genuine proposition as a picture depicting how things are, if it's true, or how they are not but could be if it's false (*TLP* 4.6). A picture (i.e., proposition) is true if it corresponds with how things are, while it's false if it doesn't. Still, "whether true or false, a picture/proposition must depict the way things might *possibly be* or *possibly not be*" (Juhl-Loomis 2010: 19). Indeed, it must depict a possible state of affairs (see *TLP* 4.01-4.05), meaning neither impossible nor necessary. If anything cannot possibly be the case, nothing is there to be depicted. Similarly, a pictorial proposition cannot portray anything that *must* be the case, i.e., that cannot possibly *not* be (see *TLP* 4.063). Picturing such a state of affairs would not possibly be false (5.61), but it tells us nothing about how the world *actually* is. "Since it could not fail to be true, it would be compatible with every possible circumstance, and so would not tell us how the world in fact is" (Juhl-Loomis 2010: 20).

Hence, "the sense of a molecular proposition is thus given by its truth-conditions, which reality may or may not satisfy" (Baker-Hacker 1984: 42). Accordingly, ' $p \ \& \ q$ ' requires the conjoint realization of the states of affairs p and q obtains, whereas ' $p \ \vee \ q$ ' allows the realization of p alone, q alone or both. So, Wittgenstein analyzes significant sentences into truth-functional combinations of atomic ones, whose conjunctions or disjunctions generate quantified sentences. Baker and Hacker suggest considering necessarily true propositions in the *Tractatus* as *non-extensional contexts*, analyzable into pseudo-propositions or, in fact, extensional ones. Let's recall that extensional contexts prioritize reference over sense, e.g., 'the morning star and the evening star' or '21/3 and 7' have the same extension but different intension. In similar syntactic contexts, a sub-sentential expression (e.g., 'Satan') can be replaced by an expression (e.g., 'Lucifer') retaining equal extension and truth-value of the whole sentence (e.g., 'the fallen angel who seduces humans into sin or falsehood').

A molecular proposition's truth value depends on the distribution of truth values among its constituents. But Wittgenstein identifies two exceptions, (a) tautology and (b) contradiction, respectively, true or false however we assign truth values to the propositional constituents. E.g., $\sim(p \ \& \ \sim p)$, $((p \supset q) \ \& \ p) \supset q$. These propositions of logic are limiting cases since they aren't bipolar. Indeed, "tautologies leave open," say Baker and Hacker, "the whole of logical space, since they are true however things are in the world, and contradictions close off the whole of logical space, since they are false no matter what." (1984: 43). Being unconditionally true or false, tautologies and contradictions have no sense since they have no truth-conditions.

The propositions of logic are tautologies. (*TLP* 6.1)

Therefore the propositions of logic say nothing. (They are the analytic propositions.) (*TLP* 6.11)

So, tautologies have no content. "They are simply (senseless) consequences of our conventional symbolism for combining propositions" (Baker-Hacker 1984: 43). Therefore, expressing necessary truth or necessary falsity obtains no genuine proposition. Such statements merely stand for tautologies (if true) or contradictions (if false) by means of their form alone.

It is the peculiar mark of logical propositions that one can recognize that they are true from the symbol alone, and this fact contains in itself the whole philosophy of logic. And so too it is a very important fact that the truth or falsity of non-logical propositions *cannot* be recognized from the propositions alone. (*TLP* 6.113)

Notably, Wittgenstein employs these semantic classes to describe the nature of arithmetic propositions, which he deems as pseudo-propositions expressing no thoughts (see *TLP* 6.2-6.21).

However, "All the propositions of logic follow from operations generating tautologies out of tautologies" (Baker-Hacker 1984: 44). So, logic isn't a science resting on self-evident axioms, but the manipulation of signs determined by rules of logical syntax. Knowing the logical syntax of any sign-language suffices for obtaining all the propositions of logic. Consistently, analytic propositions show logical necessity brought to light by analyzing the

underlying structure of language. Therefore, philosophical pronouncements appear now to be ill-formed sentences violating the rules of logical syntax. More precisely, their illegitimate categorical concepts (e.g., substance, property) are merely variables, not names. These metaphysical pseudo-propositions pretend to say necessary truths about reality but lack bipolarity (see McGinn 2006: 98). Quite the opposite, “only bi-polar propositions picture reality; and only tautologies are necessary truths, and they say nothing about the world.” (Ibid)

Nevertheless, let’s briefly remind that the late Wittgenstein abandoned PT for its supposed incapacity to account for falsity; specifically, “it fails to provide a satisfactory account of the distinction between true and false propositions” (Shieh 2019: 11). But this development isn’t my current purpose.

III - CONVENTION AND NOTATION

As stated above, Wittgenstein distances himself from Frege, who conceives logical laws as stating general truths about the world. However, he retains a non-trivial purpose of tautology and contradiction, to which he reduces the laws of logic. Indeed, such laws show “the formal - logical - properties of language, of the world” (*TLP* 6.12). Roughly put, the language has certain formal features that show the formal properties of the world, although they say nothing about it.

Notwithstanding, Wittgenstein’s *TLP* mainly relies on three achievements of Frege, later developed by Russell.

(1) The similarity between semantics and mathematical logic. Frege compares a predicate and the expression of an arithmetical function, e.g., ‘ $(x)^2$ ’. The notion of propositional function, such as ‘ x is bald’, lies in this comparison. Accordingly, we obtain a sentence if we replace the latter ‘ x ’ with a (real) proper name, “just as from ‘ $(x)^2$ ’ we get an expression of definite value by replacing the ‘ x ’ by a definite number” (Anscombe 1965: 14).

(2) The modern conception of quantification. In modern (post-Fregean) logic, quantification reformulates sentences such as ‘Everything is heavy’ and ‘Something is heavy’ as: ‘For all x , x is heavy’ and ‘For some x , x is heavy’ (or

‘There is an x such that x is heavy’), respectively. It does so by adopting a symbolic notation.

(3) The replacement of subject-predicate logic with function-theoretic logic. A proposition is a function of its constituent expressions, decomposable into function and argument.

As Anscombe notices, Frege’s notation has some non-technical relevance. Indeed, it can disambiguate puzzling arguments. Consider, for example, Descartes’s version of Anselm’s ontological argument stating that the notion of God involves that of existence, as that of a triangle implies its various properties. After Frege’s notation, the argument sounds like “*if* anything is a triangle, it has those properties, so *if* anything is God, it must possess eternal existence” (Anscombe 1965: 15). From the argument’s premise, now correctly stated, doesn’t follow Descartes’s intended conclusion that God exists. Since “from: ‘For all x , if φx , then ψx ’, we cannot infer: ‘There is an x such that φx ’” (Ibid). Suppose ‘ φx ’ stands for ‘ x is God’ and ‘ ψx ’ for ‘ x has eternal existence;’ we cannot infer ‘*There is a God*’ from ‘For all x , if x is God, x has eternal existence’.

Importantly, Wittgenstein maintains that logical constants, such as connectives, quantifiers, identity signs, and others, don’t represent anything. On the contrary, although syncategorematic, for Frege, these expressions denote actual concepts and relations (such as unary and binary functions), mapping truth-values on truth-values. But, in PT, these expressions signify *operations* for generating compound statements from elementary ones, and not *logical objects*. Despite that, for Wittgenstein, necessity is a consequence of arbitrary conventions of logical syntax for the compounding of propositions.

However, such a metaphysical flavor of PT (and the related notion of analyticity) dissatisfied all empiricists, especially the Vienna Circle’s members (Schlick and Carnap *in primis*) concerned with avoiding any metaphysical implication. So, they proposed treating the truths of logic as expressions of *conventions* governing a given language (see Glock 2008). Besides the conventional connotation (see Schlick 1974: 69-79), Circle’s members maintain

the Wittgensteinian properties of the logical laws, namely their incapacity to say anything about the way things are and their capacity of spelling out the relations and/or implication among statements.

Conclusion

The separation between *(a) saying* and *showing* presupposes the *(b) pictorial theory of meaning*, Wittgenstein's signature thesis in the *Tractatus*. Although of conventional origin, the logical form of showing becomes necessary once established. It shares certainty with *(c) tautologies* (i.e., analytic propositions) and *contradictions*, whose truth values' distribution disregards all relations with reality. *(d)* Such *logical propositions* show the linguistic scaffolding of the world but nothing else within it. However, Wittgenstein also bestows them a metaphysical connotation since they disclose how the world could be. Scholars usually overlook the implications of this possibility and adopt Wittgenstein's dismissive attitude toward analytic claims (see Anscombe 1965, Baker-Hacker 1984). Differently, I argued that *(b)* relies on *(d)*. If correct, it follows that *(c)* is prescriptive and bears a normative connotation supporting *(a)*.

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The *Tractatus* in Buchenwald

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Abstract

Throughout his autobiographical work, the concentration camp survivor Jorge Semprún mentions Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* several times. Chiefly, he uses TLP 6.4311 as a device to reflect on his experiences in the Nazi concentration camps and whether death is part of life. At first glance, Semprún's objection roots in a superficial reading of the *Tractatus*. He rejects Wittgenstein's claim that "death is not an event of life" because we witness the death of others in everyday life. His criticism can be met by connecting 6.4311 with the propositions following 5.6 and looking at Wittgenstein's own experience with death. However, there is a deeper discussion about the nature of death and its transgression in the camps present in Semprún's work which deserves more examination with Wittgenstein's thinking. Survivors and philosophers have argued in favour of an existential change in the concepts of life and death regarding the concentration camps. The paper is an effort to connect Wittgenstein with the ongoing debate about Nazi atrocities.

1. Wittgenstein and the Wars

Ludwig Wittgenstein conceived most of the *Tractatus* during the first World War, during which he volunteered for the German-Austrian side. Twenty years later, in the second World War, Wittgenstein sided with the British, volunteering in a London hospital, helping against the German onslaught. However, the Allied victory caused little joy in Wittgenstein. In the preface to the *Philosophical Investigations*, he mentions the "darkness of our times" which can be read as a reference to the War, its advancement in the capacity to kill, its Propaganda machine, the Nazi camps, and the Holocaust (Monk 1991: 385-400, 480-48). While Wittgenstein agreed with the claim that the concentration camp of Buchenwald proves that there was another, non-Nazi Germany that was killed and oppressed by the Nazis (Venturinha 2018: 200), he could not have known that one person held in Buchenwald used his work to reflect on his own experience.

The paper discusses how the concentration camp survivor Jorge Semprún uses proposition 6.4311 of the *Tractatus* in his autobiographical books. Semprún discusses the nature of death and its transgression in the camps by criticizing Wittgenstein. The paper presents his reading of proposition 6.4311, discusses whether his critique is substantial and claims that Wittgenstein's thinking is fruitful for the philosophical debate on camps.

2. The *Tractatus* in Buchenwald

Jorge Semprún was born in 1923 in Madrid. He fled the Spanish Civil War to The Hague and ultimately to Paris, where he studied philosophy. After Nazi Germany invaded France in 1942, Semprún joined the French Resistance in 1943. He was captured, tortured and deported to the concentration camp Buchenwald near Weimar in Germany, where he was kept prisoner till the camp was liberated in 1945. His philosophical background makes him stand out among the survivors who wrote about their time in the camps.

In his book *L'Écriture ou la vie* [*Literature or Life/Schreiben oder Leben*], Semprún tells the reader that on his last day at Buchenwald, a passage from a book he bought in Paris in Winter 1940/41 came to his mind: a German-English edition of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* (Semprún 1997: 202-206). The bigger part of the central chapter on the capacity and power of writing is framed by his relation to the *Tractatus* (Semprún 1997: 202-235). On the one hand, it is a device to introduce Semprún's prior studies of philosophy. He informs the reader about his difficulties translating the first two sentences of TLP 6.4311 into French and how he discussed Wittgenstein's comments on death in juxtaposition with Heidegger's *Time and Being*. On the other hand, it is an effort to reflect on the concept of death inside the camps. The most condensed passage has the occasion of the death of his friend and fellow inmate Diego Morales on the 26th of April 1945:

And then I remember Ludwig Wittgenstein. 'Death is not an event of life. Death is not lived through' wrote that idiot Wittgenstein. Yet, I had experienced the death of Morales, and I was living through it. As well as I had lived through the death of Halbwachs. Did I not live through the death of the young German soldier who had sung La Paloma? The death I had given him? Did I not experience all the horror, the compassion, of all these deaths? Of all death? (Semprún 1997: 230; a similar passage can be found in Semprún 2001: 58-69)

In the quote, Semprún states that death is an experience in our lifetime. We are present when others die; thus, death is a common experience; an event of life; even more so when surrounded by death and suffering in the War and the camps. Therefore, according to Semprún, Wittgenstein should have written: “

My death is not a part of my own life" (Semprún 1997: 206). But then, it would have been a banality, he adds.

3. "Death" in the *Tractatus*

Presumably, Wittgenstein would not object to inserting "my" into the first sentence of 6.4311. The proposition quoted by Semprún actually expresses that "my death" is not part of "my life". However, in the *Tractatus*, it is hardly a banality but a claim about the relation of limits. The strength of this reading becomes clear when the passage is considered in context. The proposition directly references earlier ones by stating in the last sentence of the proposition that "our life is endless in the way our visual field is without limits" (TLP 1922: 6.4311). In TLP 5.633-5.6331, Wittgenstein claims that although the eye limits the visual field, it is not a part of it. Thus, both life and the visual field could be considered endless because their limits are imperceptible by what they limit. TLP 5.633 itself is, in turn, a sub-paragraph of "The limits of my language mean the limits of my world" (TLP 1922: 5.6). If the same principle applies to proposition TLP 5.6 as to its sub-sections, whatever limits language or the world does not belong to it as well. This is not to say that there are no limits, but they can not be expressed by means of what they limit.

Remarkably, in TLP 5.6, Wittgenstein included the possessive pronoun Semprún wants to add. It is addressed in the final proposition of the section: "The I occurs in philosophy through the fact that the 'world is my world'" (TLP 1922: 5.641). Thus, the world of which death is not a part but its limit, is my world as it is my death: So too at death the world does not alter but comes to an end" (TLP 1922: 6.431). The claim that death does not alter a set of facts is the same as stating it is not an event in life; if we understand "life" as a sequence of alterations of facts. In proposition 6.431 "death" has to be the death of the "I", my death, since it seems obvious that the death of others is not the end of the world as such. It might be the end of their world, but not mine.

The first draft of proposition 6.4311 was conceived in July 1916 (TB 1961: 74). During a Russian breakthrough on the eastern front, at Wittgenstein's position, the Austrians suffered heavy casualties, and Wittgenstein ponders the matter of death (Baum 1984: 6-7). Authors such as Max Black have suggested that the

claim that “death is not an event of life” has to be read as a stoic remark about the non-being of death, in vain of the Platonic argument against the fear of death: when it happens, one will not be there to experience it, so why fear it? (Black 1971: 370-374) Other remarks of Wittgenstein in his notebooks support this interpretation, such as “A man who is happy must have no fear. Not even in face of death” (TB 1961: 74). Wittgenstein’s remark about death not being an event of life states as well the limitlessness of life. The second sentence of 6.4311, “eternal life belongs to those who live in the present”, evokes elements of the Christian faith (Appelqvist 2013). One might suggest that Wittgenstein was trying to comfort himself with the proposition about death, especially regarding his situation during the war. If this should be true, it gives Semprún another reason for calling Wittgenstein an “idiot”: the heroic or stoic and blissful ignorance of death was simply not an option in the camps. This objection might be superior to the superficial accusation that Wittgenstein might not have been aware that “death” is an everyday event in life. Although, I do not agree with this interpretation.

Instead, Semprún is misreading Wittgenstein by focusing too narrowly on the first two sentences of TLP 6.4311 and ignoring the general theme of the limit throughout the *Tractatus*. The same applies to the comforting reading of the proposition just mentioned. Semprún's misinterpretation appears to be based on his juxtaposition of Wittgenstein and Heidegger. He suggests that while Heidegger is able to differentiate the undeniable empirical fact of everyday death and the existential certainty of one’s own (Heidegger 2006: §52) and Wittgenstein is not. However, he ignores that “death” in TLP 6.4311 is not supposed to denote the end of “man, the human body or the human soul” but “the philosophical I” (TLP 1922: 5.641). Wittgenstein himself was quite aware that death is an undeniable empirical fact, yet it had an existential aspect.

4. Death in the camps

There is another layer to Semprún’s reflection on the possibility of the experience of death. It relates his reasoning to the larger discussion about suffering and death in the camps. According to what can be called the “paradox of the witnesses”, famously expressed by survivors like Primo Levi or Elie Wiesel and philosophically discussed, for example, by Giorgio

Agamben in *Remnants of Auschwitz* (1998), there are no witnesses of what truly happened in the camps. Whoever survived was privileged in that they had not experienced the horrors of the camp in full (Levi 1986: 13-14; Schmidt 2007: 91-95; Kusch 2019: 982). In reverse, the paradox implies that “the only true witness is [...] the one who went all the way with the experience, the one who ended up dead” (Semprún 2003: 12). The experience in the camps is something they cannot speak of, it seems to lie beyond the limits of language (Kusch 2019: 983-985). Indeed, Levi characterizes the true witnesses by the loss of their capacity for language and judgment long before they actually died (Levi 1986: 84-84). Following the paradox, the experience of the camp is unspeakable. Kusch (2019) suggests that it is also unspeakable in Wittgenstein’s terms, although he uses *On Certainty* for his argument.

Thus, one way to describe the atrocities of the camps, in the words of the *Tractatus*, is that their “human body” was still alive, but their “philosophical I” had gone. Since the “philosophical I” is, just like death, not a part of the world, but its limit, they are beyond that limit, but yet alive. So to speak, death had become a part of their lives (cf. Agamben 1998, 3.23). In this regard, it is possible to retell Agamben's argument with concepts of the *Tractatus*.

While Semprún acknowledges the privilege of survival, he rejects the impossibility of testimony. Instead, he expresses the conviction that “everything about this experience can be said” (Semprún 1997: 23). The problem is less the quality of the experience but whether the survivors are heard and live in a way that allows them and others to remember (ibid.). However, the mentioned passage in *Literature or Life* ends with a question: “Have I really come back?” (Semprún 1997: 234) For many survivors, the horror of the camps never ended; they relived it in dreams and felt a great discomfort in the world they were supposed to return to. Semprún tells this most explicitly in the story of his ‘own’ death in *L’homme qu’il faut* [*The Dead Man we Needed/Der Tote mit meinem Namen*]. In order to survive and to elude the SS, he fakes his death with the help of the Resistance inside the camp by switching identity with another inmate. He spends a night alone with the dying man, who is similar in physique and biography. After the man’s death, Semprún takes up his name (Semprún 2003). Semprún wants us to take this less metaphorically: He did not return from the camps but lived through his own death. He also declares that death has become a part of his life, although

in a different way. The camps make it necessary to rethink the concept of death and to challenge the idea expressed in TLP 6.4311. In the camps, death as the limit of life was transgressed. Those prisoners who lost their language transgressed the limits denoted by the various propositions in the *Tractatus*.

5. After the *Tractatus*

Semprún directly connects Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* to the discussion about concentration camps. The paper tried to show in which way his rejection of TLP 6.4311 is relevant to this discussion. Vice versa, the philosophical discussion about Fascism and the camps can contribute to the discussion of Wittgenstein's writing. This examination is far from over. It is a pity how little is written about the influence of European Fascism, the Holocaust and the Second World War on Wittgenstein's thinking, and how little use is made of Wittgenstein's writings to grasp what happened. To add on closing observation in that regard: Unlike other German-speaking thinkers, "death" became no recurring topic for Wittgenstein. Others, like the already mentioned Heidegger, would become obsessed with the concept; they would not, so to speak, return from the war. On the contrary, they kept promoting death in a way that committed to the European movement of Fascism.

In fact, the later Wittgenstein did not return to the topic at all. The concept of "death" is not discussed in his later writings. Probably, the later Wittgenstein would agree with Semprún's criticism of the *Tractatus*. There might be different reasons for that. Wittgenstein's own experience of the war might have changed him psychologically, as Baum suggests on the basis of Wittgenstein's diaries (Baum 1984: 6-7). More importantly, Wittgenstein's view of language changed. While the author of the *Tractatus* might have been more intrigued by the "paradox of the witness", the later Wittgenstein would side with Semprún that everything can be said. Still, the troubles of testimony are a fact. It can, however, not be explained by an opaque or private quality of the experience of death nor simply by the distance between "us" and the world of the camps (Kusch 2019: 990). Instead, the troubles of testimony are with the world after the liberation of the camps. Since the world did not change

enough, there is no “agreement in form of life” (PI 1953: §242). It might be part of what Wittgenstein felt when he spoke in the preface of the *Investigations of the “darkness of our times”*.

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The Concept of Individual and its Place in Society: A Study in Wittgenstein

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Abstract

Wittgenstein saw things in a more metaphysical framework and saw individual relationships within the larger framework of the world and cosmos. In this paper, we will analyze Wittgenstein's position concerning the individual and its place in a greater framework, the impact of culture on the same, and the origination of their particular viewpoint in light of Aristotle's theory of the man-world relationship. Thus, the first section of this paper deals with Aristotle's theory of man and his place in society. The second section explores Wittgenstein's viewpoint on the concept of the individual and society.

Wittgenstein saw things in a more metaphysical framework and saw individual relationships within the larger framework of the world and cosmos. In this paper, we will analyze Wittgenstein's position concerning the individual and its place in a greater framework, the impact of culture on the same, and the origination of their particular viewpoint in light of Aristotle's theory of the man-world relationship. Thus, the first section of this paper deals with Aristotle's theory of man and his place in society. The second section explores Wittgenstein's viewpoint on the concept of the individual and society.

I

There are several theories proposed regarding the man world since man started doing philosophy. The distinction between these two philosophers can be appreciated only with the background of the other theories put forward before them. The earliest theory in this regard comes from Aristotle in Western philosophy, who rejected the idealist universe of Plato and advocated the physicality of this world as true and worth desiring. For him, reality did not constitute ideal forms only as Plato had preached. Instead, reality consisted of forms idealized in their particular instances. Universals had no existence apart from the particulars they instantiated. Man, similarly, is not just the instantiation of universal manhood, but rather the constituent whole of matter plus mind. Each entity of the world, in the platonic scheme of things, was a poor representation of pure, ideal forms that resided in their own realm. Each entity, for Aristotle, on the other hand, is the individual, concrete unity

manifesting a particular nature of its own different from others. Man is thus not the poor shadow of a pure intellect as Plato had envisaged but a complete being on its own, residing at the center of this world. Thus, for the first time, Aristotle emphasized the concrete, physical nature of the human being, along with the concreteness of the world he inhabited. He brought the man down from the platonic world of pure forms to the ground reality of worldly existence. Man is both a form as well as a matter. “Form and matter constitute one indivisible whole, distinguishable only by thought” (Thilly, Frank, 1992, 108). The highest good for man is the realisation of one’s true part-rational part. Realization of this is possible only when one promotes the interest of others and serves one’s country. He considers man’s reason as a spark of divine reason. Man is a social being and disposed to live with others. One can realise one’s true self only in society and the state. In this sense, Aristotle is steering a middle course between “*statism*” and “*individualism*”. Nobody chooses happiness for their own sake but for the sake of our happiness with the hope of promoting happiness for others. This is called by him self-sufficient. It does not mean sufficient for one-self to live a solitary life. But includes other beings. He says, “That includes parents, wife and children, friends, and fellow citizens in general” (*The Nichomachean Ethics*, 2004, 14).

Though Aristotle did not have any theory of the emergence of both world and man, except for both coming from a self-moved mover called God, he did have some ideas about the particular natures of both of these. He stressed the contingency involved in both of them. He talked about the nature of the world in his *Metaphysics* and the nature of man in his *Nicomachean Ethics*. For him, the proper dimensions of man in his relationship with the world relate to his routine conduct and transactions with the world, which consisted of not just physical objects but also other human beings. In *Nicomachean Ethics*, he elaborates upon the good life of a human being which is to realize its potentiality by rational guidance. The reason is to guide and enable human beings to realize their full potential. The reason, according to Aristotle, is what separates human beings from other animals. Man alone possesses the ability to reason and language, allowing him to form social groups and communities. He tries to find the “good” in both the personal behavior of individuals and the political behavior of the state as well.

For Aristotle, ethics and politics thus presented two sides of the same coin. We can interpret this equation as that the rules which govern the personal behavior of an individual (ethics) should not be different from rules which govern the collective behavior of a group, city, or state (politics). This view was to have a towering influence on man-world theories in Western philosophy. Western philosophy always saw the man-world relationship in pragmatic aspects – in day to day behavior of the individual and framed accordingly the rules of ethical behavior.

Since, by nature, men are desirous of leading a happy and prosperous life, it is but natural that they would exercise whatever power they have and covet more in case they have none. But obviously, power is not equally distributed among people as wealth is not. Consequently, all men are found engaged in this momentous power struggle. To prevent anarchy and peaceful cohabitation in society, therefore, it is just that some control is exercised at the center. This society brings about by establishing an authority or government at the center to which people, ideally, should yield their freedom for that power to function. When people agree to form such a government and yield their interests to them, the social contract comes into force. However, it is to be noted in this regard that this social contract is not between people and that power. It is among people themselves and with each other, whereby they decide to abide by the dictates of that power called Government.

II

Wittgenstein vehemently echoed the tyranny of civilisation in their writings. In a remarkable contrast is young Wittgenstein's position. Though, like Oriental thinkers, he did not stress the inherent spirituality of men, like Western thinkers, he too did not lay emphasis on the materialist nature of man. For him, the man was primarily a 'philosophical subject' who is nevertheless rooted in the everyday world. His mind, language, and meaning are the product of his daily transactions with the world he is immersed in. His existence, ideas, thoughts, desires, wishes, etc. are defined and shaped by the particular cultural form he is born in. He is part of the world, a subject, who apprehends not only the inanimate objects scattered about him, but also other subjects like him. Thus, man is at the same time a subject and an object which

is subject to some other man. By admitting the existence of other subjects like one's own self, Wittgenstein cleverly overturns the solipsist charge that could have been made upon him. His conception of man as a subject is not a Cartesian ego bundled in his own skull, but a subject engaged in day-to-day activities of the world around him incessantly. This subject can know other subjects like him through the medium of language that they both share. The shared context that Wittgenstein calls the form of life is the product of convention, which is in turn the product of human agency. Since, man, right from birth, is enclosed within some or other form of life, the agency is never separated from man, and hence, language. Agency strikes a balance between man and the world he inhabits. This is because, without being able to act upon the world around him, man would merely become one of the world's objects. The agency gives rise to transactions or dealings with the man with other subjects like him. The emergence of such transactions gives rise to meanings to the word employed in these transactions. Derek Bolton notes in this regard, "Words have meaning because they are used by men in their activity." (Bolton Derek, 1979, 179)

Thus, language and meaning cannot be set apart from human action. Human existence is fraught with action; there could not be existence without ceaseless human activity. Thus, language and meaning, which are the bedrock of human reality, are, necessarily dependent upon the activity-ridden existence of human beings.

Language is not just a medium of manifesting what the person feels in his mind. This is because, according to Wittgenstein, whatever we feel and the way we express are two sides of the same coin. The content and the expression of mental states cannot be separated from each other. And both of these are learned through shared contexts in their particular language-games. This is going against the Cartesian assumption, which stored the essence of man in the pineal gland of the skull and affirms existentialists' position which insisted vehemently upon the concrete existential reality of human beings. In the end, we can say that early Wittgenstein, in part, was an existentialist too. However, one demerit of this approach is that by dragging everything in the intersubjective realm, i.e. language, meaning etc. the human subject is devoid of the originator of knowledge. But that can be easily counteracted by the fact that not only knowledge, but even the criteria, which decides what piece of

information is to be called knowledge, are decided by the society, and not the individual alone. Foucault, in this context, highlighted the presence of ruling authority or Power as one of the significant factors deciding the knowledge issue.

Wittgenstein's thrust upon ordinary language, which remained throughout his life (i.e. in post-*Tractatus* days), further amplifies his existential underpinnings in the nature of man. He was thoroughly against any picture of the essence of man that divorces him from worldly reality and imprisons him either in the Platonic ideas or Cartesian mind. There is nothing about man which is wholly inside his mind. Even language, the vehicle of his thoughts and ideas, is highly intersubjective. There is nothing called private language. At a bare fundamental level, language is the expression of sensations man has. To communicate them correctly to others, he must have shared contexts wherein others can apprehend the meaning of his words correctly. Other's consequent behavior would tell whether he has been able to express correctly or not; or, in a nutshell, whether he has been able to use language properly or not. If he would use a language that is known to him only, how he would come to know whether the language he just used is correct or not? Because, in that case, there would be no one to testify this to him. Even if, the man continues to utter the same sentence for the apparently same kind of sensation, how he would come to know that the sensations so denoted were really alike? Wittgenstein is making a point that pain like that stomach pain, for instance, is denoted by Stomach-Pain only because of the convention that people share. If I have stomach pain, and I correctly communicate about this pain with the words Stomach-Pain, only then others who share my context will come to know about my predicament. However, if I continue to use my private word for such kind of pain consistently for example Tee-Pain, nobody would be able to understand it, since such a word nowhere exists in our language-game. Even if I continue to use it in my private conversation with myself for my purpose, I would never get to know whether this is the correct word to describe such kind of pain unless there is someone who points out to me that such a word is inappropriate. It is in this manner that private language is not possible and a self-contradiction.

Wittgenstein stresses one more point that forms of life are not separable from each other – they overlap, criss-cross each other at various points. Some forms

of life closely resemble each other; some do not. It is at this juncture that Wittgenstein speaks about *family resemblances* about forms of life that share common elements. While defining the essence of a 'Game', he finds their features overlapping in different games and exclaims:

And the result of this examination is: we see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing: sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail. ... "family resemblances"; for the various resemblances between family members: build, feature, colour of eyes, gait, temperament, etc. etc. overlap and criss-cross in the same way – And I shall say: 'games' form a family. (PI 1953, 66-68)

Political ideas form families in the same way. One cannot define the context-ridden terms like economic oppression, imperialist agenda and political domination without taking into account different games or forms of life in which they occur, and shape the society and individuals there in. The simple imperialist agenda implicit in economic oppression takes an entirely different coloring in the language-game of globalization wherein different actors come to play their role. The interdependence of economy, culture and man's relation will be discussed in the later section of this chapter.

The post-*Tractatus* philosophy exhibited in *Philosophical Investigation* of Wittgenstein is, thus, concerned with humanising the earlier non-humanized form of language. It is transforming the idealist clothes of language to existential ones. *Tractatus* was centred with showing language as a formal system comprising of tokens that stood in one-to-one relation with the elements of outside reality. Whereas in *Philosophical Investigations*, language is seen as a tradition or a social custom that is constructed over and over again in inter-personal transactions of the people. Language is dragged from the formal world of a mathematician's symbols to the social world of an existentialist. It is in accordance with this shift that Wittgenstein defines the other things, be it mind, world or self. Wittgenstein's conception of man is thus neither a purely idealistic self nor a pure materialist self. While Cartesian conception gave birth to man as a mind housed in a body, materialist' conception saw man as chiefly a product of matter. Wittgenstein rejects both. For him, man is primarily what Robin Holt called, 'linguistic self' – a self which cannot be aware of its own existence, let alone others without the

intersubjectivity which is shared through language. Elaborating upon self and identity, Holt says,

Self and identity are framed in world of experience which is not reducible to a world of knowledge or truth, be it structural or solipsistic. The self is a connective force which is never absolutely constituted nor constituting but a being who has learnt and is learning the uses of language in infinitely possible contextual ways. The identity of this self is found in those aspect it takes up and grasps as defining or representational, aspects which exist at narrative distances of grammatical non-contradiction, distances established by temporary cessations (which can still, however, last a lifetime) in the habitation and exploration of the limits of language. These aspects are brought about by disruption as much as discussion (pragmatically useful) or discovery (principle), and once used, become norms internally linked with the motive force of agency and the power of articulation – norms concerning what it makes sense to say and which we come to accept as providing the criteria by which what we come to say is said to be intelligible. (Holt Robin, 1997, 63)

Conclusion

The apprehensions of Wittgenstein is still proving to be right in the form of the monster god of globalization. Man-World relationship has radically transformed into a consumer-producer relationship, resulting in devastating ecological effects. In this giant network of consumer relationship, man is no more a being endowed with a spark of divinity but someone having the power to contribute to the markets of the world, either by producing or by consuming. Man has suddenly been reduced to a mere number in the statistics of governments. Instead of spiritual, man has been reduced to a bundle of materialist tendencies which the expanding economies of the world can satiate through their products. Globalization has added to the spiritual degradation of man. Man's inherent nature is no better or divine but materially hungry, which companies can satisfy. Human values of equality, brotherhood, satisfaction, justice, morality etc. are replaced with inequality, profiteering, avarice, hoarding etc. Individual's own interest have taken priority over welfare for all.

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„Erfahrung“ und Erfahrung – eine Untersuchung des Satzes 5.552 im *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*

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Abstract

Untersuchungsgegenstand dieses Beitrages ist der Satz 5.552 des *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, in dem Wittgenstein bekanntlich zwischen zwei verschiedenen Verständnissen von Erfahrung unterscheidet und zugleich eine bestimmte Ordnung festlegt, von „Was“ der Welt, „Dass“ der Welt, Logik und dem „Wie“ der Welt. Die Logik ist für Wittgenstein erfahrungsunabhängig und einen platonischen Realismus, wie Russell ihn vertritt, lehnt er ab. Dennoch, so werde ich in diesem Beitrag zeigen, muss sich die Logik auf die „Erfahrung“, dass etwas ist, beziehen, und eben diese Quasierfahrung *kann* mit dem Mystischen identifiziert werden. Untersucht und diskutiert werden soll, wie die beiden verschiedenen Verständnisse von Erfahrung zu unterscheiden sind, inwiefern das „Was“ aus Satz 5.552, welches der Logik vorausgesetzt ist, mit dem Mystischen selbst zu identifizieren ist und was dies für die Logik bedeutet. Letztlich werde ich aufzeigen, dass die Logik zwar von der Quasierfahrung, dass etwas *ist* abhängt, aber unbestimmt bleibt, ob Wittgenstein damit allein die Gegenstände meint oder er sich dabei immer schon auf die Tatsachen bezieht. Damit bleibt letztlich ungeklärt, ob der Logik nur einfache Gegenstände vorausgesetzt sein müssen oder ob für die Logik *eine* Welt a priori notwendig ist.

Problemexposition: In Auseinandersetzung mit Bertrand Russells Typentheorie schließt Ludwig Wittgenstein im *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* eine kontingente, empirische Basis der Logik aus. Die Regeln der Logik lassen sich Wittgenstein zufolge nicht durch den Verweis auf die Bedeutung von Zeichen rechtfertigen. Eine Typentheorie wie Russell sie vertritt, lehnt Wittgenstein ab. Die Logik, erfahrungsunabhängig, „muss für sich selber sorgen“ (TLP, 5.473) und damit auf eigenen Beinen stehen. Sie ist für Wittgenstein „transcendental“ (TLP, 6.13) und in seinen Augen, ebenso wie die Ethik, eine „Bedingung der Welt“ (MS 103: 30). Sie ermöglicht uns ein sinnvolles Sprechen über die Welt. Zu gewissen Problemen führt diese Bestimmung der Logik, wenn Satz 5.552 des *Tractatus* herangezogen wird. Denn dann scheint sich die Logik in ihrer Erfahrungsunabhängigkeit in Frage gestellt zu sehen. So heißt es:

Die „Erfahrung“, die wir zum Verstehen der Logik brauchen, ist nicht die, dass sich etwas so und so verhält, sondern, dass etwas *ist*: aber das ist eben *keine* Erfahrung.

Die Logik ist *vor* jeder Erfahrung – dass etwas *so* ist.

Sie ist vor dem Wie, nicht vor dem Was. (TLP, 5.552)

Der Logik geht eine „Erfahrung“ (im Folgenden wird diese als Quasierfahrung bezeichnet) voraus. In diesem Beitrag möchte ich mich der Frage widmen, wie der scheinbare Widerspruch aufzulösen ist, dass die Logik einerseits erfahrungsunabhängig sein soll und andererseits doch von einer „Erfahrung“ abzuhängen scheint, wenngleich diese Quasierfahrung gerade keine Erfahrung im gewöhnlichen Sinne sein soll. Dabei möchte ich die These aufstellen, dass sich die Logik auf die Quasierfahrung, dass etwas *ist*, beziehen muss und diese Quasierfahrung mit dem Mystischen identifiziert werden kann. Beginnen werde ich zunächst mit einer reinen Textexegese:

Insgesamt taucht der Begriff der „Erfahrung“ an acht Stellen im *Tractatus* auf (vgl. TLP, 5.552; 5.553; 5.634; 6.1222 und 6.363). Dabei gebraucht Wittgenstein stets das Substantiv „Erfahrung“, niemals verwendet er das Verb „erfahren“. Besonders intrikat und für den frühen Wittgenstein eher untypisch, da er sonst nicht an ein und derselben Stelle mittels Anführungszeichen zwischen einem Begriff differenziert, ist, dass im *Tractatus* in Satz 5.552 und *nur* in Satz 5.552 zwischen Quasierfahrung und Erfahrung unterschieden wird. Zunächst geht aus Satz 5.552 hervor, dass die Quasierfahrung gerade *keine* Erfahrung im Sinne von „dass sich etwas so und so verhält“ ist resp. „dass etwas so ist“. Die Erfahrung, „dass sich etwas so und so verhält“, ist für Wittgenstein ein „Erleben der Tatsachen“ (vgl. MS 106: 197). Anders dagegen, die Quasierfahrung, „dass etwas *ist*“. Diese zielt auf das „Was“. Die Erfahrung, „dass sich etwas so und so verhält“, kurz, „dass etwas so ist“ zielt dagegen auf das „Wie“. Demnach gibt es einerseits eine Quasierfahrung, die das „Was“ meint und andererseits eine Erfahrung, die auf das „Wie“ zielt. Weiter aufzuschlüsseln ist die Dichotomie in „Was“ und „Wie“ folgendermaßen:

Das „Was“ und „Wie“ scheinen letztlich auf die Welt bezogen, wie die nachfolgenden Sätze des *Tractatus* deutlich werden lassen (vgl. etwa TLP 6.432, 6.44). Es sei zunächst das „Was“ betrachtet: Das „Was“ der Welt wird durch die singulären Termini vermittelt, welche die Gegenstände – die die Substanz der Welt bilden (vgl. TLP, 2.021) – benennen. Dabei entscheidend ist, dass die singulären Termini zwar die Gegenstände vertreten (vgl. TLP, 3.22), sie „benennen“ und damit von ihnen „sprechen“, sie allerdings „nicht aussprechen“ können (vgl. TLP, 3.221). Folgerichtig gilt: „Ein Satz kann nur sagen, *wie* ein Ding ist, nicht *was* es ist“ (TLP, 3.221). Weiter gilt: Die Gegenstände, das „Was“, sind „fest“, „bestehend“ (vgl. TLP, 2.0271),

„einfach“ (TLP, 2.02) und damit „nicht zusammengesetzt“ (TLP, 2.2021). Die Gegenstände „bilden die Substanz der Welt.“ (TLP, 2.021) Und „[d]ie Substanz ist das, was unabhängig von dem was der Fall ist, besteht.“ (TLP, 2.024) Ergo: Die Gegenstände bestehen unabhängig von dem, was der Fall ist, der Welt als Menge der bestehenden Sachverhalte.

Das „Wie“ bezieht sich auf das „Wie“ der Welt: Wie die Dinge sich in der Welt verhalten. Es bezieht sich auf die kontingenterweise in einer Welt realisierten Gegenstandskonfigurationen (vgl. Majetschak 2000: 98). Die Erfahrung ist eine Wahrnehmung, dass dies oder jenes in der Welt der Fall ist. Sie ist damit ganz auf das „Wie“ der Welt ausgerichtet, auf „dass etwas so ist“. Dass sich die Dinge „so und so“ verhalten, könnte genauso gut auch anders sein (vgl. TLP, 5.643). Wie hängen nun die Quasierfahrung, dass etwas *ist*, welche sich auf das „Was“ bezieht, und die Erfahrung, dass etwas *so ist*, welche sie auf das „Wie“ bezieht, mit der Logik zusammen? Und wie hängt die Logik dabei von dem „Was“ ab?

Wittgenstein erklärt den Satzes 5.552 gegenüber Moritz Schlick so, aufgezeichnet von Friedrich Waismann:

Die Logik ist vor dem Wie, aber nicht vor dem Was. Die Logik hängt davon ab, dass etwas existiert (im Sinne von: etwas vorhanden ist), daß es Tatsachen gibt. Sie ist unabhängig davon, wie die Tatsachen beschaffen sind, von dem Sosein. Daß es Tatsachen gibt, das ist durch keinen Satz beschreibbar. Wenn Sie wollen, würde ich genau so gut sagen: Die Logik ist empirisch – wenn Sie *das* Empirie nennen. (McGuinness 2021: 77)

Aus dieser von Waismann aufgezeichneten Bemerkung Wittgensteins geht nun hervor, dass die Logik davon abhängig ist, dass es Tatsachen gibt. *Wie* die Tatsachen beschaffen sind, das fällt nicht mehr in den Bereich der Logik, sondern bildet den Inhalt der Erfahrung, dass etwas *so ist* resp. dass sich etwas *so und so* verhält (vgl. TLP, 5.552). Wie ist der Inhalt dieser Bemerkung weiter zu erklären? Bisher wurde das „Was“, von dem die Logik abhängt, mit den Gegenständen identifiziert (vgl. auch Anscombe 2001: 165). Und so lässt sich auch verstehen, dass Wittgenstein die Logik gewissermaßen für „empirisch“ erklärt. Denn sie scheint in der Hinsicht „empirisch“ zu sein, als dass wir die Gegenstände a posteriori kennen müssen, um zu wissen, welche logischen Strukturen von ihnen abgeleitet werden können (siehe hierbei auch

Majetschak 2000: 98 f.). In der von Waismann aufgezeichneten Bemerkung verweist Wittgenstein allerdings auf die *Tatsachen*, das Bestehen von Sachverhalten. Bei genauer Betrachtung scheint Wittgenstein zudem zu differenzieren zwischen „dass etwas existiert“ und „dass es Tatsachen gibt“. Hängt nun die Logik von den Gegenständen ab oder von den Tatsachen? Fest steht, dass es nur Tatsachen gibt, weil es Gegenstände gibt. Damit hängt die Logik evidentermaßen *immer* von den Gegenständen, dem „Was“ ab. Aber hängt die Logik auch davon ab, dass die Gegenstände in Sachverhalten eine Verbindung eingehen, und damit von Tatsachen (vgl. TLP, 2.01)? Fest steht: Gegenstände *können* eine Verbindung eingehen, sie müssen allerdings keine Verbindung eingehen. Diese zunächst kontraintuitiv erscheinende Lesart, weiß sich gesichert, wenn Satz 2.013 herangezogen wird. In diesem heißt es: „Jedes Ding ist, gleichsam, in einem Raume möglicher Sachverhalte. Diesen Raum kann ich mir leer denken, nicht aber das Ding ohne den Raum.“ (TLP, 2.013) Theoretisch wäre damit ein *leeres* Denken des logischen Raumes möglich, herbei einem Hinweis Norman Malcolms folgend (vgl. Malcolm 1989: 139 f.). Das hieße dann, dass gar nichts der Fall ist, keine Sachverhalte bestehen und die einfachen Gegenstände somit auch in keinem Verhältnis zueinander stehen. Die Gegenstände würden damit im logischen Raum existieren, *ohne* dass sie in irgendeinem Verhältnis zueinander stünden. Damit wäre auch möglich, dass keine Sachverhalte bestehen und *keine* Welt ist. Der logische Raum bliebe damit leer, und entbehrte jeder Sachlage. Welche Konsequenz hätte dies für die Logik?

Wittgenstein schreibt u. a. in Satz 6.13, dass die Logik „ein Spiegelbild der Welt“ (TLP, 6.13) ist. Eine Logik *ohne* Welt könnte diese auch nicht mehr spiegeln, sondern würde nur noch die einfachen Gegenstände selbst widerspiegeln. Aber eben dies scheint nicht möglich. Denn die Logik ist nur als *weltspiegelnde* Logik denkbar, als *angewandte* Logik. Eine Logik ohne Welt, ohne Sachverhalte, ist nicht anwendbar. Aber die Logik kann nicht vorwegnehmen, was zu ihrer Anwendung gehört (vgl. TLP, 5.557). Eben dies scheint Wittgenstein zu meinen, wenn er in Satz 5.5521 für eine Abhängigkeit der Logik von der Welt argumentiert (vgl. hierbei etwa Hacker 2001: 130 und Anscombe 2001: 165). Damit scheint sich die oben aufgestellte These zu bestätigen: Die Logik ist abhängig von der Quasierfahrung, dass etwas *ist*, und eben diese Quasierfahrung bezieht sich auf die Gegenstände, die in Satz 5.552

mit dem „Was“ gemeint sind. Und wie der letzte Abschnitt gezeigt hat: Die Gegenstände *müssen* dabei in Sachverhalten eine Verbindung eingehen. Tatsachen müssen „vorhanden“ sein; dafür argumentieren etwa auch Arthur Kenny und Brian McGuinness in ihren Beiträgen (vgl. Kenny 2006: 87 und McGuinness 1989: 175 f.). Selbst wenn man einwenden mag, dass die Bemerkung oben nur *vermeintlich* direkt von Wittgenstein stammt, letztlich aber von Friedrich Waismann aufgezeichnet wurde und gar nicht klar ist, ob die Logik nun allein von Gegenständen abhängt oder davon, dass es auch Tatsachen gibt, so blieben dabei immer noch Wittgensteins Bemerkungen in Satz 5.552 bestehen. Diese Frage leichtfertig als *philologische* Frage vom Tisch zu wischen – ein Zug, der in einer solchen Situation natürlich immer gemacht werden kann –, hieße sich um eine wichtige wie mühsam zu erarbeitende Einsicht in die inneren Strukturzusammenhänge des *Tractatus* zu bringen, zudem wäre damit auch das Problem der Deutung von Satz 2.013 noch nicht gelöst.

Wittgenstein bemerkt in Satz 5.552 auch, dass die Logik der Erfahrung, dass etwas *so* ist vorangeht, ebenso dem „dass sich etwas so und so verhält“ und damit dem „Wie“ der Welt (vgl. TLP, 5.552). Wittgenstein scheint damit letztlich die Gedanken aus Satz 6.124 zu berühren, in dem er davon spricht, dass die Logik von nichts „handelt“ (vgl. TLP, 6.124). Und dies lässt sich nur so verstehen, dass die Logik den kontingenterweise realisierten Gegenstandskonfigurationen in der Welt, dem „Wie“ was „auch anders sein“ kann (TLP, 5.634), nichts hinzufügt. Die Logik kann die Welt nicht korrigieren. Weder kann sie das kontingent Gegebene bewegen, noch wird sie umgekehrt vom Kontingenten bestätigt oder nicht bestätigt. Ihre Beziehung zum kontingent Gegebenen, zum „Wie“, liegt allein darin, dass sinnvolle Sätze über das „Wie“ gebildet werden können. Und dies ist durch die Voraussetzung gegeben, „dass Namen Bedeutung, und Elementarsätze Sinn haben“ (TLP, 6.124). Wenn nun gilt, dass die Logik erfahrungsunabhängig ist, nicht aber unabhängig ist von der Quasierfahrung, dass etwas *ist*, so mag an dieser Stelle die Frage aufkommen, ob eben diese Quasierfahrung das Mystische berührt. Wie ist das aufzulösen? Hängt die Logik letztlich von dem Mystischen ab?

Das Mystische meint, *dass* die Welt ist (vgl. TLP, 6.44). Es kann sich, so Wittgenstein, als „Gefühl“ niederschlagen, dem „Gefühl der Welt als begrenztes Ganzes“ (ibid.). Allein vom Text des *Tractatus* ausgehend, ist im

Grunde nicht einmal gesichert, ob das Mystische auch mit Gott identifiziert werden kann. Letztlich scheint das Wittgenstein'sche Mystische nur eine andere Bezeichnung für das zu sein, was jeder diskursiven Explikation entzogen ist, sich aber in seiner eigenen Bedeutung im subjektiven Erleben einer Person zeigen kann, indem es eine Perspektive auf den Sinn der Welt zu eröffnen scheint (vgl. Majetschak 2000: 118). Die Quasierfahrung, dass etwas *ist*, wird von Wittgenstein im *Tractatus* selbst nicht mit dem Mystischen zusammengebracht (vgl. TLP, 6.44, 6.45 und 6.522). Die Quasierfahrung, die der Logik vorgehen muss, bringt lediglich zum Ausdruck, dass Gegenstände sind und zielt damit auf das „Was“. Auffällig an dieser Stelle ist eine Unbestimmtheit:

Zum einen meint das „Was“ evidentermaßen, dass etwas *ist*. Dass die Gegenstände *existieren, vorhanden* sein müssen (vgl. McGuinness 2021: 77). Zum anderen aber betont Wittgenstein, in der Aufzeichnung von Waismann, dass die Logik abhängig von den *Tatsachen* ist – dass Tatsachen sind. Das „Was“ scheint damit nicht einfach nur auf die Gegenstände bezogen zu sein, von der alle möglichen Welten im logischen Raum abhängig sind, sondern es scheint gerade so darauf bezogen, dass die Gegenstände *Verbindungen* in Sachverhalten bilden, sodass es *Tatsachen* gibt, unsere reale Welt. Eine solche Deutung hätte zufolge, dass das „Was“ damit sehr wohl mit dem Mystischen identifiziert werden kann. Und damit auch, dass die Logik von der Quasierfahrung, dass etwas *ist*, dass Tatsachen *existieren*, abhängig ist. Letztlich aber bleibt unklar, ob Wittgenstein mit dem „Was“ nur die Gegenstände, meint oder ob diese eben immer schon in Sachverhalten Verbindungen eingehen müssen, die ausnahmslos Tatsachen sind. Und diese Unbestimmtheit hält sich bei genauem Lesen auch in seinem *Vortrag über Ethik* und in seinen Tagebucheinträgen durch. Es wird eben nicht unterschieden, zwischen „dass etwas ist“ und „dass Tatsachen sind“. So wie sich im Folgenden zeigt:

Nicht wie die Welt ist, ist das Mystische, sondern dass sie ist. (TLP, 6.44)

Am ehesten läßt sich dieses Erlebnis, glaube ich, mit den Worten beschreiben, daß ich, wenn ich es habe [die Grenzerfahrung], *über die Existenz der Welt staune*. Dann neige ich dazu, Formulierungen der folgenden Art zu verwenden: „Wie sonderbar, *daß überhaupt etwas existiert*“, oder „Wie

seltsam, daß die Welt existiert“. [...] Wenn ich sage: „Ich staune über die Existenz der Welt“, mißbrauche ich die Sprache [...] Die Aussage „Ich staune darüber, daß das und das der Fall ist“, hat nur dann Sinn, wenn ich mir vorstellen kann, daß es nicht der Fall sei. (VE, 14 f.)

Das [...] Wunder ist, daß es die Welt gibt. Daß es das gibt, was es gibt. (TB, 20.10.1916)

Ich denke nicht, dass man beide Bestimmungen leichtfertig für synonym erklären darf. Sicherlich gibt es hier weiteres Diskussionspotential (vgl. McGuinness 1989: 175). Unabhängig davon, welche Deutungsweise zu bevorzugen ist, feststeht, dass die Logik einer Quasierfahrung bedarf. Und diese Quasierfahrung, dass etwas *ist*, bezieht sich auf das Sein der Substanz, der Gegenstände. Dem Diktum Adornos Beachtung schenkend, – alles, was hineininterpretiert wird, kann auch wieder herausinterpretiert werden – stellt sich dennoch die Frage, ob die Quasierfahrung, dass etwas *ist*, äquivalent eines vortheoretischen – Logik und Sprache zuvorkommenden – Seinsverständnisses ist, das jedem Denken über die Welt vorausgesetzt ist. Und damit möglicherweise nicht nur als bewusste geistige Episode, sondern als etwas, das implizit im Denken angelegt ist (vgl. Glock 1996: 94 und Vossenkuhl 1995: 94 f.), möglicherweise erhielte sie damit auch den Status des Vorprädikativen, die der Logik und Sprache als Bedingung ihrer Möglichkeit vorausliegt. D. h. sie käme der logischen Prädikation zuvor und läge damit der theoretischen Bestimmung von etwas *als* etwas, der Relation von einem Subjektbegriff mit einem Prädikatsbegriff, als Bedingung ihrer Möglichkeit voraus. Das bedeutet, um noch einmal auf Satz 5.552 zusprechen zu kommen, dass die Erfahrung, dass etwas *so* ist, dass sich etwas *so* und *so* verhält, erst der Quasierfahrung, dass etwas *ist* bedarf. Erst *dann* können überhaupt erst Unterscheidungen in der Welt getroffen werden. Anders gesagt: Jeder Mensch, der über die Welt nachdenkt, muss diese Quasierfahrung haben. Anders jedoch als etwa Parmenides, Leibniz, Schopenhauer oder Heidegger ist für den Wittgenstein des *Tractatus* ein sinnvolles Nachspüren nach dem Gehalt dieser Quasierfahrung nicht möglich. Dass es diese Quasierfahrung gibt, dies scheint sich ähnlich wie das Mystische oder die logische Form nur zu *zeigen*.

Schlussbemerkung:

Auch wenn in diesem Beitrag aufgezeigt wurde, dass die Logik von der Quasierfahrung, dass etwas *ist*, abhängt, so ist nicht klar, ob sich Wittgenstein damit allein auf die einfachen Gegenstände, die Substanz, bezieht, oder aber, ob er damit immer schon die Tatsachen meint. Und so bleibt letztlich unbestimmt, ob Wittgenstein nur die feste Form jeder möglichen Welt meint oder ob er letztlich *eine* Welt – diese *reale* Welt – meint. Daran aber hängt die Frage, ob der Logik nur einfache Gegenstände vorausgesetzt sein müssen oder ob für die Logik *eine* Welt a priori notwendig ist. Dies scheint wiederum von den Auslegungsmöglichkeiten des Satzes 2.013 abzuhängen und bleibt als möglicher Diskussionspunkt bestehen. Weiter bleibt ungeklärt, ob die Quasierfahrung leichtfertig als *mystische* Erfahrung interpretiert werden darf, wie dies in der Sekundärliteratur immer wieder zu beobachten ist, oder ob dies schlichtweg Überinterpretation ist. Darüber hinaus lässt sich fragen, inwiefern die Quasierfahrung mit ihrem Bezug auf das Sein der Gegenstände, mit deren Formen (TLP, 2.0251) selbst verbunden ist, insbesondere der Zeit.

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Acknowledgement

Ich möchte mich an dieser Stelle noch einmal ganz herzlich bei Herrn Professor Stefan Majetschak (Universität Kassel) für den hilfreichen wie lehrreichen Austausch bedanken.

Tractatus 6 Reconsidered: How the S-operation Can Deal with the Case of an Infinite Number of Atomic Propositions

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Abstract

TLP 6 offers a formal definition of the concept of the truthfunction based on the *N*-operation. We offer an alternative solution whose key element is a new *S*-operation. Unlike Wittgenstein's original conception of joint negation, our logical device can perform the task of producing a truly linear sequence of all consecutive truth-functions of a given collection of atomic propositions because it is a genuine invariable difference between any base and its successor throughout the sequence. Although, the formal construction of the *S*-operation is not an easy task, the intuition behind it is relatively simple: all truthfunctions of any given number of *Elementarsätze* can be generated using Wittgenstein's own shortened notation that comprises only truth-value signs. The notation can be transformed into binary numbers that, in turn, can be enumerated using the operation of binary successor. Our joint article (yet unpublished) is dedicated to a detailed development of this intuition. One can raise the question of whether our new formula works for the case when the collection of atomic propositions is infinite. As is well known, the *Tractatus* does not determine if the number of elementary propositions is finite or not. The answer to this question is positive as long as we are dealing with a countable infinite number of atomic propositions as well as a countable infinite number of predicates and assume that each meaningful molecular proposition only depends on a finite number of *Elementarsätze*. The present paper provides a detailed justification for this answer.

In our yet unpublished (although accepted to *History and Philosophy of Logic*) paper "Tractatus 6 Reconsidered: An Algorithmic Alternative to Wittgenstein's Trade-off" (Roman, Gomułka unpublished), we propose to substitute the famous TLP 6 formula " $\lceil p, \bar{\xi}, N(\bar{\xi}) \rceil$ " with a different one " $\lceil t, \xi, S(\xi) \rceil$ " that uses the new operation *S*. In other words, we offer a different recipe for generating the Tractarian series of forms of propositions and thus a different definition of the formal concept of the proposition. The key element of that recipe is the *S*-operation that can perform the task of producing a linear sequence of all consecutive compound propositions – truth-functions of a given collection of atomic propositions – being invariable difference between any base and its successor throughout the sequence. Though simple and elegant, Wittgenstein's original *N*-operation falls short of this task as scholars' attempts to demonstrate its possible use make clear (cf. Anscombe 1965: 133, Sundholm 1992, Cheung 2000).

The presentation of the *S*-operation that is provided in our paper follows the path paved by Anscombe and only considers the very simple case of a

collection of two atomic propositions. However, the solution allows to generate all possible molecular propositions for a given list of atomic propositions, no matter how long the list. We notice that "it can be demonstrated that a similar approach will allow us to define the S-operation for the case of an infinite (albeit countable) number of atomic propositions, assuming that each significant proposition only depends on a finite number of atomic propositions" (Roman, Gomułka unpublished). Here, we would like to provide an extensive formalised explanation of how this can actually be done.

The construction of the S-operation

Unlike Wittgenstein's original *N*-operation, our *S*-operation is not a simple logical device. However, the intuition behind it is relatively easy to grasp: we can generate all possible truth-functions of any given number of elementary propositions by using a simplified form of Wittgenstein's own shortened notation (cf. TLP 4.442) that comprises only truth-value T and F signs which are assigned to truth-possibilities generated by a given collection of atomic propositions, converting those signs into 1 and 0 digits, considering the resulting strings of zeroes and ones as binary numbers, and carrying on from the all-zeroes to the all-ones with the binary arithmetic successor operation. (Actually, as will be elucidated in the main text, we start from 000...01; our penultimate step is 111...11; and we finish at 000...00. These sequences represent, correspondingly, the joint negation of all considered atomic propositions, the tautology, and the contradiction.) Thus, we have a successive application of the same operation at each step, as is required by TLP 5.2521–5.2523 and 5.32. There is reason to speculate that such a solution was not completely alien to Wittgenstein himself as he experimented with ordering truth-functions according to T's-and-F's patterns of their shortened notations (cf. TLP 5.101).

The formal definition of the *S*-operation assumes that it is a composition of three sub-operations: π , σ , and π^{-1} (i.e. the inverse of π). The operation π takes as its argument the simplified shortened notation in the form of $(i_1 i_2 \dots i_n)$, where i_k is a k -th truth-value sign (T or F), and 2^n is a number of truth-possibilities generated out of n atomic propositions. The operation returns the

corresponding binary sequence $(d_1d_2\dots d_2n)$, where d_k is a k -th binary digit (1 or 0). In other words, π transforms the series of T's-and-F's into the binary series by putting 1 instead of each T and 0 instead of each F. Since π is a bijection, there is the inverse operation π^{-1} that for some given binary sequence $(d_1d_2\dots d_2n)$ yields a simplified shortened notation $(i_1i_2\dots i_2n)$ by putting T instead of each 1 and F instead of each 0. Meanwhile, the crucial sub-operation σ takes as its argument a binary sequence and returns its successor:

$$\sigma((d_1d_2\dots d_2n)) = (d_1d_2\dots d_2n)_2 + 1 \pmod{2^n}$$

where 2^n is the number of truth-possibilities generated by n atomic propositions, and $(d_1d_2\dots d_2n)_2$ represents $d_1d_2\dots d_2n$ as a binary representation of a number. For example, $(0011)_2$ is the binary representation of the number three with trailing zeroes, as it is stored in the memory of any digital machine.

Thus, the definition of the S-operation is as follows:

$$S(\xi) = (\pi^{-1} \circ \sigma \circ \pi)(\xi) = \pi^{-1}(\sigma(\pi(\xi))).$$

As we can see, S is a composition of the above-defined operations. Its crucial feature is its uniformity at each step: it provides the genuine constant form of the propositional variable (cf. 4.1271).

Due to the fact that the sub-operation σ is modulo 2^n , the S operation generates truth-functions in a cyclical manner, so we can choose the initial truth-function as we please. However, the starting point can no longer be a collection of atomic propositions because the series of forms should consist of uniform elements. Wittgenstein's decision to begin the series with \bar{p} was yet another distortion of his own initial idea of the series of forms. Instead, we can commence with the truth-function that is closest to \bar{p} ; namely, $N(\bar{p})$. Therefore, we make use of Wittgenstein's N -operation of joint negation that generates a molecular sentence which states that all its component atomic propositions are false.

Thus, we come to the formulation of our TLP 6 expression replacement:

$$[t, \xi, S(\xi)],$$

all of whose subexpressions have the same form of a truth-function of a given collection of atomic propositions: the initial expression t stands for the aforementioned joint negation, that is, $N(\bar{p})$; the middle expression ξ is the series' schematic letter and stands for any member of the series; and the last expression $S(\xi)$ that involves our S-operation stands for the subsequent member of the series.

For any given n being the length of a collection of atomic propositions, we have 2^n truth-possibilities; that is, the sequences of T and F signs that code truth-functions related to that collection are 2^n -long. From this follows that the total number of those truth-functions is 2^{2^n} . It is easy to demonstrate that the penultimate truth-function of a series that starts with t and is generated by S (that is, the $2^{2^n}-1$ -th member of the series) is a tautology represented by all T's (and, respectively, all ones that is a binary representation of the number $2^{2^n}-1$). However, this is not the last unique member of the series: with yet another application of the S-operation, we yield a contradiction represented by all F's and, respectively, all zeroes: adding 1 modulo 2^n to $2^{2^n}-1$ yields zero.

The case of infinitely many atomic propositions

So far, we have only dealt with a finite number of atomic propositions. However, the *Tractatus* does not determine if the number of *Elementarsätze* is finite or not (cf. TLP 4.1272). Therefore, one can legitimately raise the question of whether our new formula works for the case when the collection of atomic propositions is infinite. As we have written in our previous paper, the answer is positive as long as we are dealing with a countable infinite number of atomic propositions as well as a countable infinite number of predicates and assume that each meaningful molecular proposition only depends on a finite number of *Elementarsätze*. Again, the idea is relatively simple: we divide all well-formed formulas into subsets based on the number of atomic propositions and the maximum index of the atomic proposition in a formula (This method can be easily extended in order to cover the quantificational calculus by including the number of predicates and quantifiers)

. For each such subset, we generate a three-dimensional matrix and exhaust it diagonally; thus, each formula is generated after a finite number of steps.

The formalisation of that intuition can be defined as follows. Let $P = \{ p_1, p_2, p_3, \dots \}$ be an infinite set of atomic propositions and let us order the elements of P , so that $p_i < p_j \Leftrightarrow i < j$. For each $i, j = 1, 2, 3, \dots$ define $A(i, j) = \{ X \subset P : (X) = i \wedge \max(X) = p_j \}$, where $\max(X)$ is the largest element in X , $A(i, j)$ is the set of i -element sets of atomic propositions, such that the largest proposition in each of these sets is j . For example, $A(2, 3) = \{ \{ p_1, p_3 \}, \{ p_2, p_3 \} \}$. The following algorithm generates all propositions. Notice that the algorithm will never end, but each proposition will be generated in a finite number of steps. This is because the set of all (finite) propositions composed of infinite but countable sets of atomic propositions is recursively enumerable.

1. For each $j = 1, 2, 3, \dots$ do
2. For each $i = 1, 2, \dots, j$ do
3. For each $X \in A(i, j-i+1)$ do
4. Generate all propositions for the set of atomic propositions X using the S-operation

We will demonstrate that the procedure is correct; that is, it will generate each possible proposition in a finite number of steps. First, notice that for a given X of size i , there is a finite number 2^{2^i} of propositions generated in step 4; therefore, step 4 will end in a finite number of steps for every i and j . Let p be a proposition built with the elementary propositions $p_{i_1}, p_{i_2}, \dots, p_{i_k}$ and let $i_k > i_m$ for $m = 1, \dots, k - 1$. The set $X = \{ p_{i_1}, \dots, p_{i_k} \}$ belongs to $A(k, i_k)$. This set will be considered in step 3 of the algorithm in the k -th iteration of the main loop (step 1) and, within this iteration, in i_k -th iteration of the inner loop in line 2. Since we have observed that step 4 is always finite, the processing of $A(k, i_k)$ will conclude after a finite number of steps.

The procedure described above is symbolically presented in the figure below.

$i \downarrow j \rightarrow$	1	2	3	...
1	$A(1, 1)$	$A(1, 2)$	$A(1, 3)$...
2	$A(2, 1)$	$A(2, 2)$	$A(2, 3)$...
3	$A(3, 1)$	$A(3, 2)$	$A(3, 3)$...
...

The arrows present the sequence of processing the consecutive sets $A(i, j)$. Each cell in the table corresponds to some finite set X of atomic propositions. The S-operation, based on this set, generates the (finite) set of all propositions built with the atomic propositions from X .

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Philosophy as *Sprachkritik*. The Palimpsest of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*.

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Abstract

In his logical-philosophical treatise published in 1921, Ludwig Wittgenstein defined “all philosophy” as *Sprachkritik*, “but not in the sense of Mauthner” (TLP 4.0031). This strange tribute to Fritz Mauthner (1849-1923) undoubtedly contributed to marginalise him as an illustrious and unknown outsider, even if Wittgenstein’s later philosophy, interpreted as a turn from logical language to ordinary language analysis, has been considered to be much in line with Mauthner’s semantic and pragmatic reflections on language as a human activity. This interpretation of a turn in Wittgenstein’s philosophy and the related presentation of Mauthner as a “precursor” of Wittgenstein’s late philosophy should be questioned. I suggest that the seemingly negative reference to Mauthner’s *Sprachkritik* in Wittgenstein’s definition of philosophy as language critique in the *Tractatus* is more complicated than it seems and that it represents a key to understanding the continuities in Wittgenstein’s conception of philosophy as critical activity and language analysis. Rather than merely identifying common motives of Mauthner and Wittgenstein, which are particularly significant in the latter’s posthumous *Philosophische Untersuchungen* (1953), the aim of this paper is to question, from the very text of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* and its subtext, what it means to define philosophy as critique of language, and what such a conception implies concerning the nature, method and purpose of philosophy as a unique kind of theoretical activity.

“*Alle Philosophie ist ‘Sprachkritik’. (Allerdings nicht im Sinne Mauthners.)*” Wittgenstein’s unexpected reference to Fritz Mauthner in the proposition 4.0031 of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* is an enigmatic hapax and contrasts, in its elusiveness, with the few names recurrently mentioned in the *Tractatus*, those of the logicians Frege, Russell and Whitehead. Mauthner’s name appears as a rebuttal, without any further clarification. Wittgenstein’s elliptical exclusion presupposes that there are different ways of understanding the critique of language, and that Mauthner’s understanding of it is marginal, perhaps even alien to philosophy. All philosophy is *Sprachkritik*, but is all *Sprachkritik* philosophy? To understand in what sense philosophy is, or should be, a language critique, Wittgenstein provides only one key, in the form of a non-clue: the name “Mauthner.” What does this name mean? How to explain the ambiguity of this citatory gesture, which both eludes and highlights Mauthner’s *Sprachkritik*?

Although crucial, Wittgenstein’s definition of philosophy as *Sprachkritik* and the negative reference to Mauthner have been relatively neglected in the

literature (see however Haller 1974; Bastianelli 2011; Nordmann 2013). Comparisons between Mauthner and Wittgenstein, based on doctrinal reconstructions of their respective epistemological positions, tend to oppose the two authors (Janik & Toulmin 1973; Gabriel 2013), or on the contrary to identify them, by emphasizing later developments of Wittgenstein's philosophy as analysis of ordinary language (Weiler 1958, 1970; Leinfellner 1969, 1995; Kampits 1990). Yet the very question of the unity and consistency of Wittgenstein's philosophy cannot be decided without questioning this puzzling reference in the frame of the *Tractatus* itself. I argue that Mauthner's *Sprachkritik*, as an immanent critique of language use, or its interpretation as an activity oscillating between the two poles of sceptics and mystics (Landauer 1903), constitutes an invisible or rather unspoken canvas of the *Tractatus*. I therefore propose to read the *Tractatus* from what it ostensibly excludes and try to determine what it shows, negatively. To read it from its end and reconstruct some steps of the ladder that Wittgenstein enjoins the reader to reject. Beyond the historical interest of this issue for Wittgenstein studies, the aim is to clarify both the meaning and the scope of a controversial mutation of philosophy into language analysis or linguistic philosophy.

The reference to Mauthner's *Sprachkritik* is intriguing in its very form. The compound *Sprachkritik*, put between quotation marks, is followed by an autonomous parenthesis, referring to Mauthner's concept and at the same time denying the reference: in inverted commas, the well-known or the so-called *Sprachkritik*; in parenthesis, and as a wink to the reader (*allerdings*), Mauthner's name and its outright rejection. In the polemical rubric "*Sprachkritik*" of his *Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, Mauthner presented his own language critique as a new philosophical discipline and mocked the academics of his time, who were ostensibly trying to distance themselves from him while at the same time adopting his concepts (W2: 442ff.). In the *Tractatus*, Mauthner's name is side-lined, but his concept of *Sprachkritik* maintained, in place of the more neutral expression "*Kritik der Sprache*." Assuming that Wittgenstein had a first-hand knowledge of Mauthner's writings, how should his split use of the term "*Sprachkritik*" be understood?

Mauthner's immanent concept and practice of *Sprachkritik* contrast with the prescriptive understanding of it, including the nationalist and conservative *Sprachkritik* aiming at linguistic purism, but also artificial and universal language projects, aiming at a more logical or standardized language (Roure 2019, 2022). Mauthner's *Sprachkritik* does not consist in improving language use or developing a meta-language, but in continuing to use the same language, both object and medium of his criticism, in a way that exposes the non-reflected, implicit meaning of conventional language use. *Sprachkritik* must be performed in and through language and supposes to find a way to "kill the bedbugs without killing the Pope" (B1: 2f.), to keep on using language, while defusing its dogmatic potential. Mauthner's philosophical *Sprachkritik* managed to do it through modes of irony and parody and can be read, stylistically, as a continuation of his literary criticism (Roure 2015). Lutz Danneberg's remark that literary "*Sprachskepsis*" does not usually lead to the silence of the writer can be applied to Mauthner's prolix work and its reception: "*Die gelegentlich als inkonsequent kritisierte, oftmals als Selbstwiderspruch begrüßte Fortsetzung des Schreibens muß weder ohne Folgerichtigkeit sein noch eine unbeabsichtigte Selbstwiderlegung darstellen.*" (Danneberg 1996: 1539).

The proposition 4.0031 identifies "all philosophy" with language critique, referring "in the same breath" (Weiler 1958: 83) to Mauthner's irrelevance and "Russell's merit" (Kremer 2012). If philosophy is language critique, but not in Mauthner's sense, then in what sense is it such? Moreover, how should we interpret the universal quantifier used there? Is philosophy as *Sprachkritik* what philosophy should be, a method that rejects as nonsensical the propositions of a pseudo-philosophy staying at the surface of language, as the reference to Russell and the "logical form" seems to suggest? But in that case, would the language of critical philosophy, based on a correct understanding of the logic of "our" language, also be nonsensical? Or is the definition only descriptive of what philosophy has ever been, a nonsensical language trying to say what can only be shown, and therefore distinct from Mauthner's conception of *Sprachkritik* understood as an immanent, self-reflexive criticism of philosophy?

In the architecture of the *Tractatus*, 4.0031 is the unique extension of 4.003, which qualifies "most of the propositions and questions written on

philosophical things” (*philosophische Dinge*) as nonsensical (*unsinnig*), i.e., neither true nor false; “Most questions and propositions of the philosophers result from the fact that we do not understand the logic of our language.” How can a proposition be nonsensical? Using Frege’s terminology, Wittgenstein identifies as nonsensical “metaphysical” propositions, that are logically well formed but possess no “sense” (*Sinn*), because their author omitted to provide certain signs with “reference” (*Bedeutung*) (TLP 6.53). The lack of reference, however not considered as a lack of attribution by the speaker, characterizes what Mauthner calls “pseudo-concepts” (*Scheinbegriffe*), which unlike the “real concepts” (*Realbegriffe*) are not abstracted from any reality. Mauthner writes that “many of our philosophical concepts” are *Scheinbegriffe*, i.e., “substantival concepts” deprived of any “adjectival” effects. The danger of these metaphysical concepts lies in their psychological power: they “do exist in the human language or thought, as representations, and as such they can motivate actions, which very often have led to murder and manslaughter (religion wars, witch-burning)” (W1, xcv).

Mauthner regards the idea of a projective relation of language to the world, conceived as a correspondence between the isolated word and the thing it names, as a “word superstition” (*Wortaberglaube*). Just because a word exists does not mean that something real must correspond to it (B1: 159). However, language always refers to the real world, but “metaphorically,” i.e. through the distorting filters of experience and memory. The most abstract concepts can always be reduced to something material. Considering the verb “*bedeuten*,” Mauthner refers the meaning of meaning to the action of indicating (*hinweisen*), suggesting by showing something (*durch Hindeutung etwas veranlassen*): “The pointing of a sign to a future event or to a hidden fact” (B1: 158). To mean something is to show it, but the meaning is constantly changing through discrete semantic shifts -from the observable to the unobservable, from the empirically ascertainable to the essence, from the act of showing to that of saying and naming. Originally deictic, language is essentially metaphorical, since words convey more meaning than what is meant or experienced; metaphors in that sense are not true or false in itself but tell something about our representations of the world (Roure 2013).

In 4.003, the quantifier “most” suggests that some of the propositions and questions of philosophers are not nonsensical. Does this mean that philosophy

contains apophantic statements and significant questions? If so, what would be their status and their relationship to the truths of science, and to logic? In the *Tractatus*, a proposition that has sense (*Sinn*) can be said true or false, since it relates to a possible *Sachverhalt*. In that sense, a significant proposition is “a picture of the reality” (TLP 4.06) or “a model of the reality as we think it is” (TLP 4.01). The “totality of true propositions is the total natural science [...]” (TLP 4.11) and true propositions, as well as hypothesis in natural science (e.g., the Darwinian theory), have “nothing to do with philosophy” (TLP 6.53 and 4.1122). Propositions of natural science are not the opposite of nonsensical proposition, but of tautologies or contradictions, which are “without sense” (*sinnlos*) since they are either always true or always false (TLP 4.461), expressing the modalities of the necessary and the impossible.

Philosophy “is not one of the natural sciences” (TLP 4.111) but an activity drawing the limit of “the disputable sphere of natural science” (TLP 4.113). How, then, should philosophy be situated in relation to the sphere it delimits, encompassing this sphere without being included in it? Is it as a demarcation from the outside that philosophical propositions are nonsensical, but perhaps useful, or temporarily true, in the process of doing philosophy? How should the nature of philosophy be understood, in regard to Wittgenstein’s assertion that the reader, who has understood him correctly, must eventually recognise the TLP’s propositions as nonsensical (*unsinnig*), after having “climbed out through them, on them, over them” to “see the world rightly” (TLP 6.54)? As an activity, philosophy shouldn’t assert propositions but keep to the descriptive task of clarification (TLP 4.112), which can be interpreted as a logical but also semantic analysis of science.

The Pyrrhonian ladder metaphor (Marek 1979) symbolises also in Mauthner’s *Beiträge* the performative paradox of the *Sprachkritik*. The first occurrence of this metaphor expresses the historicity of the empirical acts of speech (see the “mobile steps” by Bréal 1897: 199): the deactivation of the dogmatic character of language takes place as the writing proceeds, making the positivity of the content elusive and fugitive (B1: 1f.). The *Tractatus* deploys another sceptical strategy, by completing the construction and rejecting the whole scaffolding afterwards, mirroring Mauthner’s portrait of the philosopher-clown:

“Tragicomic would be the clown who climbed to the top of a free-standing ladder in the circus, and then tried to pull his ladder up to himself. He would share the fate of the philosophers and fall down.” (B3: 632f.)

The conception of philosophy as a self-reflexive activity with a therapeutic vocation (Mauthner compares the disease he calls “*Logismus*” to alcoholic dependence (B1: 43)), is sceptical in the sense of an epistemological attitude (*Skepsis*), not of scepticism (*Skeptizismus*) as philosophical doctrine (B3: 617, TLP 6.51). Mauthner’s position is that the language of natural science does not reflect a “demonstrable worldview” (*Weltanschauung*), but only temporary “pictures of the world” (*Weltbilder*). In his posthumous work on the *Drei Bilder der Welt*, we read that mystic (*Mystik*), “if it does not prefer to remain silent, still talks about gods, spirits, forces and things, but it knows that gods like things have only a symbolic being, are only in human thought or in language;” The mystical is also an attitude, a feeling toward the world, unlike metaphysics or ontology, in which the “things of thought” (*Gedankendinge*) are “like auxiliary terms of mathematics,” that “must disappear if the result of the calculation is to have any sense” (DBW: 77f.). Ontology is “an obsolete term that encompasses all sterile disputes about the reality of ideas, about essence [...], about being, in short, about the ineffable (*Unsagbare*),” but ontology is never mystical, it “always wants to be logic” (W2: 294).

If we go up another notch up in the architecture of the *Tractatus*, 4.003 and 4.0031 are embedded in a definition of the thought (*der Gedanke*) as “the significant (*sinnvoll*) proposition” (TLP 4). They are preceded by two fragments conceptualizing language, defining it as “totality of propositions” (4.001) and describing the relations between language and thought as those between the “clothes” and the “form of the body” (4.002). Wittgenstein considers “human languages” as well as “colloquial” or “everyday language” (*Umgangssprache*), which is, as a “part of the human organism,” complicated and not restricted to the logical propositional language: “The silent adjustments to understand colloquial language are enormously complicated.” The same fragment defines language as “the clothing of the thoughts,” a definition that echoes Russell’s distinction between the real and apparent logical form of a proposition (4.0031) and suggests a distinction between logical and human languages. However, as humans, we cannot express the logical form: “Propositions cannot represent the logical form: this mirrors itself in the propositions.” (TLP 4.12).

The “logic of language” (*Sprachlogik*) is “humanly impossible (*menschenunmöglich*) to gather immediately” from the colloquial language, and it is precisely through a misunderstanding of the “logic of our language,” i.e., human language, that Wittgenstein explains nonsense.

Human language, however, does not require logical reform or improvement. Everyday language is “logically completely in order” (TLP 5.5563). Mauthner also considers that language works well as medium of communication (*Verständigungsmittel*), despite all ambiguities (B3: 240, see TLP 3.323), because language uses are always involved in an intersubjective situation of speech (*Gemeinsamkeit der Seelensituation*) and are never restricted to the logical propositional language. Mauthner ironizes the fact that “only philosophers of language suffer from the deficiency of languages,” so that the “healing of grammar is not such an urgent task as, say, a good workers’ legislation” (Mauthner 1906: 36). These remarks highlight the non-corrective and non-reductionist dimension of *Sprachkritik*, including in the *Tractatus*.

The aim of the *Tractatus* is defined in its preface as follows: to “draw a limit to thinking, or rather not to thinking, but to the expression of thoughts; for, to draw a limit to thinking we should have to be able to think both sides of this limit (we should therefore have to be able to think what cannot be thought). The limit can, therefore, only be drawn in language and what lies on the other side of the limit will be simply nonsense.” This is the aim of philosophy itself which, according to 4.114, “should delimit the thinkable (*das Denkbare*) and thus the unthinkable (*das Undenkbare*). It should limit the unthinkable from the inside through the thinkable.” The aim of philosophy is therefore to signify the unspeakable (*das Unsagbare bedeuten*) by clearly showing what can be said (TLP 4.115).

In a similar way, Mauthner links his conception of philosophy to the limit of what can be said or thought, identifying both activities: “*Denken ist Sprechen [...] Philosophie ist die Grenze der Sprache selbst, der Grenzbegriff, der limes: ist Kritik der Sprache, der Menschensprache. In Engelszunge können wir nicht reden.*” (B3: x). Through his definition of philosophy as *Grenzbegriff*, he inscribes in the tradition of Locke and Kant, rejects explicitly a position of exteriority and overhang. Language critique is a human activity like any language: “we cannot speak with the tongues of angels.” Mauthner’s definition

of philosophy as a limit aims to show the “senselessness” (*Unsinn*) of a *Sprachkritik* that would misunderstand, either by praising or denigrating it, the human nature of our language and therefore the human, “hoministic” character of our philosophies and “pictures of the world.”

These considerations on proposition 4.0031 show that the usual interpretation of it as a criticism or as a disdainful rejection of Mauthner's *Sprachkritik* is not self-evident and deserves to be re-examined on the basis of a rigorous reading of the *Tractatus* itself and a discussion of the difficulties and potentialities that the text presents. What is at stake here is not a question of precedence in the chronology of the history of ideas, nor of a confrontation between two authors whose approaches and places of discourse production are totally different. The point is rather to make the comparison productive by questioning the redefinition of philosophy as critical analysis of language: what conception of language, what conception of critique? It is generally considered that in his later works, Wittgenstein rectified the point of view adopted in the *Tractatus*, moving from the “crystalline purity” of logic to the “rough ground” of “everyday language,” what allowed Elisabeth Leinfellner to argue that Wittgenstein's critique of language ends up being “in Mauthner's sense.” If Wittgenstein's concept of a logical world-picture gives way in his later work to the idea that logic is a “*Luftschloss*” lacking something essential, i.e., a theory of the meaning of language use, this can be read in continuity with what the *Tractatus* shows without affirmatively expressing, and as an attempt to refute from within a dogmatic understanding of language critique.

Taking seriously the dialogue between Mauthner and the young Wittgenstein also has a historical dimension that remains to be investigated. Mauthner's definition of philosophy as activity at the limit of language and the associated *topos* of nonsense appeared in the preface to the second edition of the third volume of the *Beiträge* on grammar and logic, dated 1913 -the year in which Wittgenstein decided to leave Cambridge and started working on the *Tractatus*. Mauthner mentions there again the negative reception of his *Sprachkritik* among scholars, with few exceptions including Ernst Mach. In this context, he recounts his discussions with a “young philosopher” he met in 1907 -the year Wittgenstein was studying in Berlin-, who was enthusiastic about his critique

of language and developed the plan to write a doctoral thesis on it. The young philosopher, Mauthner tells, visited him later in Freiburg and asked him to formulate the “guiding principles” (*leitende Gedanken*) of the *Sprachkritik* in a few words. Mauthner “warned” the apprentice philosopher that, if he were not an “enemy of all -isms,” he could have called his doctrine “*Hominismus*,” to avoid the anthropolatry associated in his view to the term used by F.C.S. Schiller as the “catchword of Anglo-American pragmatism,” *Humanismus*. The young philosopher, Mauthner writes, was “in a hurry to make up his mind and told me, he wanted to heed my warning and disavow (*verleugnen*) me in his doctoral dissertation, but instead write soon another book entitled ‘From Humanism to *Sprachkritik*.’ I had a hard time getting the ambitious philosopher to promise that he would not write this nonsensical book either.” That Mauthner may allude to Wittgenstein in this humorously malicious anecdote is a conjecture worthy of investigation. Yet Mauthner’s portrait of this young philosopher is striking, and it reminds us that it is at least possible to read the *Tractatus* as a subtle response to Mauthner’s warning on the nonsense of a doctrinal system of *Sprachkritik*, which would neglect the human nature of our language world-pictures.

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Deep Rules: Remarks on Waxman's Psychologism

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Abstract

This paper focuses on two major issues discussed in Wayne Waxman's *A Guide to Kant's Psychologism: via Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Wittgenstein*: (1) the "I think" as the core of logical meaning, and (2) the distinction between human understanding and non-human animal varieties of understanding. These topics are related to Waxman's claim that Kant's critical philosophy should be viewed (via Wittgenstein) as an a priori form of psychologism rather than as opposing Hume's psychologism. I seek to explore the implications of these issues for Waxman's claim that they allow for some degree of psychologism. However, the kind of psychologism that I acknowledge is very different from the kind of psychologism that Waxman has in mind when speaking of a priori psychologism. This suggests that at least pure general logic is, in Kant's view, free from psychologism.

In his book *A Guide to Kant's Psychologism: via Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Wittgenstein* (2019), Wayne Waxman claims provocatively that Kant's critical project is an extreme version of psychologism insofar as it includes logic and mathematics in its scope. Waxman states that the laws of thought are generated by social convention. He asserts that "the only logical universality ever present to consciousness is the one inherent in the representation 'I think' so that everything else universal in it is so only because it incorporates pure intellectual self-consciousness into its representation" (Waxman 2019, 148-149). According to Waxman, we need to admit that a psychological element—the "I think"—is the basis for explaining logical universality. If we could have knowledge of logical rules independently of consciousness, they would be distinct from those acts of thought. Waxman's book is well-argued and has some allies in the literature. For example, Patricia Kitcher's *Kant's Transcendental Psychology* (1990) and Andrew Brook's *Kant and the Mind* (1994) seem to point in a similar direction. However, Waxman's argument fails to take seriously Kant's commitment to a distinction between pure and applied logic. In this paper, I shall focus on two topics that are directly relevant to Waxman's main thesis and how these topics could be responded to, drawing on some of Wittgenstein's findings. They relate to the "I think" as the core of logical meaning and to the distinction between human understanding and non-human varieties of understanding.

First, the original synthetic unity of apperception is not something that can be examined using the methods of empirical psychology. Although Kant tells us

that the “I think” is associated with all our representations (KrV B 132), he also claims that psychological principles should be excluded from pure logic. Kant was clearly opposed to psychologism in logic. As he writes:

Some logicians, to be sure, do presuppose psychological principles in logic. But to bring such principles into logic is just as absurd as to derive morals from life. If we were to take principles from psychology, i.e., from observations concerning our understanding, we would merely see how thinking does take place and how it is under various subjective obstacles and conditions; this would lead then to cognition of merely contingent laws. In logic, however, the question is not about contingent but about necessary rules; not how we do think, but how we ought to think. The rules of logic must thus be derived not from the contingent but from the necessary use of the understanding, which one finds in oneself apart from all psychology. (Log 9: 14)

Kant claims that pure logic concerns how we ought to think. He makes pure general logic coincident with grammar. As he writes:

Logic is related to the whole use of the understanding just as *grammatica* is to a language. (V-Lo/Blomberg 24: 24)

Kant also states that pure logic should be independent of any empirical facts about the mind:

[A]ll psychological observations must be excluded from (pure) logic. (V-Lo/Dohna 24: 693)

Pure general logic deals with the rules of thought, while applied general logic deals with the content of thought. As Kant writes in the first *Critique*:

Now general logic is either pure or applied logic. In the former we abstract from all empirical conditions under which our understanding is exercised, e.g., from the influence of the senses, from the play of imagination, the laws of memory, the power of habit, inclination, etc., hence also from the sources of prejudice, indeed in general from all causes from which certain cognitions arise or may be supposed to arise, because these merely concern the understanding under certain circumstances of its application, and experience is required in order to know these. A general but pure

logic therefore has to do with strictly *a priori* principles, and is a canon of the understanding and reason, but only in regard to what is formal in their use, be the content what it may (empirical or transcendental). (KrV A 53/B 77)

Likewise, pure general logic is analytic and does not increase our knowledge (KrV A 60/B 85, A 151/B 191). To see that pure general logic is analytic, notice that it is valid even when our thoughts are not connected to intuitions. We still have rigorous logical reasoning even when our thoughts do not afford us any knowledge (KrV A 262-63/B 318-319). This means that we must have some intrinsic access to pure general logic despite our individual experience; it must be available to guide our reasoning. To come to know the “I think”, we need to have prior logical capacities. Applied general logic has psychological principles. However, this is “neither a canon of the understanding in general nor an organon of particular sciences, merely a cathartic of the common understanding” (KrV B 78). We should keep in mind that Kant considers that applied general logic should not be referred to as logic:

Applied logic really ought not to be called logic. It is a psychology in which we consider how things customarily go on in our thought, not how they ought to go on. (Log 9: 18)

Second, Waxman builds his argument on the basis of Wittgenstein's later philosophy. This is questionable because we would have to assume that the early and the later Wittgenstein are radically opposed. There is no doubt that many aspects of his later philosophy differ from the *Tractatus*. However, as John Koethe points out, “it does not follow that the relation between the earlier outlook and the later is one of diametric opposition” (Koethe, 2018, p. 1). Despite some important changes, Wittgenstein's later philosophy can be seen as a continuity of his earlier philosophy rather than a radical departure from it. The *Philosophical Investigations* are supposed to clarify the logical grammar of our language by showing the limits of sense and nonsense in the use of sentences. The concept of “depth grammar” can be found there. As Wittgenstein writes:

In the use of words, one might distinguish ‘surface grammar’ from ‘depth grammar’. What immediately impresses itself upon us about the use of a

word is the way it is used in the sentence structure, the part of its use—one might say—that can be taken in by the ear. — And now compare the depth grammar, say of the verb “to mean”, with what its surface grammar would lead us to presume. No wonder one finds it difficult to know one’s way about. (PU 2009, I, 664).

The “depth grammar” can be understood as limiting the boundaries of sense. This is not so distant as it may seem from Wittgenstein’s views on logic in the *Tractatus*. Indeed, there is a continuity in his thought about what makes a proposition meaningful. This argument can be developed by tracing Wittgenstein’s thesis that every meaningful expression has a logical structure but that logic itself cannot be represented:

Propositions can represent the whole reality, but they cannot represent what they must have in common with reality in order to be able to represent it—the logical form.

To be able to represent logical form, we should have to be able to put ourselves with the proposition outside logic, that is outside the world. (TLP 4.12)

Wittgenstein did not believe in the possibility of propositions about logical form because they would require us to transcend the language we use to express them. As he writes:

What every picture, of whatever form, must have in common with reality in order to be able to represent it at all—rightly or falsely—is the logical form, that is, the form of reality. (TLP 2.18)

Logical form is fundamental to Wittgenstein’s early philosophy. In speaking of logical form, we are referring to a single form that must be present in all propositions (TLP 2.18, 2.181, 3.032, 4.12, 4.121, 5.47, 5.511, 6.124). As he puts it:

To the proposition belongs everything which belongs to the projection; but not what is projected.

Therefore the possibility of what is projected but not this itself.

In the proposition, therefore, its sense is not yet contained, but the possibility of expressing it.

("The content of the proposition" means the content of the significant proposition.)

In the proposition the form of its sense is contained, but not its content. (TLP 3.13)

Wittgenstein also tells us that logic precedes experience:

The "experience" which we need to understand logic is not that such and such is the case, but that something *is*; but that is *no* experience.

Logic *precedes* every experience—that something *is* so.

It is before the How, not before the What. (TLP 5.552)

He claimed that the propositions of logic are already given (TLP 6.124). So, it seems that Wittgenstein assumed that logic is innate. As he says:

Hence there can *never* be surprises in logic. (TLP 6.1251)

Kant and Wittgenstein both argue that logical form is self-consistent. As Kant writes:

Formal truth consists merely in the agreement of cognition with itself, in complete abstraction from all objects whatsoever and from all differences among them. (Log 9: 51)

He tells us that the formal criteria of truth in logic are the principle of contradiction and the principle of sufficient reason (Log 9: 51). These principles are true in an empty domain. Kant states:

By virtue of the fact that in immediate inferences only the form of judgments is altered and not in any way the matter, these inferences differ essentially from all mediate inferences, in which the judgments are distinct as to matter too, since here a new concept must be added as mediating judgment or as middle concept (*terminus medius*) in order to deduce the one judgment from the other. (Log 9: 115)

Given this textual evidence, it makes more sense to say that logic is not dependent on psychological principles. Immediate inferences only involve the form of judgments. It does not necessarily follow from the fact that most of our

inferences involve psychological elements that our capacity to infer began from nothing. Waxman, however, argues that we did start out with nothing. He maintains that the conditions of formal truth are given by the psychological capacities we acquire via social convention. Waxman does not regard pure general logical innatism as a valid solution because it is difficult for him to understand how the capacity for such representations could have evolved from minds without this capacity. As he writes:

Innatism, again, is not an option. Aside from the absence of evidence, there remains the question of how the capacity for such representation can plausibly be supposed to have evolved from minds that lacked it. (Waxman 2019, 143)

I have argued elsewhere (Salgueiro 2020) that even though Waxman is a proponent of phylogeny, it is difficult to see why he takes this position. If the phylogenetic tree derives from beings as elemental as bacteria, then obviously evolution can, logically, explain such a possibility. The oldest known fossil, the stromatolite, dates to about 3.7 billion years ago. With evolution, the functions of living beings have become more complex. By providing a progressive view of the complexity of living beings throughout evolution, phylogeny allows us not only to study the nervous system but also to inquire into consciousness. In this sense, it also allows for the establishment of bridges between our human understanding and non-human varieties of understanding. Hence, when Waxman resorts to Wittgenstein's claim that "[i]f a lion could talk, we wouldn't be able to understand it" (PU 2009, II, 327), he overlooks the fact that there are phylogenetic bridges between different species that allow for interspecific understanding. So, besides the existence of a physicalist part of our consciousness and a part acquired by convention, which corresponds to certain rules, it is possible that there is another part that consists of deep rules from which surface rules can be built. If these deep rules exist, they will be strictly pure. Waxman rejects this and resorts to Wittgenstein's comparison of language to a city in *Philosophical Investigations* (PU 2009, I, 18) to substantiate his position:

Nor is there any equivalent in psychological representation to the land cities require—land of the appropriate sort for building cities atop—or its linguistic analogue: the wider social infrastructure and species-wide

lifeways on which human conventions generally and linguistic conventions more particularly wholly depend. Instead, the representing subject has to produce the underlying land for its structures—the understanding that supports them—along with the structures themselves. This is just to say that psychologically generated representations have only so much and no more meaning or structure than the subject doing the representing puts into them: they connect up with others only insofar as the subject produces a connection between them, have complexity only insofar as the subject synthesizes them from simpler ingredients, and combine to form unities only insofar as the subject fashions a unity from them. (Waxman 2019, 133)

I do not reject Wittgenstein's analogy. However, the view that all structures in language are entirely created by human minds constitutes an extreme case of anthropocentrism, in my view, and is thus difficult to support. I also think this was not Wittgenstein's understanding. Proof of this is the idea of “hinge propositions”, as expressed in *On Certainty* (ÜG 341, 343, 655).

However, we are unable to establish that logical innatism is true; its possibility is as valid as its impossibility. Whether we are looking at things from a sceptical or a naive perspective, it is important to avoid coming to any sort of dogmatic conclusion. Waxman cannot reduce Kant's entire critical project to psychologism. The truth is that Kant considered that critical investigation aims to draw the boundaries of what can be known and what cannot be known (KrV A 758/B 786). Critical analysis cannot rely on empirical sources alone. In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant seeks a kind of knowledge—a priori—that is not changeable, unlike what psychologism argues. He viewed the metaepistemological results of the first *Critique* as negative but unassailable. Any changes that have occurred and will occur in our understanding, for example the introduction of imaginary numbers and new grammatical rules, are in fact changes within a system that Kant viewed as attached to a given, innate depth. In the future, there may be other beings superior to us, with enhanced cognitive capacities, as Waxman claims, but these beings will be others. As human beings, we have a natural evolutionary history (early Homo, Australopithecus, hominoids, cetaceans, therapods, etc.) and specific genetic characteristics in which the existence of deep logical rules allows us to establish new synthetic a priori constructions, such as classifying numbers as

natural, whole, rational, irrational or integers. It is only on the basis of these pure, deep rules that we can create models of knowing. Thus, Kant's critical project rests on a peculiar sceptical method, one that must not be led astray by Hume's sceptical psychologism, as Waxman claims, insofar as scepticism, in Kant's words, "rest[s] only on facta, which are contingent, but not on principles that could effect a necessary renunciation of the right to dogmatic assertions" (KrV A 767/B 795). There is a Kantian distinction between empirical facts and the transcendental conditions of those facts. Facts of reason are not the very limits of pure reason alone.

In conclusion, it is clear that at least pure general logic is beyond the scope of psychologism. Indeed, if we regard logical rules as valid even when we are thinking without intuitions, we ought to assume that they cannot be generated by social convention. I suppose that in responding to Waxman's arguments, Wittgenstein would emphasize this, teaching us that every meaningful expression has a logical structure but that logic itself cannot be represented. Pure general logic is not contingent on the psychological states of individual thinkers. Instead, pure general logic is the basis of universal and necessary truths. Even though psychologism deserves our attention, pure deep rules cannot be reduced to psychologism.

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Acknowledgement

This paper was prepared with the support of the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT), grant number 2020.05875.BD.

Tractatus 6.43: An Interpretation in the Light of Tagore's *The King of the Dark Chamber*

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Abstract

One finds ample evidence in the biographical literature of Wittgenstein that feeling of moral imperfections and loneliness runs through his early career. This is why the question of the willing subject, the meaning and transformation of life and world remains important throughout this period. But the problem lies in fragmentary, dense and cryptic writings of Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus*, where the discussion of the willing subject is confined to only one and a half page and a few entries in *Notebooks 1914-16*. Of these remarks, *Tractatus 6.43* poses a special enigma to the commentators. In this paper I intend to offer an interpretation of these remarks through the lens of the ideas of the play *The king of the dark chamber* authored by Rabindranath Tagore, Wittgenstein's favorite. In order to attain this objective I would like to divide the chapter in three sections. In the first section, I would like to refer to the controversies involved in various interpretations of T6.43 and related remarks on the willing subject and of the transformation of the world. In the second section I will discuss the theme of 'the king of the dark chamber' along with Tagore's interpretation. In the final section I would like to claim that more sense can be made of Wittgenstein's controversial remarks about the willing subject and of the transformation of the world, if we juxtapose them with thoughts of Tagore in these matters.

One finds ample evidence in the biographical literature of Wittgenstein that feeling of moral imperfections and loneliness runs through his early career. This is why the question of the willing subject, the meaning and transformation of life and world remains important throughout this period. But the problem lies in fragmentary, dense and cryptic writings of Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus*, where the discussion of the willing subject is confined to only one and a half page and a few entries in *Notebooks 1914-16*. Of these remarks, *Tractatus 6.43* poses a special enigma to the commentators.

In this paper I intend to offer an interpretation of these remarks through the lens of the ideas of the play *The king of the dark chamber* authored by Rabindranath Tagore, Wittgenstein's favorite. In order to attain this objective I would like to divide the chapter in three sections. In the first section, I would like to refer to the controversies involved in various interpretations of T6.43 and related remarks on the willing subject and of the transformation of the world. In the second section I will discuss the theme of 'the king of the dark chamber' along with Tagore's interpretation. In the final section I would like

to claim that more sense can be made of Wittgenstein's controversial remarks about the willing subject and of the transformation of the world, if we juxtapose them with thoughts of Tagore in these matters.

I

If good or bad willing changes the world, it can only change the limits of the world, not the facts; not the things that can be expressed in language.

In brief, the world must thereby become quite another, it must so to speak wax or wane as a whole. The world of the happy is quite another than that of the unhappy. (Wittgenstein, 1921, T6.43)

This passage is controversial for it talks about too many important things with loose ends such as good or evil willing, the limits of the world and changing the limits of the world, transformation of the evil world into good one and vice versa. Let us attempt to untie 'the knotted understanding' and tie the loose ends.

The paragraph suggests that willing, be it good or bad, could change the limits of the world and by changing the limits, one can change one's unhappy world into happy one and vice versa. But contrary to this he has declared earlier "The world is independent of my will." T6.373. This is consistent with an entry in the *Notebooks 1914-16*: "I cannot bend the happenings of the world to my will: I am completely powerless." (Wittgenstein 1961, 73). Hence the problem is: how can something which is completely powerless and not connected with the world could bring about transformation and change in the limits of the world? Again, *Tractatus* paragraph T5.631 makes things more complicated

There is no such thing as the subject that thinks or entertains ideas.

If I wrote a book called *The World as I found it*, I should have to include a report on my body, and should have to say which parts were subordinate to my will, which were not, etc., this being a method of isolating the subject, or rather of showing that in an important sense there is no subject; for it alone could *not* be mentioned in that book. (Wittgenstein 1922, T5.631)

He clearly states here that there is no such thing as thinking subject. But what is not clear is the status of the willing subject. He admits that “ it is undeniable that in a popular sense there are things that I do, and other things not done by me.(Wittgenstein 1961,88)”

But why did he say that in an important sense, there is no subject? Did he talk about the willing subject here? Is it identical or different from the thinking subject? Is it identical with the metaphysical subject (Wittgenstein 1922,T5.633),which exists also as the limit of the world? If one intends to understand the relationship between the metaphysical subject and the willing subject, one will have to understand the basic characteristic features of the subject. Chon Tejedor has argued against the transcendentalists view that the willing subject and the metaphysical subject are the same and she opines that Wittgenstein has discarded the notion of willing subject in 1916 even before writing the *Tractatus* and she thinks that the willing subject is not identical with the metaphysical subject (Tejedor 2013,62). Jordi Fairhurst (Fairhurst 2019,75-95) has justifiably argued against Tejedor and the transcendentalists account of willing subject by setting forth an alternative reading, which conceives of the metaphysical subject as an ethical subject , without subscribing to the main thesis defended by the Transcendental Reading.

However, this is not the end of all controversy. In another paragraph, Wittgenstein declares:

My will penetrates the world. (Wittgenstein 1961, 73).

The will is an attitude of the subject to the world. The subject is the willing subject. (Wittgenstein 1961, 86).

How to interpret these passages? It seems that Wittgenstein is proposing two different kinds of will, phenomenological and ethical in the *Notebooks 1914-16*. Ethical will is the bearer of good and evil. This distinction follows from the Tractarian distinction between fact and value. Phenomenological will belongs to the fact of psychology which can explain the volition as a fact in our everyday life; whereas ethical will is not in the world but the limit of the world. In accordance with the Tractarian theory of meaning and sayability, one can talk about the phenomenological will which is part of the world but not about the willing/ethical subject, the bearer of good and evil. For

Wittgenstein, good life is happy life and harmony is the criterion of happy life (Wittgenstein,(1961) p.78). The question is: how can we secure such good/happy life?Wittgenstein states that man can be happy only ' 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. ." (Wittgenstein 1961, 81). Wittgenstein's biographers tell us how Wittgenstein himself lived such happy life by renouncing the amenities of the world. It is through the attitude of renunciation, one can change the unhappy world to a happy one. If one could acquire this attitude then worldly state of affairs like not fulfilling one's desires will not ultimately affect him.

However, the above remarks fail to clarify how good will specifically could bring about changes in the limit of the world and make it happy. How is it consistent with renunciation? Isn't Wittgenstein being inconsistent here in stating that my will cannot affect or bring about changes in the facts of the world on the one hand and saying on the same breath that it alters the whole world for the subject by altering the limits of the world on the other?.

Here I would propose an interpretation by taking recourse to Wittgenstein's favorite play "*The king of the dark chamber*".

II

The King of the Dark Chamber(*Rājā*) is a metaphoric spiritual play by Rabindranath Tagore which was published in Nov, 1910. Wittgenstein had first read the play in German translation in 1921, when Tagore was enormously popular in Europe, particularly in Germany and Austria. While reading the English version,Wittgenstein had a feeling that the translation is inadequate to capture the deeper significance of the play. Because of this, he along with Yorick Smythies attempted another translation,where they changed 'old fashioned or stilted formulations by idiomatic equivalents'. . (Munz and Ritter,2017,325-326)

The play revolves round the relationship between a mysterious invisible king and his proud wife .His reticence towards being seen causes most of the drama centering round his queen. Queen was eager to meet her king and desires to

see him in daylight whereas the king so far has met her only in a dark chamber. The king warns her about the capriciousness of sensuality and says that she will not be able to bear his sight if he reveals himself in light, in outside world.. Queen *Sudarshana* thought that she will be able to recognise the king in broad daylight during spring festival. But she failed ---a huge catastrophe occurred for her failure. She had to go through utter despair, pain and humiliation and then finally her king showed himself only after she had cast her pride and prejudices away . Complete surrender allows her to see the king, to realize him in everything

Tagore clarifies:

She (Queen *Sudarshana*) surrendered herself in her mind to *Suvarna* on seeing his beauty. Then--- how a fire started on all sides of her; how a battle over her ensued among a group of many false external kings */rājās* as soon as she left the *rājā* internal; how her introduction to her own *Rājā* occurred in the midst of that conflagration; how her vanity was destroyed by the shock of sorrow; and eventually how after accepting defeat, leaving the palace, standing in the street, she gained the company of that Lord of hers. The Lord who can be perceived in all lands, in all times, in all forms, in the blissful rasa of one's own interior; ---- all that has been narrated in this play. (Lal Ananda 1987,269)

In accordance with the narration of Tagore, I would rather like to interpret T6.43 and other entries in the *Notebooks1914-16* in the next section

III

The play centers round the transformation of queen *Sudarshanā* who at the beginning of the play was proud of her intelligence and of her love for the king .The queen represents a finite individual in the domain of facts, which can be expressed in sensible words. This is why we can feel the agony of queen *Sudarshana*, her urge to see the king in broad daylight, not in the dark chamber; but the king represents the infinite, the unbounded, which belongs to the domain of the inexpressible.. In a sense the play is based on the relationship of the sensible and the non sense, of fact and truth . This is most evident in the assurance of the king,when he says:.

King: Your own mirror will not reflect them. It lessens you, limits you, and makes you look small and insignificant. But could you see yourself mirrored in my own mind. How grand would you appear! In my own heart you are no longer the daily individual who you think you are—you are verily my second self. (Tagore,1961,53)

The remarks of the king are significant. He represents the queen as his second self who somehow gets lessened, limited in her smallness and insignificance in the factual world. But what does he mean by "the second self"? How could the queen see herself mirrored in King's mind? It seems here we run against the boundaries of sensible language . And Wittgenstein even in 1938 had reverence for that which lies beyond the limits of language.He writes 'Human beings have a drive to run up against the boundaries of language'(Wittgenstein 1965,11-12)

Now the question is: when will the queen realize that she is king's second self? The answer seems to be: she will have this realization only when she changes her attitude to the world, that is, when one casts one's own pride, gets over one's infatuation with material wealth and amenities, beauty and surrenders unconditionally to the Supreme with love and trust. Such changes in one's attitude bring transformation in oneself as well as the world s/he inhabits.'

Apropos to the distinction between the invisible king and queen *Sudarshanā*, his second self, one finds in Early Wittgenstein the distinction between the Metaphysical/willing subject/philosophical I as the bearer of ethical attributes and our ordinary notion of a psychological, thinking subject or self. He remarks:

The Philosophical I is not the human being, not the human body or the human soul with the psychological properties, but the metaphysical subject, the boundary,(not a part)of the world. The human body, however, my body in particular, is a part of the world among others, among animals' plants stones, etc.etc... (Wittgenstein 1961,82)

Here the concept of the ' philosophical I' / willing subject, seems to be personified in the character of the king in the play and our ordinary subject with lesser body and mind is represented by Queen *Sudarshanā*. Hence when the body, or mind or soul with psychological properties gets mirrored in the

boundary, the relationship between the two gets established. In T 6.531. Wittgenstein denies the thinking subject as an object of experience. He says: I 'confront every object in the world but not the "I". Similarly, one cannot experience the king in his kingdom.

As mentioned earlier, T6.43 states that good or evil willing alters the limit of the world and by altering the limits of the world, it can contribute to an altogether different world. But this is in contrast with the view that the ethical/metaphysical subject cannot bring about any change in the domain of facts. It is completely powerless against the happenings of the world. This gives rise to an apparent inconsistency.

In the play we see queen Sudarshana's phenomenological willing to see the king in broad daylight could not bring about any change in the external world. She mistakenly chose King Subarna as her king and fell into despair. But the matter did not end there. She had a longing to reach out beyond the boundedness of language and the world and be united with her king, which gets realized at the end. Early Wittgenstein is candid in representing such attempts to go beyond the boundary as "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". (Wittgenstein 1965, 11-12).

However queen Sudarshana could ultimately realize her longings to meet the king only by changing her attitude to the world, which transformed her unhappy world to a happy one. Hence by changing her attitude, she becomes ready to receive the king as he actually is in himself, he joins her in her dealings with the world. Certainly her world 'waxes and wanes as a whole' (T6.43) with changes of her inner world incorporated. That changes the boundary of the world, making an unhappy world into a happy one. This is not inconsistent with the fact that phenomenological willing didn't have any control over the happenings of the world. In fact, ethical willing is transcendental and it encompasses viewing sub specie aeterni (T6.45) that could transform one's world not by changing the facts, but by changing its boundaries.

For Wittgenstein, happy life is a harmonious life which can be had only by those who can renounce the amenities of life (Wittgenstein 1961, 81) and

transcend the limits of language and those of the world. One notices here how the queen has renounced the amenities of the factual world in order to realize herself as the second self of her king . Wittgenstein describes it as 'waxing and waning as a whole'..

The above analysis shows why it would be normal for Wittgenstein to be philosophically drawn to *The king of the dark chamber*. Also we find T6.43 along with other cryptic passages from the Notebooks 1914-16 making sense together in light of the ideas contained in the play that fascinated the philosopher.

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The *Tractatus* on Free Will: Interpreting TLP 5.1362

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Abstract

Whereas Wittgenstein's post-1929 considerations on the will have been subject to considerable attention, his (extremely condensed) treatment of freedom of the will in the *Tractatus* has been largely neglected. Recently, however, a few scholars have attempted to provide an exegesis of the relevant passages (most importantly TLP 5.1362) and have come to remarkably different conclusions. Their disagreement concerns both the purpose and the structure of the argument that is ascribed to Wittgenstein. In the following I will focus on Diego Marconi's recent presentation of the passage in "*Tractatus* 5.1362 (reloaded)" (2021), which is supposed to avoid an issue of intelligibility that arises in connection with traditional interpretations, such as Giovanni Mion's "*Tractatus* 5.1362" (2017). I will show that Marconi's proposal suffers from a problem analogous to the one he detects in the traditional reading. To drive home this point, I shall make use of a distinction between what I call *metaphysical* and *epistemic incompatibilism*. The main result will be that, their differences notwithstanding, the traditional and Marconi's alternative reconstructions of TLP 5.1362 share one crucial feature: in both cases, Wittgenstein's argument implicitly commits him to *metaphysical incompatibilism*, i.e., the view that freedom of the will is incompatible with determinism. Most importantly, all sides of the debate have failed to see that, by their own lights, Wittgenstein is so committed.

Wittgenstein's considerations on freedom of the will in the *Tractatus* have been neglected by most commentators. Recently, however, some scholars have set out to provide a thorough reconstruction of the argument contained in the key passages, prompted in part by Frascolla's quite heterodox presentation of it (Frascolla 2007). Surprisingly, they have come to remarkably different conclusions, disagreeing both on the purpose and on the structure of the argument they ascribe to Wittgenstein. In the following I shall focus on two of these contributions, namely, Giovanni Mion's traditional reading (Mion 2017) and Diego Marconi's alternative interpretation (Marconi 2021).

1. The Traditional Reading

The discussion on free will in the *Tractatus* is confined to this passage:

The freedom of the will consists in the impossibility of knowing [now] actions that still lie in the future. We could know them only if causality were an inner necessity like that of logical inference. – The connection between knowledge and what is known is that of logical necessity.

“A knows that p is the case”, has no sense if p is a tautology). (TLP 5.1362)

According to a traditional reading, here Wittgenstein is arguing for freedom of the will on the grounds that it is impossible to infer future events (including one’s own actions) from our knowledge of the present (Mion 2017). The argument goes like this:

- (A) We have free will *if and only if* we cannot predict our future actions.
- (B) If we could predict our future actions, then the causal nexus would be a necessary nexus.
- (C) The causal nexus is not a necessary nexus.

These three premises jointly entail that we have free will, although Wittgenstein doesn’t explicitly draw the conclusion. (A) and (B) correspond to the first and second sentence of TLP 5.1362 respectively, whereas (C) is supported by TLP 5.136, 5.1361. Hence, there is little doubt that the argument is consistent with the text. More contentious is its soundness. Against (B), for instance, it may be objected that one may know the future even though nothing one knows in the present *necessitates* something happening in the future: probabilistic considerations might be enough to warrant a knowledge claim. However, the author of the *Tractatus* would deny that such probabilistic predictions constitute knowledge: non-deductive patterns of inference may support reasonable belief in future events, but the only knowledge-preserving inferences are deductive ones. The upshot is a very restrictive conception of knowledge, which Wittgenstein explicitly accepts: “It is an hypothesis that the sun will rise tomorrow: and this means that we do not know whether it will rise” (TLP 6.36311). (C) also represents a contentious claim. However, it is a straightforward consequence of the following *Tractarian* commitments:

- (i) All necessity is logical necessity (cf. TLP 6.37)
- (ii) Future events are connected to present events causally, if at all.
- (iii) Future events are not logical consequences of present events (cf. TLP 5.1361).

Although it is not spelled out in the text, (ii) transpires from TLP 5.135 and 5.136, where Wittgenstein implicitly assumes that anyone who believes in the possibility of inferential knowledge of the future takes such inference to be based on causation.

What about (A)? The left-to-right direction of entailment is intuitively plausible, as its contrapositive reads “If we can predict our future actions, we have no free will”. To dispel possible misgivings, consider that if I know *now* that I will do X tomorrow, then, since knowledge is factive (“The connection between knowledge and what is known is that of logical necessity” TLP 5.1362), it follows that I will do X tomorrow. That is, regardless of how I act, nothing could change the course of events, my doing X tomorrow is predeterminate by present facts, and my will is not free (Frascolla 2007: 133). The right-to-left side of the biconditional (which occurs essentially in the argument above) is more objectionable. It reads: “If we cannot predict our future actions, we have free will”. Here one might raise the “standard objection” that “our epistemic shortcomings have no metaphysical import: the future may well be necessitated by the present, whether or not we know it is or how such determination goes” (Marconi 2021: 116). That is, determinism might well be true, and yet we might be in principle unable to know the mechanisms by which present facts necessitate the occurrence of future events.

Now, this objection finds a natural response within the text of the *Tractatus*. For, if “The only necessity that exists is *logical* necessity” (TLP 6.37), then either propositions about future events are logical consequences of propositions about present states of affairs or determinism is false (as there is no other form of necessity). However, Wittgenstein contended that the logical relations of entailment between two propositions can be shown in the structure of the propositions (TLP 5.13). That is, in the logically transparent notation of the *Tractatus*, the “inner connection becomes obvious” (TLP 5.1311). But then the very idea of knowing a proposition while being *in principle* unable to know what follows from it is incoherent. If a proposition about what I will do tomorrow followed logically from a proposition about what is the case right now, I could know the former by virtue of knowing the latter. In short, given the *Tractarian* dictum that all necessity is logical necessity, determinism is incompatible with the unpredictability of the future.

Here is where, according to Marconi, we encounter an exegetical problem. On the one hand, at this point in the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein has not made the reduction of necessity to logical necessity explicit. Yet such a reduction is crucial to the argument: without it, premise (A) encounters the standard

objection. On the other hand, with the reduction at one's disposal, a more straightforward argument for freedom of the will is at hand, one that does not require mention of epistemic notions. One could argue like this: "If all necessity is logical necessity, and future events are not logical consequences of present events, then the future is not necessitated by the present (i.e., determinism is false). And if future events are indeterminate, then *a fortiori* our actions are also not determined in advance, and our will is free". That is, a neater argument for freedom of the will would only require to assume the logical nature of necessity together with the lack of any logical entailment between present and future events (both these commitments are clearly spelt out in the *Tractatus*). Here talk of inference, ignorance and knowledge would be avoided as an unnecessary detour. According to Marconi, the availability in the *Tractatus* of this straightforward argument casts a doubt on the traditional reconstruction of TLP 5.1362.

2. Two Kinds of Incompatibilism

According to Marconi, the traditional account makes the argument *unintelligible* – meaning that it escapes understanding *why* Wittgenstein would argue in this way, why he would go "the epistemic way":

Why not just argue that there is freedom of the will because determinism is false, as there are no necessary connections whatsoever between present and future events (including our future actions)? Why insist that we cannot *infer* our future actions, rather than just claiming that the future is not determined by the present – period? (2021: 119)

Marconi believes that the intelligibility of the argument in TLP 5.1362 can be restored if we read the *incipit* (A) not as a premise but rather as the conclusion of Wittgenstein's argument. On this reading "Wittgenstein is not arguing for free will, but for the essential connection [...] between free will and ignorance - unpredictability - of future actions" (2021: 121).

Before considering Marconi's alternative reconstruction of the argument, it pays to distinguish two different incompatibility theses. I call *metaphysical incompatibilism* the thesis that freedom of the will is incompatible with determinism, as expressed by the biconditional:

(MI) We have free will if and only if the future is not necessitated by the present.

I distinguish this thesis from what I call *epistemic incompatibilism*, the view that freedom of the will is incompatible with the predictability of the future:

(EI) We have free will if and only if we cannot predict our future actions.

Since (EI) is just another label for (A), Marconi effectively reads TLP 5.1362 as an argument for *epistemic incompatibilism*.

3. Marconi's Alternative Reading

Marconi proposes to reconstruct Wittgenstein's argument semi-formally as follows (2021: 120):

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|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. If we could predict our future actions, there would be no freedom of the will. | Premise |
| 2. Suppose we cannot predict our future actions. | Hypothesis |
| 3. Suppose there is no freedom of the will. | Hypothesis |
| 4. Future actions are necessitated by present facts. | (3) |
| 5. All necessity is logical. | Premise |
| 6. Future actions are logical consequences of present facts. | (4), (5) |
| 7. Knowing present facts, it is possible to infer future actions. | (6) |
| 8. We can predict our future actions. | (7) |
| 9. We cannot predict our future actions. | (2), Reiteration |
| 10. There is freedom of the will. | (3)-(9), Reductio |
| 11. If we cannot predict our future actions, there is freedom of the will. | (2)-(10), Conditional introduction |
| 12. There is freedom of the will if and only if we cannot predict our future actions. | (1), (11), Biconditional |

introduction

The biconditional (EI) is deduced from premises (1) and (5). Premise (5) expresses Wittgenstein's logical conception of necessity. Premise (1) (predictability entails lack of free will) is equivalent to the left-to-right side of (EI) itself (free will entails unpredictability), which is taken to be intuitively plausible. Hence, the gist of the argument consists in establishing the other side of (EI) (unpredictability entails free will). We do so by assuming that we cannot predict our future actions (2), and that there is no free will (3). Then we argue from (3), via assumption (5), to the conclusion (8) that we *can* predict our future actions, thus contradicting assumption (2). Since (3) led us to a contradiction, we can discharge it and infer its negation: there is freedom of the will (10). And since (10) depends exclusively on (2) and (5) we can discharge the former and obtain the conditional in (11) (unpredictability entails free will). The last step just joins the two sides of the biconditional (EI).

There is one crucial thing that Marconi does not highlight, however. In the inference from (3) to (4), it is tacitly assumed that lack of free will entails determinism. This is equivalent to the right-to-left side of (MI) (indeterminism entails free will). With this third premise in place the argument is valid.

On this reading, Marconi claims, Wittgenstein's argument is made intelligible. Wittgenstein *had to* go the "epistemic way", for the conclusion he sought to establish, the biconditional (EI), is itself epistemic: it expresses a relation between freedom of the will and impossibility of predicting (knowing *now*) our future actions.

4. Problems with the Alternative Reading

My contention is that, just like an unanswered why-question (why does Wittgenstein go the epistemic way to prove freedom of the will?) tarred the traditional reconstruction of the argument, a similar issue affects the new version. We might ask: *why* did Wittgenstein find it sensible to prove the connection between the unpredictability of the future and free will? After all, we have seen in section 2 that the *Tractatus* has all the resources needed to prove freedom of the will via the rejection of determinism: why also bother proving the weaker point?

I think the most plausible suggestion is that Wittgenstein, in TLP 5.1362, seeks to establish a thesis (*epistemic incompatibilism*) which holds independently of any metaphysical commitment. Hence, even though Wittgenstein later explicitly rejected determinism (TLP 6.37), thereby admitting the existence of free will, the thesis established in TLP 5.1362 is a more general one, which can be maintained even if one doesn't share Wittgenstein's stronger claims. In that passage he is homing in on the point that, regardless of whether determinism holds, *all there is* to our will being free is that we cannot know the future. If this is what the argument proves, then it makes a genuine point: all it takes for our will to be free is that we cannot know our future actions, whether these are necessitated by the present or not.

Indeed, this is a natural reading of the *incipit* to 5.1362. To say that “The freedom of the will consists [*besteht*] in the impossibility of knowing [now] actions that still lie in the future”, suggests that, as long as we are necessarily ignorant of the future, then, *whether or not the future is determined*, the will is free. To use our labels, Wittgenstein would be arguing for *epistemic incompatibilism* while simultaneously leaving open the possibility of *metaphysical compatibilism* (i.e., we might have free will in a deterministic world).

However, this is precisely what the argument fails to do. It fails to prove *epistemic incompatibilism* without assuming *metaphysical incompatibilism* as well. For, as we shall see, in Marconi's reconstruction, (EI) is established by appealing to premises which jointly entail (MI).

This is not hard to prove. As I mentioned before, the right-to-left direction of (MI) (indeterminism entails free will) is implicitly assumed in the argument above. All we need to show, then, is that its converse (free will entails indeterminism) can be deduced by using the same resources of Marconi's argument. We do that by deducing its contrapositive, the claim that determinism entails lack of free will.

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 1. If we could predict our future actions, there would be no freedom of the will. | Premise |
| 2. All necessity is logical. | Premise |
| 3. Suppose future actions are necessitated by | Hypothesis |

- present facts.
4. Future actions are logical consequences of present facts. (2), (3)
 5. Knowing present facts, it is possible to infer future actions. (4)
 6. We can predict our future actions. (5)
 7. There is no freedom of the will. (1), (6), modus ponens
 8. If future actions are necessitated by present facts, there is no freedom of the will. (3)-(7), Conditional introduction

Here *metaphysical incompatibilism* is obtained without assuming any premise that wasn't already at play in the argument for *epistemic incompatibilism* (my premises (1) and (2) correspond to Marconi's premises (1) and (5)). This shows that TLP 5.1362 does not present an *independent* argument for the "essential connection" between unpredictability and free will, since anyone who accepts the premises of the argument is also committed to the incompatibility between determinism and free will.

5. Conclusion

To conclude, let me point out that the difficulty I have raised is not exclusive to Marconi's interpretation of TLP 5.1362. For even on the traditional reconstruction, Wittgenstein is read as presenting an argument for free will while taking no substantial stance on determinism. The idea is that "the freedom of the will consists merely in the fact that we cannot know, that is, logically infer, our own future actions" (Glock 1996: 387): "merely", that is, irrespective of any metaphysical commitment to determinism. Mion himself subscribes to this view when he writes: "for Wittgenstein, free will does not depend upon an indeterminate future, but upon the impossibility to logically infer the future from the past" (2017: 30). In the traditional picture, then, Wittgenstein is presented as a metaphysical compatibilist and epistemic incompatibilist. As I have shown, however, this is not a position that he can coherently hold, since the *Tractarian* grounds that support (EI) also commit their proponent to (MI).

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Acknowledgement

This publication was supported by the UZH Candoc Grant, grant no. FK-22-075.

Keeping Two and Two Apart – On the Fraud of Writing *About* Kierkegaard's or (Wittgenstein's) Writings

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Abstract

“But both authors claim not to be putting forward doctrines but rather to be engaging in a particular sort of activity. If they are to be taken at their word, therefore, it would seem that it is only in grasping why their texts have the particular shape that they do that we grasp what sort of enterprise it is which they take themselves to be engaged in. It is thus that we grasp what philosophy, as they practise it, is.” (Conant 1995, 250)

Conant wants to put “two and two together”. He aims to make explicit what he experiences as essential in reading the books of Kierkegaard and Wittgenstein. I think that by doing so he forgets Frege’s teaching that a concept, a form—in our case: an idea of philosophical practice—cannot be communicated directly, without rendering it into an object of speech (thus perverting the very idea he seeks to elaborate).

In his *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to Philosophical Fragments* (¹1846) the fictitious Johannes Climacus characterizes the subjective thinker as an artist in regard to how he communicates his thoughts. Being aware of the ‘double reflection’ essential to every thought that is not merely outward (judging stable things) but inward (reflecting one’s relation to oneself), the subjective thinker perceives “that a direct mode of communication is [both] a fraud practised upon himself, as if he had ceased to be an existing individual [i.e., in process of coming to be]; and [also] an attempt to defraud the recipient of the communication; a fraud which brings him into contradiction with his entire thought.”

Just as the subjective thinker has made himself free through the reduplication given his reflection, so the secret of all communication consists precisely in emancipating the recipient, and that for this reason he must not communicate directly. (Kierkegaard 1992, 68–69)

James Conant (1995) famously pointed out that this indirect mode of teaching, displayed by Kierkegaard’s pseudonymous author Johannes Climacus, and especially the latter’s revocation of everything that he had so meticulously elaborated in his voluminous book, can fruitfully be compared to what Wittgenstein prompts us to do at the very end of the *Tractatus*. There too, the *frame* (the foreword and the last propositions) hints towards putting aside the

purported *core* of the book (i.e. its theories of meaning, thought and language). By recognizing these (misguided) attempts as resulting in mere tautologies, we are shown (and thus may come to see) that any attempt of depicting the borders of language from within is equally nonsensical as trying to transgress language in order to depict them from without. What *shows itself* in the *Tractatus* are thus not, as many commentators would have it, important features of language and reality which, in lack of appropriate means, we could not demarcate (but at least hint at). Rather, as Conant (1993) puts it in another seminal paper:

The guiding assumption of both the *Postscript* and the *Tractatus* is that the philosopher (typically) suffers from an illusion of understanding, from the projection of illusory sense onto a (pseudo-)proposition which lacks a (clear) sense. The task therefore is not to refute what he thinks, but to show him that there is nothing of the sort that he imagines himself to be thinking. [...] The method employed in both the *Postscript* and the *Tractatus* relies upon the thought that under such circumstances the only procedure that will prove genuinely elucidatory is one that enters into the philosopher's illusion of understanding and explode it from within. (217–218)

The core teaching of Conant then comes to this: Kierkegaard and Wittgenstein are authors who are not putting forward philosophical thesis, but trying to make the reader aware that any such thesis would lack meaning (stood in need of a sense-giving practice); and this is achieved by elucidating the senselessness of exactly those propositions which, on first sight, seemed to demonstrate that very thought.

The strange thing with Conant's writings is that I accept everything he says—or at least, that's what I suppose. But in accepting this it becomes quite unclear if and how it had been possible to understand (hence to accept) anything at all. Conant pictures the practice of philosophizing in a way that it becomes radically problematic whether such a picture can in fact be given. He speaks to the end that philosophy is a matter of form, but he does so by means of putting forward depictable content—which is, according to his own teaching, not a possible means to teach me anything. This puzzlement of mine is not designed to make a spectacular philosophical point; it is real and it is quite disturbing.

And it is intrinsically linked with the not less disturbing question how to write about authors such as Kierkegaard or Wittgenstein—if at all. Because the feeling I have is that Conant is right if he is to be understood as making (exegetical) claims about the consistency (or inconsistency) of different views (theses) we have about their writings. I would believe that his (i.e. the resolute) reading is the most convincing, but still it is a *reading* about something—and it is exactly this *aboutness* which disturbs me, having learned by Conant himself that philosophy, properly understood, isn't *about* something. Hence, I ask how I had been able to 'learn' this when at the same time this learning tells me that its form is incoherent for the purpose of such a teaching.

To start with, let me present a (later on revoked) thought of Johannes Climacus, the humourist *in* and the pseudonymous author *of* the *Postscript*. In the second part we find him reflecting about what he calls the 'double-reflection of communication'. With regard to speaking or writing, he distinguishes the *form* and the *expression* of what is communicated. First, we need to find the correct shape, the proper words and their arrangements which give expression to what we think. This is achieved by a first reflection, a reflection of the correct relation between my ideas and the language in which I try to fit it. The second reflection though, concerns not the relation of thought and language but the relation I, as a living and thinking being, have to the ideas thus shared. This second aspect does not cause problems when we talk about objective facts towards which we do not have an existential bound, like most scientific findings, the weather forecast or a cooking recipe. But this changes when the thought (which by the first reflection has been put into its proper shape) reflects (or pretends to reflect) our own existence. The way we present (communicate) our thought must then itself correspond to this thought, because otherwise we, allegedly reflected in this thought, would betray ourselves. The crucial thought of Climacus then is that this second reflection of inwardness makes it impossible to communicate directly, because any such direct speech would presuppose that the relation of oneself to the thought (in which one is living) had come to an end, had *found* its *telos* in an objective, transmittable result; whereas in fact the living relation to one's own thought is characterized by becoming ever more inward, eluding completion, eluding direct expression. Yet, in religious praying or in philosophical teaching we are continually tempted to assert what, by mere assertion, becomes a

deceit—to both who speaks and who receives. Funny, though, after Climacus has elaborated this thought, he admits that to speak it out directly is to fall into the very fallacy it is about: “To point this out directly would again be a contradiction, because the form would be direct in spite of the double reflection in the content.” (Kierkegaard 1999, 63) And he goes on to illustrate:

Suppose it were the life-view of a religiously existing subject that one must not have a disciple, that this is treason to both God and men; suppose he were also a little foolish [...] and said this directly, with unction and pathos, what then? Well, yes, he would indeed be understood. Soon ten would apply, asking to be engaged just for a free shave once a week to preach this doctrine; i.e., and as further information of the doctrine's truth, he would have had the extraordinary good luck to acquire disciples who accepted and spread his teaching about having no disciples. (63)

Suppose someone wanted to impart the conviction that it is not truth that is truth but that the way is the truth, i.e., that the truth is only in the becoming, in the process of appropriation, that hence there is no result. Suppose he were a philanthropist who must needs proclaim this to all and sundry; suppose he made the splendid short cut of imparting this in the direct form in *Adressavisen*, thus gaining a mass of adherents, while the artistic way would, despite hit utmost exertions, leave it unclear whether he had helped anyone: what then? Why then, his statement became precisely a result. (66)

Climacus is a humourist. And Kierkegaard was one too, of some sort. Climacus first wrote 700 pages filled with thoughts like these, just to revoke it. And Kierkegaard wrote numerous books under pseudonyms of which he was serious that in them could not be found one single thought which was his own. I was never able to imagine Wittgenstein as a funny guy, but advising me to throw away the ladder (*Tractatus*) or saying that all is up to me and that he was not propounding anything (*PI*), I felt kind of mocked. Now, I am not tackling the task to make sense out of this—Conant's papers (1989, 1992, 1995) do, and I am, truthfully, very convinced. What I'm asking myself instead: What is it that I was taught by Conant, when within an academic paper he instructs me about writings which are eager to demonstrate that there is nothing to be learnt by means of direct communication. Because after all, what Conant is

doing, is a form of direct communication (or at least so it appears to me). Even though he is reminding his readers about the importance of attending to the peculiar form of our philosopher's texts, Conant's own writings are still academic texts in which we see him arguing for the coherence of his (so-called resolute) reading. And I myself, not being all too humorous, do not want to blame him on that; but I am wondering why it is that I think that I have learned a whole lot by reading his papers, which should not have been possible, if they were right in what they say in regard to the essentials of Kierkegaard's (Wittgenstein's) writings.

What is the characteristic of academic texts? In a most general way, it is their being *about* something, either a specific topic, argument, historical development, or—in philosophy more often than in other fields—about the writings of humans who are regarded as philosophers. If it now happens that some of these authors write texts to the effect that we should become aware of the nonsensicality of these text's propositions, it seems to be a rather obvious method to the academic writer to focus on the specific *form* rather than the mere (purportedly nonsensical) *content* of the work. Hence, authors such as Conant focus on the *frame* of both the *Tractatus* and the *Postscript* in order to demonstrate that what is written within that frame is to be regarded as mere and absolute nonsense (and not just some grade of it). Yet, we know, or we have been taught by Frege, that it was “a mere illusion to suppose that a concept can be made an object without altering it.” (Frege 1960: xxii) And Wittgenstein himself called it the fundamental idea of the *Tractatus* “that there can be no representatives of the *logic* of facts” (4.0312). — Of course, these are themselves quotations of works of philosophy who by this very nature might prove to be nonsensical, especially if quoted and thus put outside the context in which the reader experiences them on their proper places. But still, I get this much out of it, that to write *about* the structure of a philosophical work is not the same as reading and living *within* it (even though one might at the end come to acknowledge that he or she had been moving in an illusory sphere). To follow a rule (even if, later on, we come to see that it was an illusion that we were forced to do so) is not the same as to stand outside and interpret it. To read the *Postscript* is a completely different task than to read Conant's texts *about* the *Postscript*. — Yet this, as it stands, is obvious. But what I'm curious about is what the latter can actually teach us if in the former such a huge effort

is undertaken to first lead us into nonsense just in order to then show to us that it was? I know, of course, that many commentators have asked this question before: How can we speak about a work of nonsense? And isn't it self-contradictory to use for that purpose quotations from this very work? But my emphasis in asking lies not so much on the task of speaking about *nonsense* but, more generally, on this queer attempt to speak *about* a form—hence, about a philosophical treatise, whatever it's content may be (if there is one at all).

In the foreword to the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein lists Frege and Russell as “stimulation of [his] thought” but declares that he won't give sources, because it was indifferent to him whether what he thought had “already been thought before”. This casual way of putting it makes it sound as if he found it annoying to quote and hence legislate his sources, as if he had well been able to do so but simply didn't like. But I think there's more to it. I rather take it to indicate that to practice philosophy is never to refer or denote but always to elaborate through one's own lingual and conceptual practice. (That the object is missing in this last sentence is again intended to show that there is none.) To make it sound quite spectacular, I may speak of a fraud, a betrayal, as soon as we treat a work of philosophy as if it was something that could be referred directly by means of quotes. There is a funny idea of Ludwig Hohl, a highly underestimated writer, who in his *Notizen* once says that those who truly could be accused of plagiarism should in fact be admired, for to this effect they had to write anew (to relive) the whole oeuvre of the plagiarized. What is then that I say here? That there is no philosophy to be communicated, but always and simply only to be put into practice—by means of one's own lingual, conceptual, poetical abilities. That these abilities can be strengthened by reading Kierkegaard or Wittgenstein is out of question. And they may make us see not only how to use them but also that we shouldn't expect all too much from putting them to power. But the attempt to vocalize their idea of philosophy by describing the structure (frame, pseudonymity, revocation etc.) from the outside seems misguided to me. Let's rather dick into their non/sense (because it's the only way to experience that) and then to speak for ourselves.

Conant wants to put two and two together. He aims to do what, for an academic, comes quite natural: to make explicit what he experiences in reading (i.e., living in) the books of Kierkegaard or Wittgenstein. And I have

not read better papers with a comparable aim. But still, I think it is the wrong thing to do. In 1930 Wittgenstein wrote a sketch for a foreword, now printed in *Culture and Value*, saying that ‘the spirit’ in which his book is written was not the spirit “of the main current of European and American civilization”. Lacking culture and some shared value, this civilization would not allow for great work of arts, but only for “the unimpressive spectacle of a crowd whose best members work for purely private ends.” But “the disappearance of a culture”, he goes on, “does not signify the disappearance of human value”. And he concludes by saying: “So I am really writing for friends who are scattered throughout the corners of the globe.” (Wittgenstein 1984, 6e) After that, though, he starts to ponder about the “danger of a long foreword” (7e), because ‘the spirit’ of a book would have to be “evident in the book itself and cannot be described.” — “Everything ritualistic (everything that, as it were, smacks of the high priest) must be strictly avoided, because it immediately turns rotten.” (8e) And he then stops by just writing: “It is a great temptation to try to make the spirit explicit.” (8e)

When later in this same collection we find Wittgenstein saying: “What the reader can do too, leave to the reader” (77, my trans.), it appears to me of importance to leave it to the *reader*, not the interpreter or the academic—who permanently have the temptation to *speak out* what eventually has to be *done*.

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Deep Jokes

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Abstract

In this paper I draw attention to the grammatical “deep joke”. Wittgenstein refers to this type of joke in PI §111, comparing its depth to the depth of philosophy. I start with a brief review of Wittgenstein’s notions of “grammar” and “depth”. Building on these ideas, I first offer some general considerations regarding jokes and then present descriptive remarks about deep jokes. I evaluate possible examples of deep jokes, including primary examples provided by Wittgenstein, which appear in preliminary versions (1936-46) of the *Philosophical Investigations* but were cut later. I attempt to capture the distinctive qualities of deep jokes and seek to elucidate their philosophical potential. The results of the investigation of deep jokes provide an original reflection on our (mis-)understanding of linguistic practices.

Introduction

Malcolm’s memoir includes a remark on how Wittgenstein once declared that a serious and good philosophical work could be written consisting entirely of jokes. (Malcolm 1984: 27f.) In his *Philosophical Investigations* (PI; I will refer to the English translation of 2009) Wittgenstein raises the issue of “depth”. He ascribes depth to problems that stem from a misinterpretation of forms of language.

The problems arising through a misinterpretation of our forms of language have the character of *depth*. They are deep disquietudes; they are as deeply rooted in us as the forms of our language, and their significance is as great as the importance of our language. — Let’s ask ourselves: why do we feel a grammatical joke to be *deep*? (And that is what the depth of philosophy is.) (PI 2009: §111)

What Is Grammar?

The way Wittgenstein uses the term “grammar” differs from common usage. His notion of grammar omits school grammar (declension, conjugation, tense, gender, word order); it rather has to do with a philosophical investigation of language that is concerned with the description of word meaning and use.

Grammar does not tell us how language must be constructed in order to fulfil its purpose, in order to have such-and-such an effect on human

beings. It only describes, and in no way explains, the use of signs. (PI 2009: §496)

Thus, instead of prescriptive rules *defining* the grammatical correctness of language, Wittgenstein assumes descriptive grammatical rules *describing* the established uses of terms. These rules constitute our conceptual scheme. Philosophy may explicate that scheme by describing our linguistic practices. (Glock 2017: 237) In this sense, philosophy itself is “grammatical investigation”, similar to conceptual analysis. The aim of such an investigation is to provide an overview of our language use. As, for Wittgenstein, it is precisely the lack of overview that often hinders understanding.

The task of philosophy, for Wittgenstein, is not to explain *how things really are*, but rather to make conscious and critically reflect on the participatory knowledge that speakers of a natural language automatically acquire by speaking a certain language and living a certain form of life. The philosophical investigation of language does not emphasise language’s sufficiency. On the contrary, it shows that the speakers of a language are *deeply embedded* in the language’s system, *deeply entangled* in its rules and in the confusions that stem from its use. This is not to suggest an attempt at a reformed, improved language, as it is not an ideal state of surveyable order that is relevant here, but the *activity* of constantly emphasising distinctions, (PI 2009: §132) of re-ordering and regrouping language.

What Is *Depth*?

Wittgenstein's notion of “depth” comprises structural as well as affective components; both closely linked to language. Deep problems result from grammatical confusions. It seems as if such confusions stem from the inability to distinguish between a word’s grammatical possibilities; in particular between its “surface” and “depth” grammar. The reason why we confuse surface grammar with depth grammar is that we have learned to identify language with words, instead of understanding it in terms of the practices that *confer* meaning upon those words. Words do not denote prescriptively; thus, perceiving them superficially undermines any form of comprehensive understanding. We provide words with depth in our practices of language games, of communication. If words denote variably, then their intended

meaning depends on expression, context, sentence structure, etc. Grasping words comprehensively, which means grasping their intention and their depths, is a prerequisite for successful communication.

Depth also contains psychological, or emotional significance, where a felt uneasiness that stems from language is “deep”. (Ts 302: 29) Wittgenstein speaks of “deep disquietudes”, (PI 2009: §111) caused by misinterpretations of our forms of language. These are not only formal problems, but they have affective consequences. Wittgenstein rejects the strategy of simply eliminating such deep problems from the world, as trivial philosophy does. (see Ts 211: 593) It is necessary to acknowledge the feeling of language-induced disquietude and to apply meaningful methods of “therapy”. Such methods would aim at raising awareness of our conceptual scheme and our language use.

What Are Deep Jokes?

Let us now try to apply the previous considerations to our common concept of a joke, in order to get an idea of what a deep joke could be. Joking is a social practice. The form of the practice is determined and familiar to most people. A person tells a joke and tries her best in telling it correctly. The recipient listens and tries her best to understand; a possible answer to a successful joke practice is laughter. The motives for telling a joke may vary, so do the situations in which jokes are told. It seems generally fair to claim that in many cases jokes are told to amuse and perhaps to illustrate a particular point. There are different theories regarding the mechanisms of humour and jokes. The predominant theories are the theories of relief, superiority, and incongruity. For a comprehensive introduction to the philosophy of humour, one may consult, e.g., Morreall. (see 2009, 2020) The theory of incongruity in particular illustrates how jokes thwart our expectations by bringing together apparently incongruous schemes. While the set-up creates certain expectations, these may be violated within the punchline. According to such an account, expectation, irritation, and surprise are fundamental elements that serve the pattern of joke narratives.

Wittgenstein urges that the conventional philosophical form of explanation must be replaced by description; however, Wittgenstein’s writings do not

contain clear descriptions; they rather consist in thought experiments, questions, aphorisms, fictional dialogues, and the like. These, in a way similar to jokes, seem to serve the aim of irritating or surprising the reader, forcing them to look at things in a different way; (Janik 2001: 193f.) forcing them to perceive familiar things in a way that may not be the most familiar.

Having sketched some of the joke's general features we now may ask about the deep joke's distinctive qualities. Deep jokes may share the structural and formal qualities of a more general type of joke, they cannot be distinguished in concerns of style or form. What seems to be the idea is that deep jokes bring our grammatical confusions to display. They corrupt conventional ways of thinking and speaking in order to initiate a reflection on meaning. In this way they incorporate both the problem and the solution; not the shallow solution of reduction, rather the active solution that aims at surveyability of our use of language. Deep joking may be an activity of re-ordering in a humorous mode. The punchline of a deep joke tears the recipient out of her ordinary forms of language. It brings unspoken assumptions to light that are presupposed in the way we think and talk, (Yablo 2019: 3) or emphasises distinctions which our ordinary forms of language make us overlook. The effect of such an eruption may be *disquieting*, to use Wittgenstein's term. Or, to remain within Wittgenstein's images, we may say that the punchline leads to concussions, such as those we get from running up against the limits of language. (see PI 2009: §119)

Voltolini (in an online discussion with Yablo, 2020) sees an example for a possible deep joke in Wittgenstein's PI §246:

It can't be said of me at all (except perhaps as a joke) that I *know* I'm in pain. What is it supposed to mean – except perhaps that I *am* in pain? (PI 2009: §246)

In this sense, a deep joke could originate from a senseless sentence that arises out of a misunderstanding of the rules of grammar for the expressions they contain. Though not amusing in a conventional sense, one may concede that in fact it is a funny thing to claim that one possesses knowledge of one's pain. One may argue that knowledge must be open to doubt and that is not feasible in the case of one's own pain. One can have pain, be in pain; knowledge may be

irrelevant here and wrongly referred to. The joke thus arises out of the misunderstanding of the grammar of “know” and of “pain” (or of expressions of sensations more generally).

Fortunately though, we are not restricted to assumptions since primary examples of deep jokes can indeed be found within Wittgenstein’s writings. Preliminary versions of the *Philosophical Investigations*, beginning with Ms 142 (1936-37), feature a separate remark, following §111, entirely on the deep joke. This remark was cut in Ts 227a, 227b, §111, p. 85 (1944-46); only the first sentences remained. Since its content is of high relevance to an investigation of the deep joke, I am quoting it at full length:

Fragen wir uns: Warum empfinden wir einen grammatischen Witz in gewissem Sinne als tief? (Und das ist ja natürlich die philosophische Tiefe.) (Worin liegt die Tiefe des Witzes: “We called him tortoise because he taught us”?)

Wir werden plötzlich aufmerksam darauf, daß eine solche Ableitung des Substantivs unmöglich ist. – Warum sollte sie aber so unmöglich sein? Sie ließe sich auch sehr wohl denken (Ztschische Zunamen die ein Imperfectum sind). Und nun scheint der Witz seine Tiefe verloren zu haben. Dies kommt aber daher, daß wir unsere Aufmerksamkeit verschoben haben. – Betrachte ein andres Beispiel: Lichtenberg läßt eine Magd in einem Brief über Literatur die Zahl Hundert so schreiben: 001. Wenn man sich sagt: „nun, es könnte ja auch in der andern Richtung geschrieben werden“ – so fühlt man die Tiefe der Komik nicht. Diese liegt, glaube ich, in dem Zusammenhang unseres Dezimalsystems, in welchem das Zeichen “001” eine gewisse Stelle hat. Die Tiefe der Absurdität des “001” erscheint erst für den, der, sozusagen, die mathematischen Konsequenzen aus diesem Schreibfehler ziehen kann. Nicht für den, der nur weiß, daß man so nicht ‘hundert’ schreibt. – Man kann, das ‘taught us’ betreffend sagen: Ein Verbum hat für uns, eine Grundstellung (wie man bei Turnübungen sagt) & dann verschiedene Stellungen verschiedenen Verrichtungen gemäß. Eine beliebige dieser Stellungen als Bezeichnung dessen nehmen, der (z.B.) lehrt, ist so, als nähme man für das Standbild eines Menschen irgend eine Stellung, in der er sich auch einmal befinden kann. Die Grundstellung, könnte man sagen, repräsentiert den Menschen

& der Infinitiv das Verbum. Es hätte so für uns nicht das Komische des Substantivs “taught us”, wenn man statt dessen den Infinitiv des Verbs zur Bezeichnung des Lehrenden verwendet hätte. – Die Tiefe der Absurdität liegt hier wieder in Verhältnissen, die einer längeren Erklärung bedürfen; weil sie den eigentümlichen Bau unserer Sprache betreffen.– Wenn wir auf das System unserer Sprache sehen, dann haben wir das Gefühl der Tiefe. Es ist, als sähen wir durch ihr Netz die ganze Welt.) (Ms 142: §112)

The “tortoise-joke” Wittgenstein is referring to is out of Lewis Carroll’s *Alice*:

“Once”, said the Mock Turtle at last, with a deep sigh, “I was a real Turtle.”

(...) “When we were little”, the Mock Turtle went on at last, more calmly, though still sobbing a little now and then, “we went to school in the sea. The master was an old Turtle — we used to call him Tortoise — ”

“Why did you call him Tortoise, if he wasn’t one?” Alice asked.

“We called him Tortoise because he taught us,” said the Mock Turtle angrily: “really you are very dull!” (Carroll 1865: 135f.)

It is the last sentence of the dialogue, the “Tortoise/taught us”-pun, which reveals itself more directly when read out aloud, that features the “depth” in question. If we follow Wittgenstein’s idea, then we notice how the fictional character Mock Turtle illustrates the grammatical error of a faulty derivation. The Turtle who *teaches* became the “Tortoise”; drawing on the phonetic proximity of “tortoise” /tɔːr.təs/ and “taught us” /tɔːt/ /əs/.

A handwritten marginal note was added to the remark in Ts 239 (1937), wherein Wittgenstein explains vividly why the above joke may be perceived as deep:

„Wir empfanden ihn als tief, weil er ein grelles Licht auf das System unserer Sprache zu werfen schien.”/ “We perceived it as deep because it seemed to shed a glaring light on the system of our language.” (my translation; second marginal note Ts 239: §117)

The depth of a joke appears only when one draws the consequences from it. And that is the reason why such deep jokes may also cause disquietude. A joke that sheds light on the operating modes of language, shows, above all, the

possibilities of confusion, problems, dysfunctionalities that have formed in the evolution of language. A recipient who takes these possibilities seriously may begin to doubt their own use of language, their own communicative competence, their own linguistic knowledge. Such doubt may initiate a process of reflection on the linguistic establishment and interpretation of meaning.

Let me propose another candidate for a deep joke that I regard as a revelatory example. There are actually two versions of this joke, aiming for opposing but equally original punchlines:

A group of salespeople had been travelling the country for many years, always sharing the same carriage in the train and always telling one another jokes. Over the years, they had become so familiar with their jokes that they just used numbers to indicate them. One of them would say “23” and they’d all laugh. Or “89!” A young person joined them and after a few journeys decided she’d take part. In a moment of silence, she exclaimed “97!” But nobody laughed. The young person wondered where she could have gone wrong. Had she chosen the wrong number? She got the answer from one of the salespeople “One must also know *how to tell* a joke.”

The alternative, positive punchline, instead, goes as follows:

There was a lot of laughter and one of the salespeople turned to her and said: “That’s a good one! – We hadn’t heard that one before.”

This joke may not be entirely in line with Wittgenstein’s examples. For the joke itself does not really illustrate misunderstandings that stem from grammatical confusions, but it rather illustrates the very process of linguistic establishment of meaning and its limitations. Conferring or reducing fictional content to a number might strike us as an unusual practice. However, abbreviations are a common form of meaning conferment in most languages. This legitimates the depth of the joke-story and allows to draw conclusions that are relevant for our actual linguistic practices.

The salespeople in the joke have actively and consciously conferred meaning to the numbers they utter, and they seem to be very aware of the grammatical rules of their practice. However, as a new person joins their practice it

becomes apparent how easily these rules are called into question. Of course, the new person was not present when the rules were established; nobody told her: “See, this joke (telling of the joke story ‘1’) is denoted by ‘1’, etc.” The person had no possibility of *learning* the game. Cavell puts it this way:

(...) we do not learn words in *all* the contexts in which they could be used (what, indeed, would that mean?) and (...) not every context in which a word is used is one in which the word *can* be learned (e.g., contexts in which the word is used metaphorically). And after a while we are expected to know when the words are appropriately used in further contexts. (Cavell 1979: 168)

A consideration of the ways we learn words is important, however the point crucial to the punchline is yet another: the salespeople themselves do not seem to be fully aware of their utterances’ meanings. The joke also succeeds in illustrating the psychological or emotional consequences of linguistic disquietudes. The negative punchline articulates a response of uneasiness that stems from the corruption of a language game. The positive punchline instead, evokes a feeling of uneasiness that stems from the realization of the practice’s arbitrariness.

Conclusion

I have shown how our grammatical confusions and the communicative difficulties we meet in our linguistic practices are reflected within jokes that feature a quality of depth. The investigation of grammar via deep jokes is an activity that emphasises distinctions, re-orders and regroups language. As the fictional characters displayed in the joke-stories are torn out of their linguistic entanglement, so are the recipients of a deep joke who reflect on its consequences. In such a way, deep joking may serve as a form of philosophical investigation.

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Rush Rhees and the *Tractatus*: A Handful of Observations

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Abstract

I present some of Rush Rhees's remarks on the *Tractatus*. They can be found in papers written in the 1960s, which were later included in Rhees's book *Discussions of Wittgenstein* (Rhees 1970). The focus is on two of the papers: Rhees's review of Elizabeth Anscombe's book *An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus* and on his paper "Some Developments in Wittgenstein's View of Ethics". I have chosen remarks that can be characterised as typically Rheesean and will consider what they reveal about Rhees's way of thinking and writing in general.

1. Introduction

Rush Rhees was one of Wittgenstein's friends and literary executors, and an editor of several of the books we today – for better or for worse – recognize as works by Wittgenstein (Wallgren 2023). The *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* was published the same year Rhees turned sixteen, but Rhees later studied the *Tractatus* in detail, and was also familiar with some of the first commentaries on the famous book. Indeed, in the 1960s he published detailed reviews of Elizabeth Anscombe's *An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus*, Alexander Maslov's reissued *A Study in Wittgenstein's Tractatus*, and Max Black's *A Companion to Wittgenstein's Tractatus*. He also reviewed George Pitcher's *The Philosophy of Wittgenstein* and paid special attention to the *Tractatus* and its relation to the *Philosophical Investigations*. The *Tractatus* plays a central role in his essay 'Some Developments in Wittgenstein's View of Ethics'. These papers were included in the volume *Discussions of Wittgenstein*, edited by Rhees's student D.Z. Phillips (Rhees 1970). Today, Rhees's papers are largely forgotten. The aim of this short note is to collect and present some ideas of Rhees's that I have found thought-provoking, and in particular themes that one could argue are characteristically Rheesean. My focus will be on the review of Anscombe's book and on the essay on ethics.

2. Anscombe on the *Tractatus*

In his review of Anscombe's book (1960), Rhees claims that Anscombe fails to bring out Wittgenstein's main point, as he stated it in a letter to Russell:

She makes ‘the picture theory of the proposition’ central for at least the first half of her book. But she does not show clearly how this is related to what Wittgenstein called ‘the main point’ in his letter to Russell. [...] And with her account of the ‘picture theory’ I wonder if she could.

Wittgenstein said in that letter that ‘my main contention, to which the whole business of logical propositions is only a corollary ... is the theory of what can be expressed (*gesagt*) by propositions – i.e. by language (and what comes to the same thing, what can be thought); and what cannot be expressed by propositions, but only shown (*gezeigt*); which I believe is the cardinal problem of philosophy ...’. (Rhees 1970: 2)

Anscombe’s primary focus is on the picture theory, and with her view of it, Rhees wonders if she would even be able to give an account of Wittgenstein’s main contention. He then proceeds to discuss aspects of Anscombe’s understanding, which he believes lead her astray from the main point. I found some of Rhees’s remarks rather interesting, but I cannot make any claims as to how original they are. I shall concentrate on the following: (1) *abbilden* and picturing, and the connection to a general rule, (2) truth, falsity and the sense of a proposition, and (3) the difference between logic in the relative sense of formalised languages and the absolute sense of the *Tractatus*.

(1) Rhees claims that Anscombe’s translation of the verb ‘*abbilden*’ as ‘depicts’ is often misleading (Rhees 1970: 4). Wittgenstein’s use of ‘*Bild*’ is connected to ‘*abbilden*’, and Rhees reckons Wittgenstein got this from mathematicians: *abbilden* is a concept used when finding a model for one system in another (I guess Rhees is simply thinking of functions or homomorphisms). Rhees suspects that Wittgenstein had this in mind when he spoke of ‘*Logik der Abbildung*’ or of ‘*Abbildung der Wirklichkeit*’. Since there, according to Rhees, is no good English translation, one has to use translations like ‘picture’ and ‘picturing’ (Rhees himself translates *Abbildung* as ‘representation’ in notes from 1959 (Rhees 2006: 34), but there is no mention of this in the review). This leads Anscombe to neglect what Wittgenstein called the ‘inner’ similarity between picture and pictured. And worse, from Rhees’s perspective, translating it as ‘picturing’ leaves out the connection to the idea of a general rule, which is exactly what is needed for understanding how the *abbilden*

works (cf. T 4.01). With a homomorphism in mind, the idea of a general rule is somehow innate. And this leads us to Rhees's next concern, the distinction between the truth and falsity of a proposition and its sense.

(2) The question is, Rhees thinks, what it means to say that language is an 'Abbildung of reality'. In the case of two mathematical systems, we can consider each system separately, but not so in the case of reality. Although T 4.05 may confuse one here, one needs to keep in mind that Wittgenstein there begins a discussion of true and false propositions. "And it is important not to confuse picturing reality with saying what is true. Not to confuse what we do when we want to determine whether a proposition is true or false, and what we do when we want to decide whether it has sense – i.e., whether it is a proposition at all" (Rhees 1970: 5; T 4.06). Yet, it is exactly this confusion that Anscombe is guilty of, according to Rhees. Rhees quotes Anscombe saying that in T 4.463 "a proposition, as well as a picture or a model, is conceived as *something that can have both a positive and negative sense*" (Rhees's italics). And according to Rhees this is a mistake:

She goes on to say: "Here [T 4.463] at any rate a proposition, as well as a picture or a model, is conceived as *something that can have both a positive and a negative sense*" (my italics). And this is a misunderstanding, or at least misleading.

There are positive and negative ways of *expressing* the same proposition. But they do not express different senses of the same proposition, for that means nothing. The double negation has the same sense as the proposition itself. On the other hand, the negative or contradictory does have a different sense, and for this reason it is not the same proposition. (Unclarity here might make one mix up 'affirmative or negative' with 'true or false'.) But the *sense* is not negative in this case either. It is incompatible with what it contradicts; that is all. (Rhees 1970: 13)

(3) This is connected to laws of logic as laws of thought, not only as formal systems, as Rhees explains:

A logic which was confined to formalized languages, for instance – or for which the distinction of true and false had sense only in formalized

languages – would not be logic at all in the sense in which Wittgenstein is writing of it here. He used to say later that if there were a set of rules which we followed only in connexion with a particular game that we sometimes played, then we should hardly call them laws of thought – even if these were the only rules we had for "and" and "or" and "not" and "if . . . then". We would call them laws of thought only if they went through the whole of our life. (Rhees 1970: 9)

It is unclear to me if Rhees sees this as something Anscombe falls prey to, or if he just wants to stress the point to the reader. I have selected this remark because of the emphasis on something going through the whole of our life, a typical Rheesian theme. Whether or not Anscombe's view of logic is too close to formalised languages, Rhees still claims Anscombe makes another mistake: she says that sense and saying are different, that a proposition might show how things are while saying that they are not. But Rhees holds (Rhees 1970: 11) that in the case of propositions, saying and having sense amounts to the same thing. "It is in *saying* something that a proposition pictures reality." This is how one should understand T 4.022: "The proposition *shows* its sense."

These limitations of Anscombe's understanding of the picture theory, together with some other misconceptions, result in her failure to express the main point of the *Tractatus*, Rhees asserts. It is unclear to me exactly how Rhees reaches that conclusion, what Rhees's argument is, if any (I'll return to this in the conclusion). It was also unclear to Judith Jarvis how some of the things Anscombe says hang together (Jarvis and Summers 1961). Indeed, Jarvis also found Rhees's review rather obscure, although she had some sympathy for his main point. Jarvis's review nevertheless shows an understanding of picturing of the kind Rhees is criticising, the kind where *Abbildung* in the mathematical sense is not a leading – picture.

3. Developments in Wittgenstein's Views on Ethics

In the reviews of Maslow and Black, Rhees continues his detailed examination of *Tractatus* interpretations. I don't have the space to comment on them here, but some of the more interesting points, in my opinion, concern colours and arithmetical operators, respectively. In the review of Pitcher, Rhees stresses the continuity between the *Tractatus* and the *Investigations*. He also points to

Part II, xii, as the clearest short statement of the method of the *Investigations*; perhaps a clue as to why the editors included Part II in the original edition in the first place. In the essay ‘Some Developments in Wittgenstein’s View of Ethics’ (1965), which I shall consider in this section, Rhees studies similarities and differences between Wittgenstein’s early and later work, again accentuating things that go “through the whole of our life” (cf. above).

In the essay, Rhees considers differences between ethical judgment and logical judgment, as an elaboration of T 6.42, “there can be no ethical propositions”. He asks us to compare ‘absolute value lies outside the world of facts’ and ‘logical necessity lies outside the world of facts’. Neither of these can be directly expressed, but logical necessity can be shown using the truth-table notation in a way that absolute value cannot. “For”, Rhees writes, “where there is a question of judgment of absolute value, the question ‘Is it true or false?’ means nothing” (Rhees 1970: 95). Note that here the truth table is a logical symbol in the absolute sense I mentioned above, not an explanation.

And adopting an ethics is not like getting a physical theory right. This is what Rhees says:

Well, suppose I say Christian ethics is the right one. Then I am making a judgment of value. It amounts to adopting Christian ethics. It is not like saying that one of these physical theories must be the right one. The way in which some reality corresponds – or conflicts – with a physical theory has no counterpart here. (Rhees 1970: 101)

It seems to me that this is one reason why Rhees has difficulties understanding Simone Weil, when she writes that physics and especially its mathematical formulation are ideals for our moral lives. But in that context, Rhees nevertheless gives Weil the benefit of the doubt:

Remarks of this kind invite academic criticism and seem wide open to it. But when I do criticise them in this way, I always suspect that I am being stupid, that I am failing (unable) to read what she has written in the way that it should be read, that I am simply misunderstanding something to which my eyes have not been opened. And then I conclude that I must leave it there. (Rhees 1999: 64)

When interpreting the *Tractatus*, Rhees is very certain in his judgments, but when reading Weil (1968) he is suddenly full of hesitation.

Related to this, perhaps, Rhees considers situations where it is difficult to express what something means to someone. His example is: “There is no sentence that could convey all I meant when I thanked him” (Rhees 1970: 98). He says that we could try to describe the situation in as much detail and context as possible, and yet fail and perhaps only be able to say something like “it goes deep with me”, that it was not a trivial thing. Rhees thinks that many would understand this distinction. And he claims that the *Tractatus* speaks of problems of life in this sense, but doesn’t characterise them further. The *Tractatus* does not speak of when or in what circumstances we are prone to talk about ‘problems of life’.

In the *Tractatus* it is implicit, although not elaborated, that we cannot express judgments of value just anytime, but that there are certain circumstances in which it makes sense and others in which it does not (Rhees 1970: 98). In the ‘Lecture on Ethics’, Wittgenstein was more clear about this, as he had already dropped the idea that one could give a general account of propositions via truth functions. Instead, Wittgenstein works with many examples, but it seems to Rhees that he is still looking for a core. He gave this up in the *Investigations*, as there the multitude of examples is rather aimed at preventing one from looking for a core, for the “characteristic features”. In a letter to von Wright, Rhees pointed out how Wittgenstein later (around 1948) again emphasised similarities between philosophical problems and problems of life (Rhees to von Wright, 22.9.1976).

4. Conclusion: Reading Rhees

Rhees’s reviews are not exactly charitable, and perhaps that is why Peter Geach retaliated with a rather disrespectful review of Rhees’s book *Without Answers*, published some ten years after Rhees’s review of his wife’s book (Geach 1971). Geach characterises Rhees’s book as follows: “These jottings do not give us much consecutive argument, but seem to have been selected because of their tone; we hear much of the need to be deep and serious.” Perhaps this was aimed at Phillips as much as at Rhees. However that may be, I think they still express a common first reaction to reading Rhees. It is like

getting thrown straight into an intense discussion, with abundant detail and an earnesty more characteristic of problems of life than of intellectual puzzles; one can see that what he says goes deep with him, but not where he is coming from or where he is going. There is not much argumentative cheerfulness in Rhees. Nor is there much consecutive argument, not much “*lückenlose Folge*”. Indeed, from that perspective, Rhees’s writings are full of gaps, just as readers have noticed. Rhees was well aware of this aspect of his published work and was hesitant to publish more in the same style (Rhees to Albert Chao, 5.2.1972).

Rhees's style is not surprising, considering the influence Wittgenstein and the *Investigations* had on him. Although similar to the *Investigations*, the jottings, or rather fragments, are still characterised by the more tangible presence of someone having something to say, due partly to the fact that they were often written in letters. One is given a handful of observations, often repeated with slight alterations. They are, therefore, difficult to summarize. The aggregate form of Phillips’s editorial work does not do them full justice. To see the unity of Rhees’s own work, one must, I believe, appreciate his ideas about the unity of language and the growth of understanding (for pioneering work on this, see Horn 2005 and Hertzberg 2012). This kind of growth can also be seen in Wittgenstein's development from the *Tractatus* to the *Investigations*. Growth in Rhees's sense is not about a better understanding of how something works, about consecutive arguments or mechanism, but rather about changing one’s way of looking at things (Rhees 2006: 73). I'm reminded of what Odo Marquard once said: *Merken ist wichtiger als Ableiten*.

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Das Erhabene als verborgene stilistische Konstante zwischen *Tractatus* und *Untersuchungen*

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Abstract

Unter den auffälligen inhaltlichen, aber auch formalen Unterschieden, die den *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* von den *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* unterscheiden, fließt eine gemeinsame Unterströmung, die stilistischer Natur ist und tiefer geht als die teilweise sehr großen Unterschiede auch im Stil. Der Hang zum „Erhabenen“ in der Schreibweise bleibt Wittgensteins Gesamthaltung eigen – folglich auch seinem Schreibstil. Der Vortrag deckt diese Stilkonstante auf und auch das grundsätzliche Paradoxon, das sie enthält: Beim Erhabenen besteht das Mittel zum Erreichen des Erhebungsgefühls in erster Linie in einer minimalistischen, einfachen Ausdrucksweise. Er zeigt anhand ausgewählter Textstellen, dass in beiden Werken vergleichbare Stilmittel eine vergleichbare Wirkung hervorbringen. Von Bedeutung ist die ästhetische Kategorie des Erhabenen auch für die Philosophie. Denn durch die Schreibweise drückt hier Wittgenstein seinen grundlegenden Apophatismus aus, den er unmöglich direkt thematisieren kann.

Zwischen dem *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* und den *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* ist der Bruch radikal und augenfällig. Inhaltlich und formal scheinen es verschiedene Welten zu sein. Der *Tractatus* ist eine schmale Abhandlung, die sich durch Prägnanz und systematische Stringenz auszeichnet, unpersönliche, universelle Urteile wie „Ukase“ (Russell) fällt; dargestellt wird die Quintessenz des Denkbaren – und zwar „unantastbar und definitiv“ (T 1922: 92). Die *Untersuchungen* dagegen haben die Offenheit eines mäandernden Spaziergangs: im mündlichen Ton lädt ein Ich-Sprecher den Du-Leser zu einem langsamen, ungezwungenen aber sorgfältigen Fortschreiten ein.

Der Abstand zwischen beiden Hauptwerken Wittgensteins ist also nicht zu übersehen. 1932 schreibt Wittgenstein:

Meine Hauptdenkbewegung ist heute eine ganz andere als vor 15–20 Jahren.

Und das ist ähnlich, wie wenn ein Maler von einer Richtung zu einer andern übergeht. (MS 183, 141)

Der Vergleich mit dem Malstil zeigt, dass Wittgenstein um die fließenden Übergänge von den philosophischen Inhalten eines Denkers zu seinem sprachlichen Stil weiß. Philosophische Thesen und Voraussetzungen, ja die

Auswahl der Themen selbst bilden untrennbar *zusammen* mit der Form des Geschriebenen ein Ganzes, das man mit dem Wort „philosophische Haltung oder Stil“ festhalten kann. Dem möchte ich mich in diesem Vortrag zuwenden.

Als Beitrag zur klassischen Frage nach den Brüchen und Kontinuitäten zwischen *Tractatus* und *Untersuchungen* gehe ich hier – weniger klassisch – auf den *Schreibstil* dieser Werke ein. Dafür widme ich mich allerdings nicht weiter den Stilunterschieden zwischen beiden Hauptwerken, die sofort auffallen. Eher versuche ich zu zeigen, dass es zwischen dem *Tractatus* und den *Untersuchungen* einige seltene, aber prägende Stilkonstanten gibt, die als Unterströmungen fortleben.

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Zu einem stilistischen Vergleich zwischen dem *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* und den *Philosophische Untersuchungen* schlage ich vor, die ästhetische Kategorie des *Erhabenen* heranzuziehen. Als Terminus technicus der Literaturwissenschaft „bezeichnet das ‚Erhabene‘ nicht so sehr das Erhabene, als eher die Bewegung der Erhebung selbst, oder genauer noch das Gefühl dieser Bewegung: Schwung, Begeisterung, Jubel, Schwindel, Schrecken.“ (Hache 2000: 14)

Das Erhabene zerreit, wenn es im richtigen Augenblick hervorbricht, wie ein Blitz alle Dinge und zeigt mit einemmal die ganze Gewalt des Redners.

sagt der Pseudo-Longinos, der in der Antike *Vom Erhabenen* schreibt (Pseudo-Longinos 1966: §1). Kennzeichnend für diese Kategorie ist jedoch die paradoxe Situation, dass nicht „groe Worte“ das „Groe“ am besten ausdrücken, sondern das Stilmittel zum Erreichen des Erhebungsgefhls in einer minimalen, einfachen Ausdrucksweise besteht. Das zentrale Beispiel hierzu, stammt aus Buch Genesis:

Gott sprach: Es werde Licht und es ward Licht. (*Genesis* I, 3)

Kann ein Satz einfacher ausfallen – und dennoch grandioser?

Im Kern des Begriffs des Erhabenen steht letztlich der Gegensatz, die Anspannung: Gre aus Einfachheit, Erhebung aus Enthaltbarkeit. Der Mastab dieses Stils, der seit dem XVII. Jhd. in Frankreich und noch einmal

zentral im XIX. Jhd. in Deutschland die klassische Ästhetik prägt, könnte lauten: „Weniger ist mehr.“ Wohl ein Motto, das vom Architekten Ludwig Mies van der Rohe stammt und für die Wiener Ästhetik der Jahrhundertwende steht. Das Erhabene kann aber *auch* zum Verständnis einer postmodernen Ästhetik herangezogen werden – und auch für die Wittgensteins *Philosophischer Untersuchungen*.

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Das Spannungsfeld zwischen innerem Streben und zurückhaltender Ausdrucksweise kennzeichnet auch Wittgensteins Schreibstil, selbst wenn er selten die Worte „das Sublime“ oder „das Erhabene“ verwendet. Er umschreibt es etwa hier:

Mein Ideal ist eine gewisse Kühle. Ein Tempel der den Leidenschaften als Umgebung dient ohne in sie hineinzureden. (MS 107,130)

Der „Tempel“ deutet auf Heiliges und Großes hin; der Kontrast von „Leidenschaften“ und „Kühle“ (zusammen mit dem Sprachverzicht „ohne in sie hineinzureden“) sorgt für besagte paradoxe Bewegung. Am Bezeichnendsten für diese Ästhetik, die Wittgenstein aus der deutschen Romantik oder Tolstois *Kurzer Darlegung des Evangeliums* übernommen haben könnte, ist eine Reihe von Bemerkungen über die Bibel:

Die Quelle, die in den Evangelien ruhig & klar fließt, scheint mir in den Briefen des Paulus zu *schäumen*. [...] mir ist es, als sähe ich hier menschliche Leidenschaft, etwas wie Stolz oder Zorn, was sich nicht mit der Demut der *Evangelien* reimt. [...]

In den Evangelien – so scheint mir – ist alles *schlichter*, demütiger, einfacher. Dort sind Hütten, – bei Paulus eine Kirche. Dort sind alle Menschen gleich & Gott selbst ein Mensch; bei Paulus gibt es schon etwas wie eine Hierarchie; Würden, & Ämter. (MS 119, 71-73)

Mit der Kontrastierung zwischen den *Briefen* und den *Evangelien* stehen auf der einen Seite ein mit grandiosen Ausdrucksmitteln dargestelltes Grandioses („Würden & Ämter“) – in dem Fall besteht *Kongruenz* von Sprache und

dargestellter Sache –, auf der anderen Seite aber das wahrhaft Heilige. Bei diesem authentischeren Erhabenen der Bibel „ist alles *schlichter*, demütiger, einfacher“.

Wittgenstein ist wohl der kreative Widerspruch zwischen dargestellter Sache und Ausdrucksmittel bewusst:

Die Gleichnisse des N.T. lassen jede beliebige Tiefe der Interpretation zu. Sie sind ohne Boden.

Sie haben weniger Stil, als das erste Sprechen eines Kindes. Auch im höchsten Kunstwerk ist noch etwas, was man ‘Stil’, ja auch, was man ‘Manier’ nennen kann. (MS 162b, 63r)

Nicht effekthascherische rhetorische Mittel (in diesem Zitat „Stil“ oder „Manier“ genannt) drücken das Heilige getreu aus, sondern die Nacktheit einer Ausdrucksweise, die schlichter noch sprechen soll als das „erste Sprechen eines Kindes“.

Diese Dialektik zwischen Unvergleichlichkeit des Inhalts und bewusster Zurückhaltung in den Ausdrucksmitteln glaube ich sowohl in der konzisen „Kristallreinheit“ des *Tractatus* (PU 2009: § 97, 107-108) erkennen zu können, als auch in der eigenartigen Mischung aus Herzblut und Nüchternheit, die die *Untersuchungen* auszeichnet. Im zweiten Hauptwerk ist das Erhabene freilich weniger auffällig, aber es findet sich durchaus auch darin wieder, wenn auch in einer anderen, postmodernen Form.

Im Folgenden stelle ich einige vergleichbare in beiden Werken vorkommende Stilmittel vor, die zusammengenommen ein ganzes Netz von Perzepten und Konzepten bilden, das eben am treffendsten als „Erhabenes“ bezeichnet wird. Dieses Sehnen, das nie zum expliziten Ausdruck findet, weil es gerade dadurch verloren ginge, gibt beiden Werken – nicht nur dem *Tractatus* –, eine eigentümliche Gestalt.

Von Interesse ist diese Einsicht auch für die Philosophie. Denn damit findet das „[s]ublim“ Transzendente der logischen Ausführungen des *Tractatus* (cf. T 1922: § 6.13, PU 2009: § 89), das man in Wittgensteins zweiter Philosophie für eliminiert hat halten können, – nicht in Gestalt von Thesen, wohl aber in ihrem verdeckt erhabenen *Stil* – seinen Niederschlag.

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Zum Bilden der Dynamik des Erhabenen, braucht es 1) Einfachheit in der Ausdrucksweise. Eine bloße, sozusagen „einfache“ Einfachheit genügt allerdings nicht: Man hätte damit nur Trivialität. 2) Es braucht genau das Gegenteil davon: anbrechende Anspannung – sei es in Form von Anspruch, Leidenschaft oder Verzückung – allerdings entweder verdeckt oder in homöopathischen Dosen erteilt. Andernfalls erreicht man nur Kitsch. Damit wird 3) die Einfachheit zu einer Einfachheit zweiten Grades: das Ergebnis eines *akzeptierten* Verzichts – also einer Beherrschung. Diese deutet auf eine Vollkommenheit, deren Spuren in einem stilistischen Ebenmaß und Gleichgewicht zu finden sind.

Zum Ersten: Auch wenn es nicht einfach ist, Spuren eines Verzichts zu finden, kann schon das Fehlen philosophischen Jargons – bereits im *Tractatus* – als repräsentativ dafür gelten. Außerdem wird jeder Leser bereitwillig zustimmen, dass – so unterschiedlich beide Werke sind – beide einem sehr einfachen Stil verpflichtet sind. Genova charakterisiert die Aussagen des *Tractatus* als „thin and un-clever“ (Genova 1995: 108, 128) und schreibt über die *Philosophischen Untersuchungen*:

Like Beckett's, Wittgenstein's later style is prosaic to a fault. Words collect on the page without apparent necessity. A typical sentence for either of them drones on noisily. [...] Chatty, even dull, not a smidgeon of music sneaks into his expressions or sentences. [...] only the most commonplace and banal observations, things that normally escape notice because they are so banal, pass his lips [...].

Bedeutet das, dass das Erhabene damit abflaut? Nein. Der Vergleich mit Samuel Beckett zeigt es: Bei aller Kargheit glimmt bei Beckett unverkennbar das Feuer unter der Asche; auch sein Schreibstil berührt das Erhabene.

Freilich äußert sich diese Grundtendenz in beiden Büchern in zwei verschiedenen Varianten: Im *Tractatus* ist die Schlichtheit minimalistisch, extrem beherrscht; in den *Untersuchungen* liegt das stilistische Einfache in der Alltagssprache, also im Stil des Allbekannten und Vertrauten. Doch die Grundrichtung bleibt.

Unter vielen möglichen Beispielen findet sich im *Tractatus* (T 1922: § 2.12-2.14):

Das Bild ist ein Modell der Wirklichkeit:

Den Gegenständen entsprechen im Bilde die Elemente des Bildes.

Die Elemente des Bildes vertreten im Bild die Gegenstände.

Das Bild besteht darin, dass sich seine Elemente in bestimmter Art und Weise zu einander verhalten.

Die wortkarge Kürze der Sätze; das Verschwinden des Sprechers; die abrupte Parataxe; die semantische Armut sowie die Wiederholung desselben elementaren Satzschemas (Hypozeuxis) vermitteln ein Ethos neutraler wissenschaftlicher Strenge.

Aus den *Untersuchungen* nun einen sehr kurzen Auszug:

[...] Ich dachte an mein Frühstück und ob es heute spät damit würde. [...]
(PU 2009: § 607)

Wie könnte man dasselbe sparsamer und schlichter ausdrücken?

*

Die zweite, gegensätzliche Komponente vermittelt Entzückung, indem sie auf etwas Überwältigendes hindeutet. In der Bibel schafft die Thematik des alles überstrahlenden Jenseits dramatische Anspannung. Das genügt schon.

Auch im *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* wird Größe thematisiert, nämlich in der Umkehrung der letzten Seiten, in denen plötzlich die Rede von Sinn und Wert, vom Transzendentalen und vom „Mystischen“ ist. Genau in diesem Moment endet das Buch. Hier zeigt sich eindeutig Verzicht, so dass die zwei Hauptkomponenten des Erhabenen vorhanden sind.

Thematisch quillt das Erhabene auch aus der gewaltigen Eröffnungsmetaphysik der ersten Zeilen hervor (T 1922: § 1-1.2):

Die Welt ist alles, was der Fall ist.

Die Welt ist die Gesamtheit der Tatsachen, nicht der Dinge.

Die Welt ist durch die Tatsachen bestimmt und dadurch, dass es *alle* Tatsachen sind.

Denn, die Gesamtheit der Tatsachen bestimmt, was der Fall ist und auch, was alles nicht der Fall ist.

Die Tatsachen im logischen Raum sind die Welt.

Die Welt zerfällt in Tatsachen.

Hier herrscht (wie im ersten oben erwähnten Auszug aus dem *Tractatus*) Schlichtheit. Doch betonen diesmal gerade semantische Armut und Wortknappheit das Monumentale.

Andere, allerdings seltene Passagen wirken erhebend durch bildhafte Wendungen:

Diese Zuordnungen sind gleichsam die Fühler der Bildelemente, mit denen das Bild die Wirklichkeit berührt. (T 1922: § 2.1515)

Die Grammophonplatte, der musikalische Gedanke, die Notenschrift, die Schallwellen, stehen alle in jener abbildenden internen Beziehung zu einander, die zwischen Sprache und Welt besteht.

Ihnen allen ist der logische Bau gemeinsam.

(Wie im Märchen die zwei Jünglinge, ihre zwei Pferde und ihre Lilien. Sie sind alle in gewissem Sinne Eins.) (T 1922: § 4.014)

Das verträumte Ende vom § 4.014 wird zum lyrischen Höhepunkt dieser Bemerkung, die zunächst pädagogisch-wissenschaftlich einsetzt. Aber auch dort ist Zurückhaltung zu spüren: denn der Vergleich steht unter abmildernden Klammern.

Selbst diskrete Anspielungen auf einen „Gott“ gibt es im *Tractatus*. Doch wirken diese Momente gerade durch ihre Seltenheit und durch den Kontrast mit dem streng wissenschaftlichen Korsett der übrigen Bemerkungen um sie herum umso unverhoffter, umso wunderbarer.

In den *Philosophischen Untersuchungen* sind die – auch dort sehr sporadischen – erhabenen Momente gänzlich stilistischer Natur. Wie im *Tractatus* sind es zuerst Bilder, die regelrecht gewaltig ausfallen können:

[...] Könnte ich mir nicht denken, ich hätte fürchterliche Schmerzen und würde, während sie andauern, zu einem Stein? Ja, wie weiß ich, wenn ich die Augen schließe, ob ich nicht zu einem Stein geworden bin? [...] (PU 2009: § 283)

Das Bild, das Wittgenstein den Märchen entnimmt, hat mythologische Tragweite. Doch die Folge der Bemerkung legt den dichterischen Höhenflug bald ab und geht ins Ironische über – denn solche Momente dürfen nicht dauern.

Zwei Beispiele seien hier noch erwähnt:

„Aber schließt Du eben nicht nur vor dem Zweifel die Augen, wenn Du *sicher* bist?“ Sie sind mir geschlossen. (PU 2009: 236)

Auf die verhältnismäßig viel längere, eine Metapher beinhaltende Frage fällt die Antwort als knapper, definitiver Satz – und scheint selbst durch die Kürze und das aktuelle Präsens etwas zu schließen. Die Lyrik ist unverkennbar – und der Schluss ist in seiner Knappheit zugleich verhaltend *und* erhebend.

Unsere letzte Passage hat Rudolf Heller zu Recht hervorgehoben:

Die Probleme, die durch ein Mißdeuten unserer Sprachformen entstehen, haben den Charakter der *Tiefe*. Es sind tiefe Beunruhigungen; sie wurzeln so tief in uns wie die Formen unserer Sprache, und ihre Bedeutung ist so groß wie die Wichtigkeit unserer Sprache. – Fragen wir uns: Warum empfinden wir einen grammatischen Witz als *tief*? (Und das ist ja die philosophische Tiefe.) (PU 2009: § 111)

Die pulsierende Wiederholung des Wortes „tief“, mit seinem langen [i:], das durch Kursivierung noch betont wird, gibt der Endfrage den Charakter einer quälenden Frage. „[T]iefe Beunruhigungen“ werden zu Abgründen. Aber der dozierende Ton der Frage hält sie unter der Decke.

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Mit diesen letzten Beispielen treffen wir auf Aphorismen. Diese prononcierteste aller „einfachen Formen“ gehört sicherlich mit zum Erhabenen. Allerdings stellen Aphorismen eine so ausgewogene Mischung aus Überraschung, Verzückung und Einfachheit dar, dass hier das Gleichgewicht

erreicht wird, das zum dritten Moment des Erhabenen gehört. Der Aphorismus ist ein Bruch- und Höhepunkt im Textfluß, in dem für eine Zeit lang Weisheit erreicht wird und „Friede[n] in den Gedanken“ (VB 1994: 91; MS 127, 82) einsetzt. Auch stilistisch. Da er eine Lösung darstellt, ist er aber auch wie alle Weisheit grundsätzlich einfach. Einfach – und trotzdem überwältigend.

Das Talent Wittgensteins für aphoristische Formulierungen wird schon im *Tractatus* meisterhaft bewiesen. Dort stehen sie im Vordergrund: apodiktisch, schneidend, immer alleinstehend. Auch später zeigt sich diese Tendenz deutlich. Allerdings so, dass die Aphorismen in den *Untersuchungen* erstaunlich bescheiden, ja fast unmerklich ausfallen. Man bemerkt sie zwar, aber eher beim zweiten Lesen.

Den typischen Rundungseffekt schaffen die Aphorismen durch ihre kunstvoll ausgearbeitete Form (auch in den *Untersuchungen*, selbst wenn es dort nicht in gleichem Maße auffällt) sowie durch ihre Kürze und den kategorischen Ton. Aber auch durch den Rhythmus, auf den ich mich hier konzentrieren will.

Manche Formeln tragen den absteigenden Rhythmus, der abschließt und abrundet – hier dank eines Semikolons (Heller 1978: 91):

Der Philosoph behandelt eine Frage; wie eine Krankheit. (PU 2009: § 255)
11 ; // 5.

Andere zeigen einen ausgesprochen fließenden Sprachrhythmus, der einen kurzen Satz reibungslos zu Ende bringt:

Die Welt und das Leben sind Eins. (T 1922: § 5.621)
Der *tiefe* Aspekt entschlüpft leicht. (PU 2009: § 387)

Einige weisen die Ausgewogenheit des symmetrischen Rhythmus auf. Im *Tractatus*:

Es gibt allerdings Unaussprechliches. // Dies *zeigt* sich, es ist das Mystische.
(T 1922: § 6.522)
10. // 9. (= 3, 6)
Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, // darüber muss man schweigen.
(T 1922: §7)
7, // 7.

So wie im milderen Ton der *Untersuchungen*:

[...] Einen Satz verstehen, heißt, // eine Sprache verstehen. Eine Sprache verstehen, heißt, // eine Technik beherrschen. (PU 2009: § 199)
7, // 7. 7, // 7.

Dieser zweigliedrige Rhythmus aber kommt auch sonst im Text und in *allen* Manuskripten so häufig vor, dass man ihn allgemeiner einer starken Tendenz von Wittgensteins Stil zuordnen kann. Ein besonders gesättigtes Beispiel dafür findet man in PU 2009: § 242:

[...] Richtig und falsch ist, was Menschen sagen; / und in der Sprache stimmen die Menschen überein. // Dies ist keine Übereinstimmung der Meinungen, / sondern der Lebensform.

Zur Verständigung durch die Sprache gehört nicht nur eine Übereinstimmung in den Definitionen, / sondern (so seltsam dies klingen mag) eine Übereinstimmung in den Urteilen. // Dies scheint die Logik aufzuheben; / hebt sie aber nicht auf. // – Eines ist, die Meßmethode zu beschreiben, / ein Anderes, Messungsergebnisse zu finden und auszusprechen. [...]

Nicht umsonst ist rhythmische Symmetrie das Markenzeichen des Stils der Bibel (Meynet 2021). Man kennt die poetische Kraft der Wiederholung, die aus der Widerspiegelung eines, also auch etwas Einfaches macht:

[...] Wie im Märchen die zwei Jünglinge [...]. Sie sind [...] in gewissem Sinne Eins. (T 1922: § 4.014)

Dies gilt, zumal der symmetrische Rhythmus meistens in Zusammenhang mit einfachen, kurzen Hauptsätzen vorkommt und sich fast eintönig in wortwörtlichen Wiederholungen niederschlägt. So vermittelt er den Eindruck von Gleichgewicht, Ebenmaß und Einfachheit.

*

Das Erhabene als stilistische Konstante durchzieht zwei so unterschiedliche Schreibweisen wie die des *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* und der *Philosophischen Untersuchungen*. Freilich fällt die „Schicht“ kalter Asche, unter der das Feuer glimmt, „dicker“ in den *Untersuchungen* aus als im *Tractatus* –,

aber diese Verhaltenheit führt nicht zum „Erlöschen“ der paradoxen Bewegung, die Erhebung bringt, sie macht sie womöglich noch beeindruckender.

Was besagt das über Wittgensteins Denken?

Die Ästhetik des Erhabenen markiert eine Kernfrage Wittgensteins, die quer durch seine ganze Philosophie verläuft, gerade weil sie nicht direkt verarbeitet werden kann: die Frage der *Grenze*. Schweigen ist Ausdruck einer tieferen Einsicht. Auch wenn das Spätwerk diesen Apophatismus weniger thematisiert als das Frühwerk, darf man die Klärungsarbeit der *Untersuchungen* „a refinement of the silence of the *Tractatus*“ nennen (Garver 2008: 15).

Womöglich schweigt Wittgenstein allerdings auch, um dadurch über die Grenze hinauzuweisen. Denn die Sehnsucht nach einem Jenseits der Grenze bleibt bestehen. Hier wird eine suggestive Zurückhaltung erforderlich: eine Art stilistischer Seiltänzerkunst. Wittgenstein thematisiert die Grenze nicht direkt, sondern dieses gleichzeitige Sich-Sehnen und Sich-Enthalten kommt im Denk- und Schreibstil performativ zum Ausdruck.

Diese Grundhaltung kristallisiert sich in der hier beschriebenen Ästhetik des Erhabenen.

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Wittgenstein's Picture

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Abstract

This paper aims at a discussion of the sense of the term “picture” in Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* and the relation of it to the everyday and colloquial use of the same term, via the employment of a simile. More specifically, it will be argued that Wittgenstein’s concept of “logical picture”, as it appears in the *Tractatus*, can be seen as the philosophically motivated extension and sublimation of the ordinary concept of picture. This extension is achieved through the transformation of the notion of an external and phenomenal likeness (between a picture and that which the picture depicts), relevant in the colloquial use of the concept of picture, into the notion of an internal and non-perceivable likeness. In other words, the everyday concept of picture is philosophically extended through the sublimation of a likeness that is visible and, on the surface, into a likeness that resides under the surface and is, in a way, hidden from view.

1

Suppose someone proceeded in the following way: He takes a picture of Wittgenstein (e.g., the one taken in 1929 on the occasion of the conferment of a Trinity College scholarship), makes a photocopy of it, then uses the photocopy to make a new photocopy of it and so on until 299 copies are produced. He then arranges the whole in the form of a book composed of the following 300 pages:

Page 1 is a picture of Wittgenstein,

page 2 is a photocopy of page 1,

page 3 is a photocopy of page 2,

... ,

... ,

page 300 is a photocopy of page 299.

The description of the preceding process makes one expect a book with all its pages alike, i.e., page 2 should be similar to page 1, page 3 should be similar to page 2 (and because of the previous step, page 3 should also be similar to page 1), ..., page 300 should be similar to page 299 and because of all the previous steps, page 300 should ultimately be similar to page 1.

Yet, it is an empirical fact that an actual photocopy machine is not 100% accurate, which means that an actual photocopy is a slightly distorted version of the original of which it is a copy. Thus, as the number of photocopies increases, the material resemblance of each new photocopy with the starting picture gradually diminishes until we are left with a copy that bears no resemblance at all to the starting picture (page 300 is an almost blank page).

However, there holds a formal relation between any photocopy of the above series and the starting picture, for any photocopy of that series is in a sense a copy of that first picture. Let "p" be the starting picture and "C(x)" the operation that gives the photocopy of a given picture x, then the series of the book's pages can be seen as the repeated application of the operation C(x) first to p and then to its own result. Accordingly, the book's pages can be expressed as: p, C(p), C(Cp), C(CCp), and so on. This way of presenting the series of photocopies makes apparent the formal relation that all of them have to page 1 (the 1929 picture of Wittgenstein).

Since every page of the book has a formal relation to page 1, all the book's pages can be regarded as pictures of Wittgenstein. For example, page 300 can be seen as a picture of Wittgenstein since it is a copy of a copy of a copy of...a copy of a picture of Wittgenstein. On the other hand, page 300 bears no physical resemblance to a picture of Wittgenstein at all (it could be a picture of anything and nothing). That is, even though all 300 pages can be conceived as pictures of Wittgenstein, they do not all look like pictures of Wittgenstein.

In other words, there are two senses in which a copy from the above series can be said to be a picture of Wittgenstein: 1) Because it is formally related to a picture of Wittgenstein (e.g. page 300) and 2) Because it looks like a picture of Wittgenstein (e.g. page 10).

We could say that all the copies are pictures of Wittgenstein in sense 1 (minus page 1) but not all of them are pictures of him in sense 2. If a page of the book is a picture of Wittgenstein in sense 2, then it is a picture of him apart from being part of the book. On the other hand, if a page is a picture of Wittgenstein in sense 1 exclusively, then it is a picture only by virtue of the copies that precede it and so, considered in-itself, it loses its pictorial character. Such a gradual distortion of the picture of Wittgenstein can also be seen as an

instantiation of the sorites paradox since it is not unambiguous where a limit should be drawn to distinguish pages that look like pictures of Wittgenstein from those that do not.

To sum up, the series of photocopies described above are to be seen as a representation of the gradual transformation of the sense of “picture of Wittgenstein” from something ordinary to something, as it were, sublimated and purified.

I assume that the expression “picture of Wittgenstein”, in its ordinary sense, presupposes a physical resemblance between the picture and Wittgenstein’s appearance. In contrast to this, “picture of Wittgenstein” can also be used in a more extended and sublimated sense in which the physical resemblance (between the picture and Wittgenstein’s appearance) drops out of consideration and a different criterion of what-it-is-to-be-a-picture-of takes its place, that is, the formal relation stressed above.

This kind of extension of the concept of “picture” (and the ensuing consideration as pictures of things which would not be considered as such in the ordinary sense of the term) is used as a simile for the use of the term “picture” in Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*.

2

The term “picture” (“Bild” in the German original) is an essential conception for the *Tractatus*. I neglect the many different meanings the word “Bild” carries in German (e.g., model, ...) and for simplicity, focus just on its meaning as picture. After all, it is a commonly accepted view that Wittgenstein offered the “picture theory” of language in the *Tractatus* and not, e.g., the “model theory” of language, etc. One of the central premises of *TLP* is the comparison of the sentences (propositions) of language with pictures. As a picture represents its subject matter, so does a proposition represent its sense. That is, a proposition of ordinary language functions essentially like a picture, it is a representation of a state of things, that can then happen to be the case or not. In the first case the proposition is true, in the second it is false, but in both cases the proposition is a representation of something distinct from itself, it is a picture and what it pictures is its sense.

Wittgenstein's use of the term "picture" is broad enough to include all different kinds of things (e.g., portraits, spatial pictures in general, but also non-spatial kinds of pictures). He argues that what all possible kinds of pictures have in common, as far as they all are pictures, is a certain parity of structure, a commonality of logical form between them and what they are pictures of. In other words, a picture and that which is depicted in it, should be structurally alike even if the former is a different kind of entity from the latter. Accordingly, Wittgenstein can be seen as giving expression to the formal and logical prerequisites that any picture (of whatever kind) has to satisfy just by virtue of the fact that it is a picture, i.e., that it is able to represent something different from itself.

Such a broad conception of "picture" makes it possible for Wittgenstein to consider as pictures things which would not be taken as such in the ordinary sense of the term (e.g. a musical score on paper, or the inscriptions on a gramophone record). It also enables him to consider as pictures the propositions of ordinary language, entities that *prima facie* do not look like pictures.

The sense in which Wittgenstein uses the term "picture" is best exemplified in proposition 4.014 of the *Tractatus*, where the relation between language (picture) and the world (what-is-pictured) is compared to the relation between the gramophone record of a musical piece, the written musical notes of the same piece and the sound waves that transmit it:

The gramophone record, the musical thought, the score, the waves of sound, all stand to one another in that pictorial internal relation, which holds between language and the world.

To all of them the logical structure is common.

(Like the two youths, their two horses and their lilies in the story. They are all in a certain sense one.) (TLP 1922: 4.014)

Even though the gramophone record and the written musical notes are about the same musical piece, when the two are placed side by side they look totally dissimilar. Despite this, Wittgenstein argues that there must be an internal

similarity between them, a common internal pattern shared by both, which is what makes the translation from the one to the other possible (TLP 1922: 4.0141).

In relation to the series of copies described above: If we say that the gramophone record and the written musical score have something in common, then the expression “in common” is used in a similar sense to “Page 300 has something in common with Wittgenstein”, and not in a similar sense to “Page 1 has something in common with Wittgenstein”. That is, the common pattern is not something perceived but something, as it were, residing under the surface forms of phenomena.

It must already be apparent that for such a broad use of the term "picture", the phenomenal similarity between the picture and the thing it pictures drops out of consideration as irrelevant as long as there is an internal structural parity between them. Put differently, the structural parity that Wittgenstein asserts there is, need not be accompanied by a phenomenal likeness between the picture and that which it pictures.

However, Wittgenstein also held that in the completely analyzed propositions of everyday language a material likeness between them and the situation they picture would be evident, or that the completely analyzed proposition would look more like a picture than its unanalyzed counterpart. E.g., the case of “ aRb ” which Wittgenstein considers as being a picture (in the ordinary sense of the term) of the fact of “ a being in a certain relation to b ” (TLP 1922: 4.012). In cases of everyday propositions where such a kind of physical resemblance is not visible (due to the misleading surface form of everyday propositions), logical analysis was supposed to be performed and the result would be a sentence’s true logical form in which the likeness between it and what it pictures would be rendered visible. In other words, the logical analysis of an ordinary sentence was supposed to un-cover the pictorial character it, a character that was nevertheless assumed to be already implicit in the unanalyzed ordinary sentence, albeit hidden under its surface form.

I wish to contrast this kind of super-extended use of the term “picture” with its use in colloquial language (from which the notion of "picture" is derived in the first place). In the latter use, the look-alikeness of the picture with the thing it

pictures is in a way relevant (I assume for convenience that a non-representational picture of something is not a picture in this primary sense). For example, a picture of Wittgenstein normally looks like Wittgenstein, or a picture of a chair normally looks like a chair. Whereas in the sublimated sense in which “picture” is used in the *Tractatus*, the identity of logical form between picture and thing pictured is seen as the essential characteristic (for the picturing relation to hold) and any kind of physical likeness between them retreats into the background. Plainly put, a picture, in such a sense, need not look like one.

We can sum up the situation by saying that a logical picture of a thing need not have an aesthetic (I use this word in its old sense, as denoting that which is perceived by the senses) likeness or similarity with that thing, it need not “look like a picture”. Whereas for something to be a picture in everyday English, it normally has to have an aesthetic likeness with that which it pictures, it has to look like a picture.

3

To conclude, Wittgenstein’s concept of “logical picture” in the *Tractatus* can be seen as a philosophically motivated extension and sublimation of the ordinary concept of picture. For such a concept, the logical parity of structure between picture and thing-pictured is considered as the essential feature and not any external likeness between them. Hence, from the ordinary notion of picture where such an external likeness plays a role, Wittgenstein arrives at a sublimated and purified notion of it, where this characteristic drops out as irrelevant.

As page 300 of the photocopy series can be said to be a picture of Wittgenstein in an extended sense of the term “picture” (that is, page 300 can be conceived as a picture of Wittgenstein even if it bears no physical resemblance to him), so the concept of logical picture can be seen as an extension of the everyday concept of picture (that is, picture and what-is-pictured must share a common logical form without necessarily looking alike). In other words, the *TLP* notion of (logical) picture can be seen as an extension of the everyday notion of picture that results from the sublimation of “aesthetic similarity” into “logical similarity” (the transformation of a perceivable and material likeness into one

that is formal and, as it were, hidden beneath appearances). In order to be able to regard the sentences of language as pictures, Wittgenstein has to rely on a sublimated notion of picture, he has to philosophically sublimate the common and the ordinary.

The series of photocopies presented above can also be seen as a visual exposition of a traditional characteristic of philosophical reasoning, namely, the non-ordinary conclusion (page 300 is a picture of Wittgenstein) that can follow from an ordinary premise (page 1 is a picture of Wittgenstein) and the strict following of an un-ambiguous rule (a copy of a picture of Wittgenstein is a picture of Wittgenstein).

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Of Pictures and Trivialities

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Abstract

Wittgenstein's picture theory of language (PTL) unites grammar and logic as two sides of the same coin. A consequence of this theory, which Wittgenstein refuses to accept, is that trivialities are ill-formed. This turns out to be precisely what is claimed by Logicality, a recently developed thesis about natural language which has been corroborated by a large amount of empirical arguments. Logicality also provides an explanation for Wittgenstein's dissonant attitude towards trivialities. The discussion on PTL and Logicality brings out reasons to take a closer look at the historical relationship between analytic philosophy and generative linguistics.

Wittgenstein (1921), i.e. the *Tractatus*, proposes that sentences are pictorial: "Der Satz ist ein Bild der Wirklichkeit" (4.01). They represent states of affairs in the same way as, say, the score of Schubert's *Unvollendete* represents the sound of this symphony: "Die Grammophonplatte, der musikalische Gedanke, die Notenschrift, die Schallwellen, stehen alle in jener abbildenden internen Beziehung zu einander, die zwischen Sprache und Welt besteht" (4.014). Thus, the structure of a sentence is isomorphic to the structure of the state of affairs it describes: "Der Konfiguration der einfachen Zeichen im Satzzeichen entspricht die Konfiguration der Gegenstände in der Sachlage" (3.21). Just as we can compare the musical score and the musical sound to see if they match, we can compare a sentence and reality to see if the sentence is true: "Die Wirklichkeit wird mit dem Satz verglichen" (4.05). Grammar, then, specifies what states of affairs can exist, as it specifies what sentences are well-formed, i.e. can be true: "Die Grenzen meiner Sprache bedeuten die Grenzen meiner Welt" (5.6). Logic would then "für sich selber sorgen", since inferences would be constrained by reality in the same way depiction is. Just as we cannot fail to see in a picture what must be the case if it is true: "Wir können uns, in gewissem Sinne, nicht in der Logik irren" (5.473). This is known as the "picture theory of language", henceforth PTL (Daitz 1953, Keyt 1964, Hintikka 1994).

One would think that a consequence of PTL is that trivialities, i.e. sentences which are tautological or contradictory, should not be part of the symbolism. In other words, tautology and contradiction should be excluded from the set of structures which can be generated by the combinatorial rules of the representational system. They should be "ill-formed", so the speak. This is

intuitive: just as we cannot use musical notation to produce a score which matches every or no possible piece of music, we cannot use linguistic signs to construct a model of every or no possible state of affairs. At various places in the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein seems to show awareness of this result: "Tautologie und Kontradiktion sind nicht Bilder der Wirklichkeit" (4.462). Since sentences, by hypothesis, are pictures of reality, it follows that "Sätze, die für jede Sachlage wahr sind, können überhaupt keine Zeichenverbindungen sein" (4.466). This means tautologies are ill-formed, and the same, of course, should hold for contradictions, which are the negation of tautologies: "Tautologie und Kontradiktion sind die Grenzfälle der Zeichenverbindung, nämlich ihre Auflösung" (4.466). However, Wittgenstein stops short of identifying triviality with ill-formedness. He calls combinations of signs, such as "Socrates is identical", which violate logical syntax "unsinnig" (nonsensical), and says, explicitly, that "Tautologie und Kontradiktion sind [...] nicht unsinnig", insisting that "sie gehören zum Symbolismus" (4.4611). Nevertheless, he ends up using an word which is very close, morphologically and semantically, to "unsinnig" to describe trivialities. The word is "sinnlos" (senseless): "Tautologie und Kontradiktion sind sinnlos" (4.461). Thus, nonsensical sentences and senseless sentences are both uninterpretable, but only the former violate the rules of logical syntax, i.e. are ungrammatical.

Wittgenstein's position, in my view, is inconsistent. The theory of language he proposes entails that trivialities are not sentences, as they are not pictures. However, Wittgenstein maintains that trivialities are sentences. Why does Wittgenstein commit to the last proposition?

I submit that Wittgenstein has committed an error in distinguishing between senseless and nonsensical sentences in the *Tractatus*. I would make the case that PTL is consistent only if this distinction is eliminated, i.e. only if senseless sentences are also nonsensical. My hypothesis is that the reason Wittgenstein does not consider trivialities ill-formed is phenomenological: he succumbs to the natural intuition that sentences can be trivial and well-formed at the same time. Thus, it would seem obvious to Wittgenstein, for example, that "it's raining and not raining", a sentence perceived as well-formed, has the analysis [rain & not-rain], which is a contradiction. This intuition, I propose, is an illusion, caused by the failure to recognize the proper "transformative analysis" of the sentence (Beaney 2002, 2003, 2016). Thus, I would say that

Wittgenstein falls prey to precisely the kind of problems he sets out to solve. What would have helped him out of the fly bottle in this case, I believe, is a theory of natural language which (i) identifies triviality with ill-formedness and (ii) shows what the proper transformative analysis of sentences such as "it's raining and not raining" is under which it is not trivial.

There is, as it turns out, such a theory. It has recently been developed in linguistic research and goes by the name of "Logicality". Logicality states that universal grammar has access to a natural deductive system which filters out and marks as ill-formed sentences expressing trivialities (von Fintel 1993, Krifka 1995, Fox 2000, Gajewski 2003, Fox and Hackl 2006, Chierchia 2013, Del Pinal 2019, Pistoia-Reda and Sauerland 2021, Del Pinal 2022). To illustrate, consider the contrast between the sentence "every student but John came", which is clearly perceived as well-formed, and the sentence "a student but John came", which is clearly not. This contrast, as pointed out by Peters & Westerståhl (2023), was observed as early as in the 14th century by William Ockham: "An exceptive proposition is never properly formed unless its non-exceptive counterpart is a universal proposition. Hence, "a man except Socrates is running" is not properly formed" (from *Summa Logicae* Part II:18, translated by Alfred J. Freddoso and Henry Schuurman). An influential account of the contrast is von Fintel (1993). The central idea in this account is that the word "but" has a semantics which results in the first sentence entailing 'every student who is not John came and it is not the case that every student came' and second sentence entailing 'a student who is not John came and it is not the case that a student came'. As the second entailment is contradictory, the second sentence, i.e. "a student but John came", is ill-formed. (For examples of ill-formedness caused by sentences being tautologous see Barwise and Cooper 1981, Bylinina and Nouwen 2018, Haida and Trinh 2020, among others.)

Logicality, of course, has to explain why "it's raining and not raining" feels perfectly well-formed. One variant of Logicality (Del Pinal 2019, Pistoia-Reda and Sauerland 2021, Del Pinal 2022) proposes that natural language grammar contains a covert, context-sensitive "rescaling" operator which attaches to "non-logical" expressions and shifts their meaning. The logical form of "it's raining and not raining" is then not [rain & not-rain] but [R(c)(rain) & not-R(c')(rain)], which is not a contradiction, because the meaning of R(c)(rain) might be

different from that of $R(c')$ (rain). In other words, the sentence can have the non-contradictory reading of 'it's raining in some sense and not raining in another sense'. Speakers, however, may not be consciously aware of this process. The interaction of the natural deductive system and universal grammar takes place at a subconscious level. It results in judgements of acceptability which speakers can intuit but not explicate. Note, importantly, that rescaling will not rescue "a student but John came", as no semantic modulation of the non-logical terms – i.e. "student", "John", "came" – could rescue the sentence from being a contradiction.

An issue arises which the proponents of Logicality must address and which is also raised by Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus*. This is the issue of how to distinguish between logical and non-logical constants? For Wittgenstein, the logical constants are those expressions that will disappear in the proper semantic analysis: what they express, namely entailment relations, would emerge from the pictorial nature of the symbols in the ideal notation. Until we succeed in constructing such a notation, however, we have to deal with logical constants in our non-ideal language. Wittgenstein says of such expressions that they do not represent: "Mein Grundgedanke ist, dass die 'logischen Konstanten' nicht vertreten" (4.0312). This description more or less captures our intuition about such words as "every", "a", and "but". The rescaling story works under the assumption that these words are logical constants. It is true, in some sense, that they do not "represent" anything. However, this description turns out to be too vague. It is not clear what would prevent me from saying, for example, that "every" refers to the relation 'is a subset of', which is the set of pairs $\langle X, Y \rangle$ such that X is a subset of Y . We need a more rigorous definition of logical constants.

It turns out, however, that such a definition is quite difficult to formulate. Gajewski (2003) suggests to define logical constants in terms of "permutation invariance". Logical constants, then, would be those expressions whose denotation remains constant across permutations of individuals in the domain. Gajewski's proposal is widely known and cited. However, it clearly cannot be the whole story, as it classifies predicates like "exists" or "is self-identical", which supposedly denote the universe of discourse U , as logical. Obviously, U remains the same under all permutations of the individuals in it. It can be observed, however, that these expressions do not incur ill-

formedness as we would expect: neither "every man exists" nor "every student is self-identical" is ill-formed, despite the fact that no matter how we modulate the meaning of "man" and "student", the sets they denote will be a subset of U. There would then be no reading of these sentences in which they are not trivial. This means that "exists" and "self-identical" are in fact not logical constants, as far as the language system is concerned. To the best of my knowledge, an adequate intensional definition of logical constants is still missing. At this stage, a wealth of data find illuminating explanations in terms of Logicality. These explanations appeal to an intuitive notion of "logical constants", but the distinction they draw between logical and non-logical terms is, in the end, stipulative. It is, of course, also possible that the distinction will turn out to be essentially stipulative, i.e. that analyticity is conventional by nature.

We can thus summarize Logicality as follows: (i) trivialities are ill-formed; (ii) seemingly trivial sentences that are perceived as well-formed are in fact not trivial.

Recall Wittgenstein's inconsistency: he takes trivialities to be well-formed even though the theory of language which he proposes, PTL, predicts them to be ill-formed. This inconsistency, I hypothesize, is due to his inadequate analysis of a class of natural language expressions: he analyzes a sentence such as "it's raining and not raining", which is perceived to be perfectly well-formed, as a contradiction. Logicality provides a way to overcome this inadequacy: it makes it possible to analyze this sentence as contingent.

I will now briefly comment on some points of contact between analytic philosophy and theoretical linguistics which have been brought into relief by our discussion.

Analytic philosophy began with the insight that the "logical form" of a sentence, i.e. one which captures its semantic properties, might be quite different from its "surface form", i.e. one which captures its syntactic, morphological and phonological properties. The most well-known example is perhaps Russell's (1905) analysis of definite descriptions, according to which the sentence "the present King of France" has the logical form which is true if and only if there is there is exactly one king of France who is bald. This constitutes

a "revolution" in the way we think about natural language sentences: semantic analysis must be carried out on a structure different from one which inputs pronunciation or writing. Beaney (2016: 235) puts it succinctly: "[T]here is no decomposition without interpretation". The term "interpretation" here is to be understood as 'translation' or 'transformation'. Thus, semantic analysis consists of (i) the step of "transformative analysis" which translate the surface form of the sentence into its logical form, and (ii) the step of "decompositional analysis" which dissects the logical form and computes its consequences (Beaney 2000, 2002, 2003, 2016, 2017).

This means, effectively, that a sentence is associated with at least one structure which inputs pronunciation and one other structure which inputs interpretation. Transformative analysis is the step that relates the two. As it happens, the idea that a sentence is associated with more than one structure is foundational to modern linguistics. It brought about the "generative revolution" in the 1950's (Chomsky 1988). In the current "minimalist" version of generative grammar which has established itself more or less as canonical (Chomsky 1991, 1995, Radford 2004), a sentence is associated with two structures: a "phonological form" (PF) and a "logical form" (LF). PF inputs pronunciation while LF inputs interpretation. PF and LF are related by "transformational rules" which build complex structures from lexical items step by step. The LF of a sentence, just like the logical form which results from transformative analysis, can differ drastically from how we hear the sentence or see it written on paper. We can thus witness an interesting parallel between the "analytic revolution" in philosophy and the "generative revolution" in linguistics. A notable fact is that the former came much earlier. Its beginning can be dated to Frege's 1879 debut, *Begriffsschrift*, wherein he proposes quantificational predicate logic (Beaney 2016: 228). The beginning of generative grammar, in contrast, came with Chomsky's 1955 magnum opus, *The Logical Structure of Linguistic Theory*, wherein he proposes transformations. And it would take the linguists about 20 years more to come up with the idea of LF as a structure which disambiguates scopal relations between quantificational elements in the sentence (May 1977, Chomsky 1981, Huang 1982, May 1985). What is the reason for this delay?

The answer, I believe, lies in the difference between early analytic philosophers and generative grammarians with respect to their view on the

surface form of natural language sentences. For the former, this form is haphazard. Serious investigation can only begin after transformative analysis, which is carried out by the philosopher contemplating on what the sentence means. However, the step of transformative analysis is itself shrouded in mystery: there is no theory of it. Coming up with the logical form of a sentence is, therefore, similar to scientific discovery in its spontaneous and revelatory nature. In contrast, generative grammarians take the relation between PF and LF to be systematic: both are derived by transformational rules, which are codified in a unified theory. It is understandable that it takes more time to figure out how something works than to realize that it works.

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Acknowledgement

This work is supported by the ERC Advanced Grant "Speech Acts in Grammar and Discourse" (SPAGAD), ERC-2007-ADG 787929.

The Woeful World of Negative Facts - Langer and Wittgenstein on What is Not the Case

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Abstract

Susanne K. Langer was an early recipient of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* and repeatedly drew on his picture theory in her early studies on the logic of symbols. In her paper "Facts: The Logical Perspectives of the World" (1933), she also critically discusses the *Tractatus*' "woeful world of facts". Her main criticism is that facts are not complexes of objects, and metaphysically final constituents of the world, but are one of many possible logical (propositional) perspectives of the world. While some of her criticisms are valid and her conception of facts can shed light on some of the problems in TLP, Langer's approach has its own shortcomings, especially when it comes to negative facts, which she conceives as mere background "automatically determined" by some other defined form (cf. 1933: 185). However, this overlooks the logical connection between a positive fact, or its expression in a proposition and precisely its negation, which, according to Wittgenstein, consists in "that negation must be related to the logical place determined by the negated proposition" (TLP 2016: 4.0641) and does so through an opposition of sense (cf. TLP 2016: 4.0621). In the following, I want to bring Langer's and Wittgenstein's views on (negative) facts into dialogue and show that both approaches can complement each other in a fruitful way. To this end, I will first briefly present Langer's critique of Tractarian facts, then outline the shortcomings of her conception of negative facts and finally propose a Wittgensteinian solution to the problem of negative facts.

1. A Critique of *Tractarian* Facts

Langer begins her paper "Facts: The Logical Perspectives of the World" (1933) with the question "What is a fact?", which for her is "one of the great mysteries of philosophy" (cf. *ibid.*: 178). This mystery lies above all in the nature of facts, which oscillates between propositional and "object-like" structure. Following the logical-atomistic views prevailing in the early 20th century, "facts" have the same form as propositions in that they are "about" certain entities and that "just as the logical system can be analysed into propositions [...], down to the 'atomic' type, so 'the world divides into facts', with the 'atomic' facts as its ultimate terms (*ibid.*: 179). According to Langer, this view contains two premises: first, an atomistic conception of facts and second, a Wittgensteinian picture theory of the proposition (cf. *ibid.*: 180). That is, an atomic proposition pictures an atomic fact by combining the object-names in a similar way as the objects themselves are combined in the atomic fact, so that an atomic fact can be represented by a completely singular proposition, i.e. in Wittgenstein's terminology: an elementary proposition (cf. *ibid.*; TLP 2016: 4.21). According to

Langer, however, the premise of atomic facts and picture theory are incompatible and lead to a paradox: for if, according to Wittgenstein, in the elementary proposition “[o]ne name stands for one thing, and another for another thing, and they are connected together. And so the whole, like a living picture presents the atomic fact” (TLP 2016: 4.0311), then the question arises how this connection, i.e., the relation of objects is represented in the elementary proposition. While the configuration, the relation of objects in the atomic fact, is not an ontologically distinct entity, but precisely the atomic fact (as *Sach-Verhalt*), propositions must contain more than mere names in order to depict an atomic fact as a *configuration* of objects at all: they must contain relations or properties, i.e. something that is not particular, but universal (cf. Langer 1933: 181; cf. Felappi 2017: 44).

The paradox stated by Langer thus is that “a fact whose factors are all particulars, is represented by a proposition whose factors separately denote the items that compose the fact, but the factors of the proposition do not all denote particulars” (Langer 1933: 181). It arises, she states, from a “tacit premise” about the nature of analysis of which Wittgenstein, but also Russell and Moore, were not aware, namely “that a *complete analysis* is always exhaustive of the *possibilities of analysis* in its object” and – as she adds – “this is the axiom which I believe is false” (ibid.). This axiom is false because an analysis always refers only to formalised “conceptual constructions” and therefore involves an abstraction from the content, from reality, which “might conceivably have some other form” (ibid.). The common mistake made by Wittgenstein and his fellows, then, was “to confuse the ultimate products of analysis with the necessary elements for synthesis”, which is akin to assuming “that, because a line can be analysed into an infinity of unextended points, therefore an infinite number of unextended points can *compose* a line”, while it is clear that “an infinity of points will not in itself produce a line, because the points are abstractions – locations *on* the line, not parts of it” (ibid., 183). That is, just because we can analyse propositions into their constituents, that does not mean that we can analyse or *divide* the world into facts (TLP 2016: 1.2), with the “atomic facts” as its ultimate terms consisting of “a combination of objects” (ibid.: 2.01).

Rather, it is the confusion of things with their propositional expression that “has given rise to the idea that facts are both the actual constituents of reality,

and the content of propositions” (Langer 1933: 184). But what then *are* facts according to Langer?

The answer is, obviously, that facts are not complexes of real objects, and metaphysically final constituents of the world. They are not *events*. A fact is that which is expressible in a proposition and is a *perspective of an event*. As such, it is always an abstraction, involving one of the possible formulations of the event. No matter how detailed it may be, it is still formal, i.e., dependent upon some “logical language”. (ibid.: 185)

Facts, for Langer, are “propositional in form” (ibid.), they are propositional or logical perspectives of the world, or in Langer’s terminology: of an event. (Obviously, the notion of “event” that Langer uses here to avoid difficulties with her earlier conception of reality as a Kantian thing-in-itself raises questions of its own – but these are questions that cannot be answered here; cf. Felappi 2017.) Thus, for Langer, the world does not divide into a disjointed “mosaic” of facts (cf. Black 1971: 28), rather, the world and the objects have a density that allows for many possible factual perspectives. By rejecting the conception of facts as complexes of objects and as metaphysically ultimate constituents of the world, some problems of the *Tractarian* conception of facts and, connected with it, of names, elementary propositions and logical analysis can be illuminated. For, the representation of facts by the proposition is neither a symmetrical relation nor the only representation of the world, but rather one of many possible, propositional representations of the world. However, Langer’s approach has its own shortcomings, especially when it comes to negative facts, which I will explain in due briefness below.

2. Langer’s Woeful World of Negative Facts

Langer specifies her view of the relationship between propositions, facts and events as follows: While there are past, present and future events, facts are general, particular, positive or negative; and while *events* are *referred to* by a proposition, *facts* are what propositions *express* (cf. Langer 1933: 186). Unfortunately, Langer remains quite silent about negative facts in particular and connected to that, negative propositions (cf. Felappi 2017). In what follows, I will mention some problems arising from Langer’s all too brief account of negative facts, leaving aside questions of truth and falsity in this context,

partly for the sake of simplicity, partly because Langer herself found that “[t]ruth and falsity are, after all, metaphysical gods, not to be worshipped openly in the realm of logic” (1927: 127). In her paper on facts (1933), Langer explains negative facts as follows: first, “a negative fact is simply a structure which is automatically determined whenever some other form [e.g. a proposition] is distinguished from the general system [i.e., logical language] – it is the background, the portion of the system rejected by the definition of a form” and second, “[a]ll the positive and negative *facts* which can be simultaneously asserted of an *event*, constitute its presence in a universe of discourse” (ibid.: 185; ann. JT. Since Langer has a very broad concept of logic, encompassing the study of *all* symbols, including e.g., poetry and music, she speaks here generally of a “form” instead of a proposition and the “general system” as the respective symbol system of the form, i.e. here of logical language).

This view is problematic in several respects: First, Langer explains negative facts themselves in negative terms, merely as that which is automatically rejected into the background by a defined form, e.g. a proposition. Negative facts are thus *all* those perspectives that are not expressed by the proposition or, in other words, *everything* that is not the case according to the proposition’s assertion. In her second explanation of negative facts, Langer seems to limit them at least by their reference to an event, insofar as all positive and negative facts that can be simultaneously stated as propositional perspectives of a given event “constitute its presence in a universe of discourse”, where “the event’s universe of discourse” means something similar to its “logical space” in Wittgenstein’s terminology. That is, a negative fact, according to Langer, is anything that is excluded by the assertion of a proposition about an event – but that still seems to be a lot of things!

And it leads to the following problem: if negative facts are all those logical perspectives that are not the proposition’s assertion “p” about an event, this means that negative facts are precisely not only $\sim p$, but also m, n, o, etc., *if* m, n, o, etc., are *not* p. Unfortunately, Langer says nothing explicit here about the connection between negative facts and negative propositions. But if, according to Langer, facts themselves have a propositional structure and are expressed by sentences, it seems plausible to assume that negative sentences, i.e. sentences with negations, express negative facts. For, if we do not want to

deploy a truth-maker, the only way to determine *what* is not the case is by means of a negative sentence, and this is not *everything* that is not the case. But this is precisely what Langer's conception of negative facts as the background of a positive proposition does not provide since, e.g. *m*, *n*, *o* are excluded as negative facts not only by the assertion "p", but also by that of "q" (if *m*, *n*, *o*, are not *q*). In other words, negative facts cannot only be the background lying outside the positive proposition but must be determinable by what is negated in the negative proposition, so that the logical connection between a positive fact and precisely *its* negation is unambiguous. Langer's negative facts are merely *contrasts* to positive facts, not their *contradictions*, which we want to express in logical language. Neither does it seem very plausible to Russell "to say that in addition to facts there are also these curious shadowy things going about such as 'That today is Wednesday' when in fact it is Tuesday. I cannot believe they go about the real world" (Russell 1918: 56). Apart from the fact that, as Russell continues, this is simply difficult to imagine (cf. *ibid.*), the fact "That today is Wednesday" is, as said, not only a negative fact when in fact today is Tuesday but also when in fact today is Monday.

I don't think Langer really meant to take such a view of negative facts, but her truncated account of negative facts as "the portion of the system rejected by the definition of a form" seems to amount to such a view of negative facts as "curious shadowy" – though not things, but – logical perspectives "in the background" of a positive fact. In the following, I would like to present an alternative conception of negative facts with Wittgenstein, which avoids the problems of Langer's "woeful world of negative facts", in particular by taking into account the logical connection between a positive fact and its negation.

3. Wittgenstein on What is Not the Case

Wittgenstein comments more extensively on negative facts and negative propositions than Langer, dealing in particular with the relation between a positive proposition and its negation: A negative fact, according to Wittgenstein, is first of all the "non-existence" of atomic facts and thus the counterpart of the positive fact as the "existence of atomic facts" (TLP 2016: 2.06). Negative facts are what is not the case, nevertheless, what is not the case, belongs to the world just as much as that which is the case, for the world is the

“totality of facts” (ibid.: 1.1), i.e., the world consists of the “facts in *logical space*” (ibid.: 1.13; emph. JT). In language we can map this logical space and (also) say what is not the case. However, in doing so, precisely because of the thing-like nature of atomic facts, it seems clear that the non-existence of a configuration of things in the proposition cannot be depicted as such directly by representing objects through signs (cf. ibid.: 5.5151). In other words, we cannot represent pictorially what is not the case, but can only deny in the proposition the picture of what is the case. Referring to an early diary note, Wittgenstein later explains as follows: “I can draw a picture of people fencing with each other; but not of two people not fencing with each other (i.e. not a picture that shows only that)” (BT 2005: 89; cf. NB 1979: 29/09/14). Thus, the sentences “p” and “~p” have “opposite senses, but to them corresponds one and the same reality” (TLP 2016: 4.0621), i.e., “the signs ‘p’ and ‘~p’ can say the same thing” and this “shows that the sign ‘~’ corresponds to nothing in reality” (ibid.). Indeed, as Wittgenstein writes in the *Tractatus*, this is his basic idea, namely “that the ‘logical constants’ do not represent” (ibid.: 4.0312). Accordingly, “[e]very proposition must already have a sense” and the sense is precisely that which the affirmation affirms and the negation denies (ibid.: 4.064), thereby inverting or opposing it to the affirmation (cf. ibid.: 5.2341). Like Frege, Wittgenstein conceives of negation as an operation which shows “how one can get from one form of proposition to another” (ibid.: 5.24) and can further be characterised by the fact that it can “undo the effect of another” through iterative application, so that operations can also cancel each other out, as in double negation (ibid.: 5.253; cf. NB 1979: 23/01/15; PU 2009: §447). If negation is an operation that is applied to a content, this means, according to Frege, that it is “in need for completion”, just as a function is only “saturated” with an argument (cf. Frege 1960: 132). According to Wittgenstein, this means that “one could say that negation must be related to the logical place determined by the negated proposition” (TLP 2016: 4.0641).

At first, this may sound similar to Langer’s explanation of negative facts as the background automatically determined by a defined form, e.g. a positive proposition as rejected – for here, too, the negative is fundamentally determined by the reference to the negated, i.e. the positive proposition. However, for Wittgenstein this reference is much more specific than for Langer, or rather, the logical place determined by the negated proposition is

not simply its entire background, and precisely because of this, the ambiguities that characterise Langer's account of negative facts can be avoided. Thus, in the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein considers, quite in the spirit of Frege's conception of "unsaturation of negation", that "the sign of a negative proposition [must] be constructed with that of the positive proposition" (ibid.: 5.5151) and that it is precisely for this reason that "every proposition has only one negative, since there is only one proposition that lies completely outside it" (ibid.: 5.513). For we can only "say that two propositions are opposed to one another if they have nothing in common with one another" (ibid.). That is, by containing and operationally negating the picture of the positive, i.e. the picture of what is the case, every proposition, according to Wittgenstein, has only one negative which is completely, i.e. contradictorily, and not merely contrarily opposed to it, or which is unambiguously determined as that which is not the case. This is precisely the advantage of his view over Langer's diffuse background of negative facts, namely, that it is specified *what* is not the case since "not-p" does not mean "everything else but p" (cf. Glock 2000: 334). For when one says that something is not the case, e.g. that "They're not fencing with each other", then this "doesn't mean that that isn't being talked about. That's precisely what is being talked about; it's (just) that it's being ruled out" (BT 2005: 89).

To sum up: I have tried to show that Langer's and Wittgenstein's conceptions of (negative) facts complement each other, insofar as Langer's conception of facts as logical perspectives of the world represents an alternative solution to the *Tractarian* problem that elementary propositions cannot only represent a concatenation of simple names but must always already contain something universal. On the other hand, Wittgenstein's conception of negative propositions avoids Langer's indeterminacy or ambiguities of negative facts. What follows from the complement of the two approaches is that negative facts are only a special propositional form of reference to what is the case. *Woeful*, then, is the "world of negative facts" at most insofar as it does not exist as a *world* or background but is only a modified logical perspective of the world.

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Acknowledgement

I thank Simon Wimmer, Giulia Felappi and Mats Thunestvedt for helpful discussions on Susanne Langer and negative facts.

The Notion of Negative Fact in the Early Works of Russell and Wittgenstein

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Abstract

This paper consists in a comparative study of the notions of negative fact in the early works of Russell and Wittgenstein. How to account for our ability to think both that it is false that what is not the case is the case and incorrect to think that it is true that what is not the case is the case? Are the truth and the correctness of such thoughts and of their expressions meant to be insured by the existence of negative facts? Or do we need to think of negative facts differently? In his early works, Russell argues not only that negative facts exist, but also that the philosophical problem they suffice to solve is real. While in the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein dissolves the philosophical problem by letting the superfluity and misleadingness of the affirmation of the existence of negative facts be seen as such.

This paper consists in a comparative study of the notions of negative fact in the early works of Russell and Wittgenstein which addresses three questions. The first is that of the reasons for which both Russell and Wittgenstein agreed on the philosophical importance of accounting for the intelligibility of negative facts. The second is that of the reasons for which it is both philosophically and plainly important to account for the intelligibility of negative facts, either by construing a notion of negative fact as Russell did, or, by clarifying the notion of negative fact as Wittgenstein did. The third is of the explanation of the contributions of each philosopher to the philosophical resolution or dissolution of this philosophical problem. Thereby, I hope to contribute to the achievement of a better understanding of the similarities and divergences of Russell's philosophical project in *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism* and that of Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus*.

Russell expresses as follows the philosophical problem, also addressed by Wittgenstein, which concerns the intelligibility of negative facts: "You have a feeling that there are only positive facts, and that negative propositions have somehow or other got to be expressions of positive facts." (Russell, 2010: 41-42) The misleading requisite addressed by Russell is one according to which negative propositions, or negative sentences in the grammatical sense, *must be* expressions of positive facts. The repugnance Russell expresses stems from the alleged necessity that to negative propositions *correspond* positive facts, that the possibility to form negative propositions necessarily implies their

correspondence to positive facts. That which is thereby *a priori* negated is that a negative proposition can *suffice* to express a negative fact, and that a negative proposition does not need to *correspond* to some fact or to express some *other* fact.

Russell and Wittgenstein agree with the common sense assumption of the superfluity of ontological counterparts to account for negative propositions. But they disagree with the common sense assumption formulated by Russell, according to which the non-existence of ontological counterparts to negative facts would imply the negation of the existence of negative facts. They attempted either to establish or clarify that a negative fact can both be truly and really expressed by a negative proposition. According to Russell, one should *a priori* establish that to a negative fact *corresponds* a negative proposition. The epistemological construction in which sense data theory consists provides groundings or insure that a logical clarification of the expression of our thoughts may be intelligible. Such theory should render possible the establishment of pertinent correspondence between propositions and facts, and thereby, insure that propositions are *about* the world, despite the possibility of skeptical denials of the existence and knowledge of the external world. But then, one central difficulty is that meanings of words could result entirely from assignations. By contrast, Wittgenstein calls into question the need of such *a priori* establishment of the correspondence of a negative fact to a negative proposition, and proposes a philosophical dissolution of the problem of the reality of negative facts. As brought out by Floyd (2006) and Sullivan (2013), Wittgenstein does indeed reject the *a priori*. But contrary to the approach proposed by Oaklander and Miracchi (1980), this dissolution does not amount to a rejection of the notion of negative fact. For, the conceivability of the verification of *some* negative facts does not imply that the possibility of the verification of the truth of a negative fact should be *coordinated* to the negative proposition. The logical clarification of the expressions of our thoughts is not based upon or rendered possible by an epistemological theory. This aspect of Wittgenstein's method with the *Tractatus* has been brought out by Conant (2002) and Diamond (1981). Wittgenstein rather renders clear that propositions compatible with scientific theories whose validity can possibly be established can be clarified by analysis. Thereby is not called into question the possibility of assignation of meaning to

propositional components, but the sufficiency of the model of arbitrary meaning assignment to account for the monstration by a proposition of its sense.

Russell's resolution of the problem of the intelligibility of negative facts

Russell proposed the construal of a logically perfect and ideal language (Russell, 2010: 25-26), to address, among other problems, the fantasy, or myth, of a private language. Such language, devoid of the ambiguities of actual languages, could analytically be construed by the establishment of a one-to-one correspondence between the components of a proposition and those of a fact, except logical connectives. Such language would suffice to exhibit the logical structure of the asserted or denied facts. One-to-one correlations would foundationally be needed to be established between words and objects to reach some understanding, ungrounded otherwise. Such correlations would be foundational of mutual understanding and guarantee the neutral evaluability of facts, characteristic of neutral monism (Klement, 2018: 174). But then, the establishment of the truth of negative propositions, composed as positive ones of propositional elements correlated to objects would not be possible, except if some truth-functional composites would *correspond* to negative facts. Some truth-functional composites, negative ones, would thus need to correspond as others to correlations of objects that could and would need to be established for a negative proposition to correspond to a negative fact. But how can such correspondence be established, if that to which a negative proposition would correspond would precisely need to be that whose existence is denied by the proposition?

Russell's solution is the correspondence of elements of distinct *classes*. The attainment of ultimate simples "out of which the world is built, and that those simples have a kind of reality not belonging to anything else." (Russell, 2010: 111) would thereby be rendered possible. That is to say, analysis not only needs to be possible, but also to end with unarbitrarily determined correct answers. For Russell and Wittgenstein, the condition for the achievability of analysis is that some propositions, atomic ones, *express* atomic facts. For, the alleged incapacity to affirm that which is not the case could not ground our abilities to reject, whenever required, falsities or injustices. According to

Russell, to account for the groundedness of our ability to reject, whenever required, the false and the unjust, we would have *to re-establish* the intelligibility of polyadic relations (Russell, 2010: 26). We could not but have to start *by reconstruing* the elements of the relations of separate things and their relations to render these intelligible again. Such move obviously raises the objection of infinite regress (Descombes, 2014: 144).

Wittgenstein's criticisms of Russell's resolution of the problem of the intelligibility of negative facts

As Russell, Wittgenstein is concerned with logical symbolism but does not suggest that everyday language could be imperfect by contrast with logical symbolism. A non-logically construed ambiguous language could not and should not be opposed to a logically construed unambiguous language. Wittgenstein acknowledges that Russell showed that the assumption of the equivalence between the apparent and the real form of a proposition can be misleading (TLP, 4.0031). But he also renders clear that equally misleading would be to reject the possibility of such equivalence, required to account for analysis. Such rejection would involve both renouncing the intelligibility of novelty and the systematic rejection of the orderliness or articulateness of propositions of colloquial or everyday language (TLP, 5.5563). Wittgenstein clarifies a *plain* assumption that should eventually not be discarded by any philosophical attempt, that true negative propositions are *sufficient* to express negative facts: negative facts can be accounted for.

Russell and Wittgenstein criticized the distinction of the notions of being and existence implied by metaphysical conceptions that sought to guarantee our ability to express ourselves through correlated *categories* which would enable us to distinguish possible from impossible combinations of sensical elements, and thereby, sense from non-sense. Nevertheless, the criticism Russell addressed to such conceptions implied granting that our ability to express ourselves could and should be *restored* against any such conception. The substitutability of *correspondence* of correlated elements comprised in types or classes should be affirmed to oppose conceptions according to which correlations of categories would render us able to articulate propositions by enabling us to relevantly distinguish possible from impossible combinations of

sensical elements. When Russell argued “that there were negative facts” (Russell, 2010: 42); he insisted about the importance of not dogmatizing, of not considering negative facts as existences to *affirm*: “I do not say positively that there are, but there may be” (Russell, 2010: 42). Russell thereby discommits the consideration of the philosophical problem of the intelligibility of negative facts from the assumption of the necessity of the existence of an ontological counterpart correlated to true negative propositions. He thereby proposes a new solution. But as remarked by Wittgenstein, this solution can immediately raise concerns with respect to the situatedness of logical space, of the whole of possibilities. Some distinction between conceivable and relevant possibilities should indeed be accountable for *from within* logical space. This is one of the main motives for which Wittgenstein calls into question both the possibility and intelligibility of would-be attempts to *restore* our ability to express ourselves against or despite categorial conceptions.

With his theory of types, Russell dispenses with the task of the coordination of a negative proposition to a positive proposition and thereby to a positive fact, whose need is asserted by Raphael Demos: “a negative proposition is an ambiguous description of some positive proposition [...]” (Demos, 1917: 196). But Wittgenstein further dispenses with Russell’s theory. The adequacy of our notion of proposition is indeed called into question by the defense of Russell’s theory: “that the word ‘proposition’, in the sense in which we ordinarily try to use it, is a meaningless one” (Russell, 2010: 103). By contrast, Wittgenstein’s approach in the *Tractatus* is that *any* philosophical conception of our ordinary notion of proposition needs to be able to account for the complete intelligibility of propositions. Russell’s paradox needs to be dispensed with. Wittgenstein summarizes Russell’s intuition for conceiving the theory of types in 3.332: “No proposition can make a statement about itself, because a propositional sign cannot be contained in itself”. The propositional sign having been defined as “the sign through which we express the thought” (TLP, 3.12) and as the *fact* “that its elements, the words, are combined in it in a definite way” (TLP, 3.14), the impossibility for the propositional sign to be contained in itself can be established as follows. Were we to admit that the propositional sign could be contained in itself, then we would also have to (misleadingly) admit that any propositional sign could not have served to express any determinate thought. Wittgenstein’s answer to Russell thusly involves seeing in which sense

Russell's theory is unconcerned with a certain indetermination within language that Wittgenstein provided us the means to dispense with. By contrast with Russell, Wittgenstein urges us not to ascribe any role to the meaning of a sign in logical syntax. For the purpose of the implementation of a logical notation, the description of expressions is necessary and sufficient (TLP, 3.33).

Wittgenstein specifies the process through which the formalization of the proposition can be achieved without Russell's theory in 3.315. Two aspects of such process should retain our attention: (i) as a step in the implementation of logical notations, the process does not depend on a particular linguistic convention but on the nature of the proposition. Russell's paradox vanishes in the *Tractatus*, without the introduction of allegedly logical *a posteriori* principles which could have forbidden illegitimate combinations of propositional elements. The vanishment of the paradox is rather achieved by the clarification that a logical accident against which insurance would be required could not have happened anyway. (ii) Correlatively, the starting point of the formalization of the proposition is necessarily *a posteriori* and the formalization process necessarily happens *a posteriori*. Propositions and images are facts (TLP, 2.141 – 3.14), and there is no such thing as an *a priori* true image (TLP, 2.225). The starting point of a logical analysis could not have been an *a priori truth*. The formalization of components parts and of the whole proposition could not have led to *a priori* propositions supposedly meant to restrictively limit that which can be said. Wittgenstein thus showed that the establishment of a correspondence between elements of distinct classes to solve the alleged problem of the correspondence between true negative propositions and negative facts is superfluous and misleading.

Wittgenstein's dissolution of the alleged correspondence problem

In sections 2.04-2.06 of the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein reconceives the notion of "world" by means of the distinction between facts and states of affairs and the notion of the space of possible states of affairs. The totality of actually holding states of affairs is the world (TLP, 2.04). Facts are acknowledged as determining the world as a whole by determining both what is the case and what is not the case (TLP, 1.11-1.12). Similarly, the totality of holding states of

affairs is also acknowledged to determine those which do not hold (TLP, 2.05). Nevertheless, Wittgenstein does *not* claim that there is a totality of non-holding states of affairs. Wittgenstein distinguishes a state of affairs that holds from one that does not by calling the former a positive fact and the latter a negative fact. Yet the distinction of the positive and the negative does not apply to states of affairs. The distinction between facts and states of affairs matters to disarm the difficulty mentioned by Russell which can arise in a discussion about negative facts.

Wittgenstein provides us with means to dissolve the aporia as follows. First, as with positive facts, equating negative facts with things, the ones named by the words used to designate those things, is misleading. A negative fact is not some *thing*, or an *entity*, that could and would be missing for or to someone. Rather, for example, something can be absent or lacking to someone, and that negative fact can be noted, envisaged, or remarked. Second, similarly to positive facts, each negative fact does not involve only one entity in isolation from all others. The absence of something from a given place can be remarked as we can imagine that a given thing could have occupied that place, as *could have held* a state of affairs that does not hold in a given situation. Third, as facts, states of affairs do not mutually depend on each other (TLP, 2.061): facts are independent of each other, that is to say, necessarily logically independent from each other (TLP, 6.37). Fourth, that a state of affairs holds or not cannot be inferred from whether another state of affairs holds (TLP, 2.062). Thus to affirm both that contradictions are formal and that a priori propositions are vacuous could not have involved a contradiction.

Insofar as a depicting state of affairs, a proposition, necessarily depicts a state of affairs which could have held, the way in which a true negative proposition can and does suffice to express a negative fact can be explained. Exactly as we can *use* a scale to measure, we can *use* a proposition to determine whether reality is as depicted by that proposition (TLP, 2.1512). We can provide to ourselves a correct answer to a determinate closed question concerning the truth of a fact by comparing reality to the proposition. The determinacy of the result of this comparison is involved by the determinacy of the result of the operation of negation (TLP, 5.2341; Narboux, 2009: 124). This point also settles the question of the bipolarity of the proposition in the *Tractatus* as the relevance of the realizability of the operation of negation could not be entailed

by its achievability. As remarked by Diamond (2019: 223), the notion of bipolarity is of limited usefulness. Propositions of logic (TLP, 5.44, 6.1, 6.121) and propositions (TLP, 3.14, 3.141, 3.251) could neither be mutually exclusive nor indistinct. We can determine whether a depicted fact holds by means of a depicting fact. In a given situation we can obtain a correct answer to a given question that we can pose to ourselves by determining whether holds or not a given depicted fact (the state of affairs) depicted by a depicting one (the proposition). If the depicted state of affairs holds, then the fact is positive. If the depicted fact does not hold, then the fact is negative. True negative propositions are thusly adequate to express negative facts. Surely this is not a possibility that could have awaited to be established by means of a philosophical conception. But this *plain* assumption has been philosophically rendered clearer by Wittgenstein with the *Tractatus*.

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Acknowledgement

This paper has been centrally inspired by achievements of James Conant, Cora Diamond, Juliet Floyd, Jean-Philippe Narboux, and Peter Sullivan, concerning the philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein. I am grateful to them. I am also grateful to Donald Cornell, for his very helpful suggestions and remarks on earlier versions of this text.

The Problem of the Will in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*

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Abstract

At the beginning of the 20th century, opinions on the problem of the nature of the will appeared divided between the empiricist tradition and Schopenhauer's philosophy. It is common knowledge that the young Wittgenstein was influenced primarily by Schopenhauer; however, it is reasonable to ask how much his early views on the nature of the will were influenced by the empiricists. In this paper we analyze Wittgenstein's statements on the nature of the will in the *Tractatus* and show that they present a fragment of a theory obviously closer to Kant's and Schopenhauer's philosophy and evincing only limited empiricist influence.

Introduction

At the beginning of the 20th century, opinions on the problem of the nature of the will appeared divided between the empiricist tradition (Hobbes, Locke, James, Russell) and Schopenhauer's philosophy. It is common knowledge that Wittgenstein was influenced primarily by Schopenhauer at the beginning of his philosophical work (Schroeder 2011). It may still be asked how much of the young Wittgenstein's views, which we find in the *Notebooks* and the *Tractatus*, were influenced by empiricism, and specifically by James.

Wittgenstein had already encountered James's work during his studies at Cambridge, probably thanks to G.E. Moore, who taught Moral Sciences and who had written an article on James's *Pragmatism* (Tarbox 1989: 91). The question is whether he had already become acquainted with James's reflections about the nature of the will, which can be found only in the second half of Volume 2 of *The Principles of Psychology* (James 1890: 488).

In general, the question of the will in Wittgenstein's early writings has so far been of little interest to most researchers. For example Hacker (2000: 194) says about young Wittgenstein's encounter with the problem of the will that he "only touched upon it unsatisfactorily in the *Tractatus*". Other commenters focus primarily on the later works (e.g., Munz and Ritter 2017, Vacura 2018).

***Tractatus* 5.1362—Freedom of the Will**

We shall look first at the context of the first discussion of the will in the *Tractatus*. The text in Section 5 deals with propositions, understood as "truth-functions of elementary propositions" (TLP 5), which "can be arranged in

series" (TLP 5.1). The truth of one proposition can (logically) *follow* from other propositions; we can *see (ersehen)* this from the *structure* of propositions (TLP 5.13). For example, we can see that the truth of proposition p follows from the truth of proposition $p \vee q$ and the truth of proposition $\sim q$ (TLP 5.1311).

This deduction is possible, first, because the propositions have common parts (p, q), and second, because of their structure. Elementary propositions (propositions with no structure) cannot be deduced one from another (TLP 5.134).

Wittgenstein now moves from the discussion of propositions to the discussion of situations. While inferences from *propositions* are possible (when they meet the conditions described above), inferences from *situations* are not: "There is no possible way of making an inference from the existence of one situation to the existence of another, entirely different situation" (TLP 5.135).

While we have a way to perform deduction on propositions (based on their structure), we do not have any such method for situations. This negation holds for concurrent situations as well as for diachronic situations (situations following one after another in time). While we may tend to think of causality as a kind of inference, this notion is a mistake. Causal inference (as strict inference) is not possible: "There is no causal nexus which justifies such an inference" (TLP 5.136).

Causal inference from situations is therefore not possible, and the "events of the future cannot be inferred from those of the present" (TLP 5.1361).

What immediately follows is a famous statement about freedom of the will (TLP 5.1362), which we will divide into three parts:

- (1) "The freedom of the will consists in the fact that future actions cannot be known now."
- (2) "We could only know them if causality were an inner necessity, like that of logical deduction."
- (3) "The connection of knowledge and what is known is that of logical necessity."

In (3) Wittgenstein claims that the term “knowledge,” when applied to the relation between two propositions, can be used strictly in the cases described above when one proposition *follows logically* from another—cases of “logical necessity.” In (2) he says that the case of causality, i.e., the case where the truth of one proposition seems to *causally follow* from the truth of another, does not have the character of “logical necessity.”

Causal reasoning is not logical inference, and once again “events of the future cannot be *inferred* from those of the present” (emphasis added); belief in the causal nexus is “superstition” (TLP 5.1361, 5.136). This formulation expresses Wittgenstein’s well-known indeterminism (Scheer 1991).

The belief that causal reasoning provides *knowledge* about the future is superstition. According to Wittgenstein we cannot know anything about the future; therefore we cannot know our future actions. This “impossibility of knowing actions that still lie in the future” Wittgenstein calls “freedom of the will” (1).

This passage obviously provides no explanation of what the will is. By subscribing to indeterminism, supported here by the observation that causality has no connection to logical necessity, Wittgenstein merely allows for a theory of free will, i.e., will that is not subordinate to causality.

***Tractatus* 5.631—The Will as a Pointer to the Subject**

The second discussion of the will at the end of the 5th section of the *Tractatus* focuses on a different topic: the question of the limits of language, i.e., whether there is anything beyond the totality of propositions (including all the complexities of their mutual relations and their relations to states of affairs, discussed earlier in the *Tractatus*).

Wittgenstein’s short answer is no: “The limits of my language mean the limits of my world” (TLP 5.6). There is nothing beyond the world of propositions; that world is also my world, and my world, strictly speaking, is myself (TLP 5.63).

The obvious question now arises: where, in this description of the world as a sphere of facts and their pictures (propositions), am I, the thinking self, the subject? Wittgenstein’s answer is again striking: nowhere. In another famous

statement he says: “There is no such thing as the subject that thinks or entertains ideas” (TLP 5.631). He elaborates on this claim in the rest of the paragraph: “If I wrote a book called *The World as I found it*, I should have to include a report on my body, and should have to say which parts were subordinate to my will, and which were not, etc., this being a method of isolating the subject, or rather of showing that in an important sense there is no subject; for it alone could not be mentioned in that book” (TLP 5.631).

This statement is quite puzzling in the context of the rest of the *Tractatus*. What does it say? If Wittgenstein were to provide a list of the objects he encountered in the world, a few objects (such as arms and legs) would have a special property of being “subordinate to my will.” We know that Wittgenstein’s objects have internal and external properties (TLP 2.01231) (see Mácha 2015 for a detailed discussion). This special property is not internal because “a property is internal if it is unthinkable that its object should not possess it” (TLP 4.123). Is it therefore an external property, such as a table’s being red and not white?

A property of being “subordinate to my will” that can be ascribed to some objects seems to be a property unlike any other. My arm’s being subordinate to my will is not an external (or internal) relation between two objects, my will and my arm. The will is not an object.

One way to understand this difficult passage is that the property of being “subordinate to my will” is a kind of *pointer* that points beyond the totality of propositions, beyond the world. This property is a strange relation of being “subordinate to” that starts at my arm and goes beyond my world, pointing to the non-object, “my will.”

When Wittgenstein speaks of using subordination to the will as “a method of isolating the subject” that shows that “in an important sense there is no subject” (TLP 5.631), he implies that “the will” is for him somehow connected or related to the metaphysical subject (not unlike Kant’s and Schopenhauer’s transcendental subject; see Leinfellner 1982). However, the relation of the will and the subject is already beyond what can be meaningfully and precisely described. The metaphysical subject itself, whose “existence” is manifested by the encounter with entities with the specific property of being subordinate to

my will, is not in this world: “The subject does not belong to the world: rather, it is a limit of the world” (TLP 5.632).

Section 5.6 concludes with the well-known analogy of the eye's not being seen in a visual field (TLP 5.633) and the repeated statement that “the philosophical self is...the metaphysical subject, the limit of the world—not a part of it” (TLP 5.641).

***Tractatus* 6.37—Volitional Necessity**

Wittgenstein returns to the problem of the will once more in the 6th section of the *Tractatus*. This section continues the discussion of propositions and their general form. Wittgenstein also revisits the question of causality and rejects any form of the principle of induction or of Kantian apriorism with regards to causality (TLP 6.31). He then repeats his conviction that logical necessity is the only form of necessity: “There is no compulsion making one thing happen because another has happened. The only necessity that exists is logical necessity.” (TLP 6.37).

This conviction also has implications for the objects “subordinated to my will” described in the previous section. It may seem that there is another kind of *volitional necessity* based on these concepts of the metaphysical subject and the will. Nevertheless, Wittgenstein says that there is no such necessity, because there is no logical one: “there is no logical connexion between the will and the world” (TLP 6.374). Again, the only acceptable necessity for Wittgenstein is logical necessity (“the only necessity that exists is logical necessity” TLP 6.375) and such necessity is not present here. This conviction also reveals the meaning of the puzzling remark that “the world is independent of my will” (TLP 6.373).

How, then, can we explain the fact that my will controls my hand? For Wittgenstein this question is akin to the question of causality. Causal necessity, as we have said above, is rejected, so regularities observed in the world cannot be explained by causal necessity (in a strict sense). (A large part of section 6 is devoted to this discussion.) Similarly, my control of my arm may manifest

some regularities; there is, however, no necessity in this circumstance. My hand may stop responding to my will at any time or even become completely autonomous.

There is a well-known phenomenon called “alien-hand syndrome” (sometimes called “Dr. Strangelove syndrome” or “anarchic hand syndrome”) – in the most typical cases, affected patients experience that one of their hands cannot be voluntarily controlled, acting seemingly on its own or being “disobedient” while the other hand acts normal (Scepkowski 2003). Sometimes, the hand is even personified – patients give it a name as if it were an independent agent (Doody 1992, see also Vacura 2022).

***Tractatus* 6.42—The Will and Ethics**

The last discussion of the will in the *Tractatus* is in Section 6.4 and is related to values and ethics. In the context of Wittgenstein’s pictorial theory developed in the *Tractatus*, all propositions are pictures of states of affairs and are therefore purely descriptive; in this sense, it is possible to assert that “all propositions are of equal value” (TLP 6.4). Because of the descriptive character of propositions “it is impossible for there to be propositions of ethics” (TLP 6.42).

That is why “it is impossible to *speak* about *the will* insofar as it is the subject of ethical attributes” (TLP 6.423, emphasis added), i.e., it is impossible to say anything about “good/evil will” and the like. This statement can be considered a reaction to Kantian ethics, with its declaration that “it is impossible to think of anything at all in the world...that could be taken to be good without limitation, except a good will” (Kant 2011: 4:393). The point is not that the will is unrelated to ethics, but that what Kant tried to say cannot be said. Because of the descriptive character of propositions, our ability to speak is limited to depictions of states of affairs.

The will is, however, relevant to ethics. We have seen above that the will is a kind of *pointer* beyond what can be described by propositions—that is, beyond the world. This idea is reiterated here: “If the good or bad exercise of the will does alter the world, it can alter only the limits of the world, not the facts—not what can be expressed by means of language” (TLP 6.43).

The following statement, expressing a “holistic” conception of the will, is again quite puzzling: “In short the effect must be that it becomes an altogether different world. It must, so to speak, wax and wane as a whole” (TLP 6.43). This remark has been explained by Wenzel (2016), who links it to Kant’s concept of an “intelligible” or “noumenal” choice (*Wahl*) by means of which one chooses the whole world (of appearances).

Conclusion

The will is not mentioned in the rest of the *Tractatus*, so we are left with the few remarks analyzed above. They present a fragment of a theory which seem to be based on Kant’s and Schopenhauer’s philosophy, showing only limited empiricist influence. Wittgenstein’s view on the problem of the will changed somewhat in his later works. For example, Hyman (2011) and Wenzel (2016), believe that Wittgenstein’s later reflections on the nature of will in *Philosophical Investigations* are in reaction to James’ ideas, presented in his seminal work *The Principles of Psychology*, which he opposes. Wittgenstein’s views cover merely a few pages of this book, these pages, however, attracted much attention and sparked multiple discussions. But this development is beyond the scope of the present exposition (see Vacura, 2018).

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"There Is Indeed the Inexpressible". Some Remarks on Ethics and Aesthetics in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*

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Abstract

In this paper, I will analyse proposition 6.522 of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, which states that "[t]here is indeed the inexpressible" (TLP 6.522). My aim is to show that this proposition is closely related to much of what we read about ethics, aesthetics (and logic) and their connection in the *Tractatus*. In particular, I will first point out that the problem of the inexpressible refers back to an issue that is central both in the *Tractatus* and in Wittgenstein's later philosophy, that is: the idea that the sense of a proposition is not "something" different and distinct from the proposition itself, just as the sense of life is not "something" different and distinct from life itself. In the last part of the paper, I will illustrate how this idea also underlies the way in which Wittgenstein addresses aesthetic matters and the distinction between world and facts of the world.

As is widely known, according to Wittgenstein the problem of what can be said (or expressed) by a proposition and what can only be shown by it is the "cardinal problem" of philosophy (WC: 98, letter to B. Russell, 19.8.1919). Again according to Wittgenstein, it was the failure to fathom this that prevented Russell from really understanding his first book. The explicit formulation of this 'cardinal problem' is found in proposition 6.522 of the *Tractatus*, which reads: "There is indeed the inexpressible [*unaussprechlich*]. This shows itself; it is the mystical" (TLP: 6.522). As we shall see, the problem in question also involves ethics and aesthetics, although it might not be so easy to recognise this without analytically considering what the *Tractatus* (together with the writings contemporary to it) suggests about ethics, as well as aesthetics. More specifically, one should consider what is stated in proposition 6.42 and some of its comments.

In proposition 6.42 Wittgenstein writes that "there can be no ethical propositions" (TLP: 6.42), while in the first paragraph of proposition 6.421 he writes that "ethics cannot be expressed [*aussprechen*]" (TLP: 6.421). If we read these two statements alongside the last paragraph of proposition 6.421, where ethics and aesthetics are identified by stating – with dizzying conciseness – that "[e]thics and aesthetics are one" (TLP: 6.421; see Schulte 2013), we cannot but extend to aesthetics what Wittgenstein writes about ethics: there can be no aesthetic propositions and aesthetics, like ethics, cannot be expressed.

The same consideration applies to the second paragraph of proposition 6.421: "Ethics is transcendental" (TLP: 6.421). If ethics is transcendental, and if ethics and aesthetics are one, then aesthetics too is transcendental; as is logic, according to one of the two paragraphs of proposition 6.13: "Logic is transcendental" (TLP: 6.13). Note also that, according to a fairly explicit remark in the *Notebooks 1914-1916*, the fact that ethics is transcendental means that it "does not treat of the world [as science does]. Ethics must be a condition of the world, like logic" (NB: 77e, 24.7.1916). Assuming one continues to take the identification between ethics and aesthetics seriously, it follows that neither does aesthetics treat of the world. Instead, for aesthetics, as for ethics (and logic), "[h]ow the world is, is completely indifferent" (TLP: 6.432). It is science that is interested in discovering how the world is; on the contrary, what ethics and aesthetics (and logic) are interested in is "[n]ot how the world is, [...] but *that* it is" (TLP: 6.44). And this is just another way of saying that ethics and aesthetics (and logic) are 'conditions' of the world. Therefore, it is absurd to speak of ethics as a science, just as it is absurd to speak of a "science of Aesthetics" (LA: 11). Indeed, we might say that among the facts into which the world is divided (cf. TLP: 1.2) there are properly neither ethical nor aesthetic facts, just as there are no logical facts.

Of course, in order to come to terms with all this, one has to ask what Wittgenstein properly means by 'condition' when in the *Notebooks* he speaks of ethics, of logic, and thus – as I am suggesting – also of aesthetics as "a condition of the world" (NB: 77e, 24.7.1916). But I will return to this in a moment. First, it is worth clarifying the distinction between saying (or expressing) and showing, to which – as mentioned above – Wittgenstein assigns paramount importance. In particular, attention should be drawn to the fact that, in the *Tractatus*, this distinction plays different roles and has at least two senses or uses.

(1) There is a sense (or use) in which Wittgenstein speaks of showing in relation to propositions (with sense – *sinnvoll*) and, more generally, to pictures. I will try to explain this point in the least 'technical' terms possible through the following example. The proposition 'It is raining' tells us that it is raining – and it is true if it is raining, false if it is not raining. But that 'It is raining' is a proposition, is not, in turn, something that the proposition tells us: the proposition does not *say* of itself that it is a proposition; rather, it *shows* that it

is one the very moment we understand it. We might also say that when we hear 'It is raining', we do not need to worry about the proposition ('Is it really a proposition?'); instead, we usually simply wonder whether it is raining or not. In other words, what we care about is not the proposition, but the weather. As Wittgenstein writes in the *Notebooks*, we do not "need to worry about language" since "language takes care of itself" (NB: 43e, 27.4.1915 and 26.4.1915 respectively). In the *Tractatus*, the proposition does not say, but "shows its sense./The proposition shows how things stand, if it is true. And it says , that they do so stand" (TLP: 4.022). We could then say that, by distinguishing between saying and showing, Wittgenstein does not at all wish to maintain that there is something, i.e. saying, that the proposition should or would like to do, but nevertheless cannot or is unable to do.

Certainly, what Wittgenstein writes could suggest otherwise, but I believe that what Wittgenstein stresses in a significant remark in the *Philosophical Investigations*, namely that often in philosophy "[t]he great difficulty [...] is not to present the matter as if there were something one *couldn't* do" (PI: §374), also applies to the *Tractatus*. Indeed, overcoming this difficulty here means recognising that what the proposition shows, by showing its sense, is simply that it is a proposition. And this is because, according to the *Tractatus*, the sense of a proposition is not 'something' that is added to the proposition or accompanies it. But, I repeat, this is not an easy difficulty to overcome if, as Wittgenstein somewhat disconsolately reminds us in *Zettel*, "[w]e don't get free of idea that the sense of a proposition accompanies the proposition: is there alongside of it" (Z: §139).

(2) But there is also a second sense (or use) of the distinction between saying (or expressing) and showing, and it can be explained as follows. What Wittgenstein wants us to recognise is that ethics (but also, as we know, aesthetics) does not treat of the world and that, consequently, its problems are never problems of natural science (cf. TLP: 6.4312; see Perissinotto 2022). Let us suppose, for instance, that someone asks: 'How can our life have any sense if we are destined or condemned to die?'. Suppose now that it turns out that the human soul is eternal and survives death. The question that Wittgenstein would ask us at this point is why an eternal life thus understood, i.e. understood as 'temporal immortality', should have a sense that our mortal life does not have (cf. TLP: 6.4312). Such a question leads us acknowledge that the

sense of life does not depend on how the world is. Moreover, this explains "why men to whom after long doubting the sense of life became clear, could not then say wherein this sense consisted" (TLP: 6.521). For if it could be said what the sense of life consists in, this would mean that the sense of life is not life, but 'something' that happens (or fails to happen) within it. What Wittgenstein has in mind here is explained very well in an annotation from 1930 that deserves more attention than is usually given to it: "If anyone should think he has solved the problem of life and feels like telling himself everything is quite easy now, he need only tell himself, in order to see that he is wrong, that there was a time when this 'solution' had not been discovered; but it must have been possible to live *then* too and the solution which has now been discovered appears in relation to how things were then like an accident" (CV: 6).

I think that the link between points (1) and (2) is quite evident. Just as the sense of a proposition is not 'something' added to the proposition, so, in a very similar way, the sense of life is not 'something' added to life. Just as we cannot discover that a proposition was not yet a proposition, so we cannot discover that life was not yet (fully) life. In short, a life with a sense is not life plus its sense, just as a proposition with a sense is not a proposition plus its sense. Incidentally, it is remarkable that Wittgenstein treats the semantic and the ethical sense in the same way.

To return now to the men of proposition 6.521, among whom Wittgenstein himself should perhaps be counted, it could also be said that their attitude towards life has radically changed, even though life (the world) may have remained unchanged as far as its 'how' is concerned. The sense of life, so to speak, does not come to us as an inheritance that makes us rich from poor, or as a medicine that gives us back the health we had lost. All this could also be expressed by saying that no fact is ethically relevant. It is for this reason that "there can be no ethical propositions" (TLP: 6.42), even if "[t]here is indeed the inexpressible" (TLP: 6.522). And what is 'inexpressible' is life itself, not some hidden or profound side or aspect of it.

Now, as we already know, what applies to ethics also applies (with all due distinctions) to aesthetics. Here again, an example may be useful to clarify the issue. Cézanne painted the Sainte-Victoire mountain in Provence many times.

As regards its 'how', the mountain painted by Cézanne was the same mountain that the inhabitants of Aix-en-Provence, including Cézanne himself, saw every day. Cézanne discovered nothing new about that mountain – at least, not in the sense in which a geologist, say, might discover something new about the composition of its rocks or its origin. Nevertheless, the former, the Sainte-Victoire mountain painted by Cézanne, is radically different from the latter, the real Sainte-Victoire mountain. But insofar as it has nothing to do with how the mountain is, this difference is 'inexpressible', even if – as Wittgenstein writes – this "inexpressible [...] shows itself" (TLP: 6.522). We could say that in Cézanne's paintings of the Sainte-Victoire mountain the inexpressible shows itself, and shows itself with such force that Cézanne's mountain is, so to speak, more 'real' than the real mountain. After all, tourists in Provence are probably more likely to photograph the former than the latter.

What we find here, in the case of Cézanne's mountain, is the same attitude or idea that I have illustrated in relation to the sense of a proposition and the sense of life. Cézanne's mountain does not have 'something' that a tourist's photograph or an amateur's drawing does not have; at the same time, however, the former is radically different from the latter. Nor does the former convey information that the latter do not convey, or only convey in an incomplete or inadequate way; however, there is no science that can explain where the difference lies between Cézanne's mountain and a Sunday painter's painting. In an almost Platonic spirit, we might thus say that Cézanne did not paint a mountain but 'the' mountain. But we should also add, this time in a non-Platonic spirit, that there is no other way to see 'the' mountain except by looking at Cézanne's mountain. This is precisely the way in which the problem of the inexpressible is transposed and addressed by Wittgenstein in the field of aesthetics.

What I have highlighted so far also allows us to better understand what Wittgenstein means when he speaks of ethics and aesthetics (and logic) as conditions of the world, i.e. as transcendental. The term 'condition' lends itself to many readings and misunderstandings, and it is perhaps no coincidence that this expression is not taken up in the *Tractatus* but remains confined to the *Notebooks*. Certainly, when he speaks of 'condition', Wittgenstein is not referring to 'something' that precedes the world or stands at its origin as its cause or foundation (see Tejedor 2014). In this sense, the term is devoid (or

intended to be devoid) of any metaphysical significance. To put it somewhat roughly, what we have is not the world on the one hand and its conditions on the other. What Wittgenstein rather seems to be suggesting is that the world already appears to be ethically and aesthetically connoted, even though the facts of the world, as facts, are always indifferent and irrelevant to ethics and aesthetics (and logic). We could also put it this way: for science there are the facts of the world, for ethics and aesthetics there is the world, even though the world of ethics and aesthetics is not another world compared to the world of scientific facts.

In a famous passage in the *Notebooks*, Wittgenstein makes this point clear through the oft-quoted example of the stove – it may also be useful, when reading the passage, to replace the word ‘stove’ with the expression ‘Sainte-Victoire mountain’. The example appears in a note dated 8 October 1916, which opens with a statement that could be considered an explicit comment on what I have tried to argue so far: “As a thing among things, each thing is equally insignificant; as a world each one equally significant” (NB: 83e, 8.10.1916). Perhaps in order to tone down his statement, Wittgenstein then immediately explains himself by introducing the example of a humble and ordinary object, the stove: “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 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” (NB: 83e, 8.10.1916). It is also interesting to note that Wittgenstein realises the difficulty of expressing all of this, so much so that he adds in brackets: “Something good about the whole, but bad in the details” (NB: 83e, 8.10.1916). Evidently, this parenthetical remark expresses Wittgenstein’s dissatisfaction with his formulation, but it is also a sign or clue that the ‘cardinal problem’ of the inexpressible has been reached here. Significantly, in the annotation made the following day, Wittgenstein plainly reveals the task ahead of him: “But now at last the connection of ethics with the world has to be made clear” (NB: 84e, 9.10.1916) – and with it, we might add, that of aesthetics.

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Solipsism and Realism in the *Tractatus*

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Abstract

The question of solipsism in Wittgenstein's early work is highly controversial. In this paper I shall explore it by assessing two dominant interpretations concerning the relation between solipsism and realism, as stated in paragraph 5.64 of the *Tractatus*. The first interpretation takes realism at face value and advocates a "self-effacing solipsism" according to which the world is independent of the subject, while the second defends a kind of transcendental solipsism combined with empirical realism. The second interpretation has the advantage of better accommodating the passages in the *Notebooks* and the *Tractatus*, which explicitly state solipsistic theses influenced by Schopenhauer. Furthermore, the ambiguity at the heart of the *Tractatus* concerning the nature of objects allows for a phenomenological interpretation, which favors empirical realism. Moreover, this interpretation is consistent with proposition 6.431 about the world coming to an end at death.

The issue of solipsism is one of the most controversial in Wittgenstein's early work. I shall approach it by mainly examining in what sense solipsism can coincide with realism, as stated in paragraph 5.64 of the *Tractatus*. Concerning this question, there are two dominant lines of interpretation. According to the first, realism means that the world is independent of the subject, while the second advocates a kind of empirical realism influenced by Schopenhauer. I shall argue that the second interpretation does more justice to the solipsistic passages in the early work and can be corroborated by a certain understanding of the Tractarian objects, which form the substance of the world.

Wittgenstein's aim in the *Tractatus*, as expressed in the preface, is to draw a limit in language by developing a criterion for distinguishing sense from nonsense. Our language has meaning because it is a picture or a model of reality. Picturing is possible because language and world have the same logical form. This form becomes manifest when we logically analyze our everyday language and arrive at elementary propositions, which contain simple names. Elementary propositions have sense because they correspond to states of affairs, consisting of simple objects, and are true if the states of affairs obtain, or false if they do not obtain. Thus, only contingent propositions have sense. Propositions of metaphysics that describe the relation of language and reality, as well as the propositions of ethics, aesthetics and religion, are nonsensical (*unsinnig*) because they try to express what can only be shown, the unsayable,

the mystical. The propositions of logic also lack meaning, as they are tautologies, but show the logical form of language and the world. Regarding the propositions of the *Tractatus* itself, which are also nonsensical, this paper is compatible with a “traditional” rather than a “resolute” reading of them (for a discussion of developments in this debate see Conant and Bronzo 2017).

We see that in the *Tractatus* the limits of language are drawn. These limits coincide with the limits of the world. We can understand this, if we keep in mind that language and the world have a common structure, i.e. logical form. On the one hand, logical form is the limit of language because it cannot be expressed or pictured through language, although everything that can be said must have a logical form; it can only be shown. On the other hand, logic sets the limits of the world, all the possible combinations of objects, i.e. the form of the world and not its content, which is the combinations that obtain, namely the facts. Wittgenstein writes: “Logic pervades the world: the limits of the world are also its limits” (TLP 1972: §5.61).

In his discussion of solipsism in §§5.6 – 5.641 of the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein acknowledges that language and the world have the same limits and proceeds to characterize language as *my* language and the world as *my* world: “*The limits of my language mean the limits of my world*” (TLP1972: §5.6). He then identifies the world with my world and adds: “This is manifest in the fact that the limits of *language* (of that language which alone I understand) mean the limits of *my world*” (TLP §5.62). As my language, the one and only language I understand, has the same limits as the world, the world becomes my world; this is according to Wittgenstein a case of solipsism. Thus, it seems that he adopts a version of solipsism, which is a doctrine that in its more traditional metaphysical form maintains that only I and my experiences exist. In the same paragraph we read: “For what the solipsist *means* is quite correct; only it cannot be *said*, but makes itself manifest” (ibid.).

After identifying the world with my world, he goes on with other identifications: “The world and life are one” (TLP 1972: §5.621) and “I am my world (the microcosm)” (TLP 1972: §5.63). Concerning the I or self, Wittgenstein clearly says that it is neither the human body nor the Cartesian

thinking subject nor the empirical self of psychology, which has experiences, thoughts and emotions, but the philosophical or metaphysical subject, which does not belong to the world (TLP 1972: §5.641).

In the *Notebooks* and the 5.6's there is indeed a strong prima facie evidence that Wittgenstein advocates some kind of solipsism. In spite of all this evidence for a solipsistic stance, are we justified in claiming that Wittgenstein was a solipsist in his early work? In order to tackle this question, which has received widely different answers, we shall first examine the influence of Schopenhauer's work on the development of Wittgenstein's views on solipsism.

In *The World as Will and Representation* the German philosopher distinguishes the knowing subject from the objects of knowledge, which are representations or phenomena. This subject is not the human body, but a presupposition of all objects or representations. The knowing subject imposes, as in Kant, space and time as a priori forms of intuition on the phenomena. The subject knows, while it cannot be an object of knowledge (WWRI: 3-6). For Schopenhauer, the knowing subject and its objects, i.e. the world as representation that comprises human beings, are manifestations of an underlying deeper reality, of a thing in itself, which is the will. The body is known in two different ways, namely as a representation and as a manifestation of the will. The subject becomes an individual because she has this special, immediate relationship to her body.

As in Schopenhauer, the metaphysical subject in Wittgenstein is not a part but a presupposition of the world (TLP 1972: §§5.632, 5.641). He compares the metaphysical I and its relation to the world to the eye and its relation to the visual field. As we do not see the eye, i.e. it does not form a part of the visual field, in the same way the metaphysical subject is a limit of the world and is not encountered in the world. This is so because whatever we see and describe could be otherwise, while the I is a priori (TLP 1972: §§5.633-5.634). It cannot belong to the world, because then it would be an empirical subject, i.e. a part of the world, and so it could not be identified with the whole of reality. Indeed, there is no other way to identify the metaphysical subject except through the world and its objects, with which it is coordinated.

Along with these important similarities between Schopenhauer's knowing subject and Wittgenstein's metaphysical or philosophical I, there is a key point

of divergence: For Wittgenstein, the metaphysical subject has no privileged relation to a particular human body as in Schopenhauer. The human body belongs to the world like every other (composite) object. In this way Wittgenstein is more consistent than Schopenhauer in separating the metaphysical subject from the world. This move of alienating the subject from the body and the world allows him to claim in the *Notebooks*: “This is the way I have traveled: Idealism singles men out from the world as unique, solipsism singles me alone out, and at last I see that I too belong with the rest of the world, and so on the one side *nothing* is left over, and on the other side, as unique, *the world*. In this way idealism leads to realism if it is strictly thought out” (TB 1998: 15.10.16). In the *Tractatus* his thoughts are formulated as follows: “Here it can be seen that solipsism, when its implications are followed out strictly, coincides with pure realism. The self of solipsism shrinks to a point without extension, and there remains the reality coordinated with it” (TLP 1972: §5.64).

These passages are central for the interpretation of solipsism in the *Tractatus*. If we take them at face value, they point towards a realistic view of the world, which would rule solipsism out. In order to see if this is the case, we shall investigate how solipsism can coincide (*zusammenfallen*) with realism. This very controversial issue is intertwined on the one hand with the self and on the other with the problem of the objects in the *Tractatus*.

We shall focus on two dominant interpretations. The first one maintains that we have here a case of a “self-effacing solipsism” (Pears 1987: 166, Bell 1996: 160-162) according to which the self disappears and only independent reality remains. In this way the metaphysical I could be seen as a formal concept introduced to indicate that experiences are had and language is spoken from a first person point of view, though this insight cannot be expressed in language by meaningful propositions, but only shown (see Pears 1987, 165). Hence, a solipsistic language would not contain propositions that refer to the subject (the centre), e.g. “I am in pain”. In this language, expressions referring to the centre will be replaced by expressions in the third person singular: “There is pain” and when others feel pain the following proposition can be used: “A behaves like the centre, when there is pain”. Thus, all mental events are on a par with physical events like “It rains” or “A bird is singing” and they belong to the world. In this way the first person pronoun is banished at least for the

centre. An example of such a language is presented in PB 1998: §§57-58 (see also Bell 1996: 164-165).

The above expressed view about the subject is part of a realistic interpretation of the world in the *Tractatus*, in the sense that the world is independent of the subject. This conception can be supported by the following considerations: the world is just given to the metaphysical subject, as it is shown in the expression “the world as I found it” encountered in TLP 1972: §5.631. Consequently, the subject is passive, as it cannot have any kind of influence on the world’s formation. Thus, according to this interpretation, it could follow that Wittgenstein is not a transcendental idealist in the sense that the subject imposes certain features, such as space and time on the objects of the world (Vossenkuhl 2009: 98). Only logic is transcendental because it is the presupposition of the possibility of picturing the world. Nevertheless, it is not imposed on the world by the subject, as it is a mirror image of the world (TLP 1972: §6.13).

Indeed, if we understand §5.64 as pointing to a self-effacing solipsism, we should maintain not just that the subject is passive, but that it completely disappears, in the sense that it is not needed for the mirroring of the world. According to this interpretation, we do not need a metaphysical subject as a kind of “metalinguistic soul” to infuse life into the propositional sign and connect it to the world, as Hacker maintains (Hacker 1986: 100). The proposition has already intrinsically a sense and nothing substantial is added but the empty formal concept of “I think” (Sullivan 1996: 211). The connection between language and the world is achieved only through the common logical form, which is presupposed in the use of everyday language by empirical subjects. In this sense, the metaphysical subject becomes redundant (Vossenkuhl 2009: 122).

As the reasons given thus far for this interpretation are not conclusive, we cannot give a final answer to the question of solipsism before examining the second interpretation, first proposed by Hacker, that Wittgenstein was an empirical realist and a transcendental solipsist. Hacker defines this kind of solipsism as follows: “What the solipsist means, and is correct in thinking, is that the world and life are one, that man is the microcosm, that I am my world. [...] They express a doctrine that I shall call transcendental solipsism” (Hacker

1986: 99-100). This interpretation allows for an empirical realism that accommodates the representations in the work of Schopenhauer. On the other hand, although Wittgenstein speaks of the world as will in the *Notebooks* (TB 1998: 17.10.16), there is no sign that the will has the role of the thing in itself in the *Tractatus*.

Hacker's interpretation takes into account the obvious fascination that Schopenhauer's idealistic views and their solipsistic implications exerted on Wittgenstein. Hacker and the followers of his line of interpretation take seriously those passages in the *Tractatus* in which Wittgenstein *expressis verbis* declares the truth of solipsism (see also Tang 2011). This is an advantage over the rival interpretation, but it is not sufficient for accepting a transcendental solipsistic stance without further considerations pertaining to the objects of the *Tractatus*.

We must stress that we cannot give a definitive answer to the problem of solipsism in the *Tractatus*, as long as the question of the nature of simple objects remains open. Objects are the substance of the world, i.e. what is fixed independently of the combinations in states of affairs (TLP1972: §2.024). As long as the objects fulfill their role of guaranteeing that names have a fixed reference, there is no need that further clues are given, so that we can decide about their nature. It is noteworthy that many years after the completion of the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein had remarked that during its composition he had thought that it was rather an empirical task and not his task as a logician to decide whether an object was complex or simple (Malcolm 2001: 70). Taking this into account, we could think that as long as objects are postulated and logical form guarantees the relation between language and world, there was no need for Wittgenstein the logician to say much about the nature of simple objects and their relation to the simple names. Hence, it is not clear if they are particulars, universals or both. It is indeed open whether they are to be realistically understood at all, as it can be defended that the simple objects are just postulates of his theory of meaning and cannot be identified independently of their internal or formal properties, which are given by the logical form of the corresponding names in language (see also Ishiguro 1969 and Venieri 1990).

Thus, an ambiguity lies at the heart of the *Tractatus*, which allows for different interpretations of the nature of objects. One could even defend a purely phenomenological understanding of the objects. Such an interpretation of the Tractarian objects cannot be excluded and is corroborated by the fact that Wittgenstein himself advocated briefly in 1929/30 a primary phenomenological language corresponding to phenomena. (PB1998: §§1, 54). Such an interpretation would be compatible with Kantian empirical realism from which Schopenhauer's representations are derived (see also Schroeder 2012).

Moreover, Wittgenstein's saying that in death the world does not alter but comes to an end (TLP 1972: §6.431) gives additional evidence for understanding pure realism in TLP §5.64 as a kind of empirical realism. If realism is understood as pertaining to a world independent of the subject, then solipsism cannot coincide with realism, because the mind-independent world does not disappear in death. In this paper we cannot further expand on the question of death and the way the subject is to be understood in this context.

In treating the widely different views about solipsism in the *Tractatus*, we can maintain that the difficulties arising in interpreting the relevant passages are partly due to the fact that in the discussion of solipsism two strands of Wittgenstein's thought meet, which cannot be easily reconciled. The first is logical atomism, which explains how language connects to the world and the second is the idealistic strand inspired by Schopenhauer, which is introduced in the passages on solipsism and the self. The introduction of the metaphysical subject of solipsism in the austere logical system of picturing the world produces a tension and so the metaphysical subject can be easily ignored as redundant by the interpreters. Thus, solipsism collapses into realism in the sense that the world is independent of the subjects using the language. On the other hand, if Tractarian objects can be interpreted in such a way that they are compatible with Schopenhauer's representations, then the realism in paragraph 5.64 can be understood as a kind of empirical realism; this realism can be combined with a kind of solipsism, where the subject is identified by its representations and no independent reality in the form of the world as will is postulated. This is a way to understand the passages on solipsism, where Wittgenstein undertakes the task of drawing a limit of the world through the introduction of the metaphysical subject.

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Like Wondering at a Tautology: Imagination and Logical (Im)Possibility in the Lecture on Ethics

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to clarify the central role played by Wittgenstein's conception of logical (im)possibility in his 1929 "Lecture on Ethics" (1965). This will be done in reference to Chapters 26 and 29 of the *Big Typescript*, where Wittgenstein reflected extensively on the role of imagination as a means to determine the sense(lessness) of a proposition and the logical (im)possibility of a state of affairs. To that end I will first provide an account of the difference Wittgenstein observed between logical and physical (im)possibility. I will subsequently clarify the role of imagination in relation to sense and logical (im)possibility. And lastly, I will argue, against this backdrop that Wittgenstein's insistence on the nonsensicality of both meaningful ethical propositions and absolute or ethical facts, should, first and foremost, be understood as a result of their logical and not merely their physical impossibility. And, additionally, that he conceived absolute experiences to be 'absolute' in virtue of their logically impossibility.

Logical and Physical (Im)Possibility

One of Wittgenstein's most striking examples, clarifying the distinction between logical and physical (im)possibility in the *Big Typescript*, is to be found in its chapter 96 in his reflection on what would determine the divisibility of a black strip. (BT: 450)

There he argues that whether a black strip is divisible within the visual field, or, alternatively, what the 'divisibility' of such a strip would mean, is determined by what counts as an attempt at dividing that strip. The *logical* possibility of that division would pertain precisely to the description of what such an attempt would consist in and what would count as failed or successful attempt. The *physical* possibility of that division, on the other hand, is determined by the success or the failure of such an attempt.

Whether or not the black strip is divisible will therefore depend upon one's *actual* success or failure in doing so, even if it is, by default, logically possible. That is, even if its division was restrained by "physical facts" in the visual space, e.g., due to a lack of dexterity or tools, and thus rendered physically impossible, the strip would remain "infinitely divisible" in Euclidean space. As such, according to Wittgenstein, whereas the logical possibility of this division

is stipulated as rule, the assessment of a physical possibility takes the form of an empirical statement; as Trächtler (2020: 167) phrases it: “the scope of physical possibility is framed by empirical statements”.

Logical possibility thus precedes physical possibility; what is physically possible must be logically possible, but that must not be the other way round. And, likewise, whilst what is logically impossible is by definition also physically impossible, the opposite need not be. A logical impossibility that would happen to be a physical possibility, such as e.g. succeeding in drawing a round rectangle, would be excluded as, according to Wittgenstein, “the possibility, whatever it is, must be foreseen by logic (that is, there is no logical surprise).” (MS 108: 137; my translation) Or, alternatively, as he puts it in BT: “surprises do occur in the world, but not in grammar.” (BT: 63)

The only possible surprises are, by default, *logically* possible, yet astonish us because we hadn’t considered their *physical* possibility:

So, if I hear that the book is lying – somewhere – on the table and now I find it in a particular position, then I can’t be surprised and say “Ah, I didn’t know that this position existed”; and yet I hadn’t foreseen this particular position, i.e., hadn’t envisaged it in advance as a particular possibility. What surprises me is a physical possibility, not a logical one! (BT: 318)

Being Able to Imagine “What it Would be Like” as a Criterion for Sense and Logical Possibility

An important criterion Wittgenstein acknowledged to assess whether something would be logically possible or whether a certain proposition could have sense, was whether we could imagine what it would be like for it to be the case, and, conversely, whether we could imagine it *not* to be the case.

We say that a proposition hasn’t sense, unless we can imagine it: we must be able to make some sort of image of reality. If we can, what is expressed is possible; this is how possibility is expressed. (LC 2016: 18)

If something is logically impossible, however, then, by definition, the attempt to imagine it will not be successful. An example of this would be the attempt to

imagine something such as a round rectangle, or conversely to imagine what it would be like if the law of excluded middle did not hold. We would not know what it means for propositions expressing either of these situations to be either true or false; such propositions would be senseless or nonsensical.

Wittgenstein, however, investigated this very criterion in chapters 26 and 27 of BT, and aimed to clarify this very criterion ‘grammatically’, i.e., “What does it mean when one says: ‘I can’t imagine the opposite of that?’” (BT: 96) That is, he wished to clarify how one can “reinforce the senselessness of a proposition” by making use of such expressions. (BT: 96)

The unimaginability expressed in such statements does not pertain to an individual’s ability to imagine such and such: “I’m not trying to indicate a lack of imagination.” (BT: 96) When someone utters that they can’t imagine either a round square or the law of excluded middle to be otherwise, this does not pertain to imagination in the psychological sense of the word; it is not a form of *aphantasia*.

Rather, as Wittgenstein argues, we are prompted to use such expressions as a result of confusing empirical and grammatical propositions. That is, we display a tendency to affirm rules of grammar as if they were verifiable propositions, such that, when presented with, for instance, the sentence “This rod is of a certain length” we are inclined to reply “Certainly!” or “I cannot imagine the opposite of that” rather than “Nonsense!”. (BT:96) To reply this is then senseless, as Wittgenstein indicates, as much as the attempt to imagine what it would be like for a grammatical rule to be true or false, to be verifiable.

Grammatical rules are indeed, as opposed to empirical propositions, arbitrary, i.e., in the sense that they are not verifiable or directly accountable to reality. Grammar, rather, stipulates the meaning of these propositions and that includes determining the requirements for them to be true or false. It describes the structure and application of language: “what we would like to call the connection between language and reality”. (BT: 441) Correspondingly, “what we call possible and what not depends entirely on our grammar, i.e., on what it permits.” (BT:99) That is, whereas the scope of *physical* possibility is framed by *empirical* statements, the scope of *logical* possibility is framed by *grammatical* ones.

In delimiting what is logically possible and meaningful, the rules of grammar formulate what is logically necessary, according to Trächtler (2020). Logical impossibility then stands opposed to what is logically necessary, i.e., to grammatical rules. The logical impossibility of drawing a round rectangle, for instance, is excluded in virtue of the definitions (grammatical stipulations) of ‘round’ and ‘rectangle’ we uphold in Euclidean grammar. It is logically impossible and thus senseless because it is excluded by and would violate the rules of grammar. We should therefore, similarly, be wary of confusing verifiable propositions with such logical impossibilities. That is, when presented with, for instance, the sentence “This rectangle is round” we should steer away from denying it, calling it false, and rather recognize its senselessness.

However, whereas senseless statements such as “I cannot imagine the opposite of that” indicate the confusion of grammatical proposition for an empirical one, expressions such as “I can imagine [p to be the case]” or “I can draw what it would be like if p is the case”, indicate, according to Wittgenstein, an application of p; they indicate the use of the sentence p in a particular calculus (grammar). (BT: 96, 98) And conversely claiming “I cannot imagine p to be the case” indicates the lack of such an application.

Although one might argue that, in virtue of the arbitrariness of what is deemed to be logically (im)possible and what holds as logically necessary, one could “simply fabricate the rule” that would allow for say ‘round rectangles’, this would not suffice according to Wittgenstein. It would not be enough to provide a description of what a round rectangle would be like, and thereby show the possibility of this state of affairs we are asserting. Such a description would, after all, at most, “do what a painted or sculptured image does” and could not “produce what is not the case”. (BT:99) For we would still have to stipulate how this expression would have to be used and verified. A proposition lacking an application and a verification would be “empty”, “senseless” or “useless”. (BT: 98, 99) (MS 107: 177)

The Logical Impossibility of Ethical Facts

Interestingly, from the vantage point of BT, Wittgenstein’s insistence on the impossibility of both meaningful ethical propositions and absolute or ethical

facts, should, *first and foremost*, be understood as something determined by grammatical rules.

Indeed, if there were such a thing as the subject matter of ethics, he argues that it could not be expressed, as it would be “intrinsically sublime and above all other subject matters”, whereas “all the facts described [...] and in the same way all propositions stand on the same level.” (LE 1965: 7)

This because, from the perspective of BT, the notion of either an ‘ethical proposition’ or an ‘ethical fact’ is excluded by Wittgenstein’s definitions (grammatical stipulations) of ‘facts’, ‘proposition’ and ‘ethics’. Ethical facts are logically precluded, and ethical propositions are senseless because they violate grammatical statements, such as: “Ethics, if it is anything, is supernatural and our words will only express facts. As a teacup will only hold a teacup full of water and if I were to pour a gallon of water over it.” (LE 1965: 7)

We speak here first and foremost of their *logical* and not of their *physical* impossibility, precisely because the success of any attempt to either formulate an ethical proposition or discover an ethical fact is ruled out in advance *grammatically*. In the same way as ‘a teacup’ will, by definition, “only hold a teacup full of water” regardless of the number of times I would try to pour a gallon of water in it or the tools I would have at my disposal.

What makes ethical *propositions* senseless, and ethical *facts* “chimerae” is the impossibility of their constitution, *not* their physical absence. (LE 1965: 7) Hence, it is not that the expressions we use in the absolute or ethical sense will remain unverified and will therefore remain senseless. It is rather that they can *by definition* never be verified and can *by definition* never be meaningful.

We could thus never come across something like an absolute or ethical fact, in the same way as we would not happen to succeed in drawing a round rectangle: there are no logical or grammatical surprises; “surprises do occur in the world, but not in grammar.” (BT: 63)

Curiously, Wittgenstein did *attempt* to imagine what an absolute or ethical fact would be like:

Now let us see what we could possibly mean by the expression, ‘*the absolutely right road*’. I think 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, independent of his tastes and inclinations, would necessarily bring about or feel guilty for not bringing about. (my underlining) (LE 1965: 7)

That this holds as an ‘attempt’ becomes apparent in the light of Wittgenstein’s tentative phrasing i.e. “what we could possibly mean”, “I think it would be” ..., which certainly seems appropriate from the vantage point of BT. That is, Wittgenstein appears to attempt to imagine something logically impossible to be logically possible. (LE 1965: 7)

From this perspective however, the *tentative* success of his attempt to imagine “what it would be like” for the sentence “this is the absolutely right road” to be meaningful is not merely indicative of his own imaginative competences in the psychological sense, but, strangely enough, suggests the *tentative* logical possibility of such a road.

And, as he phrased it in BT: “what we call possible and what not depends *entirely* on our grammar, i.e., on what it permits.” (BT: 99) Hence, Wittgenstein appears to be permitting the tentative description of something that could, oddly enough, by his own grammatical stipulations, not be described.

I would, however, argue that in doing so, he is considering the possibility of a grammar that would allow for such ‘absolute’ or ‘ethical’ propositions, rather than allowing a “grammatical” or “logical surprise”.

Yet, it would appear that even if we could conceive of such a grammar, the description of such a road, would, similarly to the tentative description of a round rectangle at most do “what a painted or sculpted image does” and could still not “produce what is not the case”. (BT: 99) Even if this tentative description would express a logical possibility, it would still be “lacking the essential rules of application for [a] proposition”, such as verification requirements (BT: 99):

Each sentence is an empty game of strokes or sounds without the relationship to reality and the/its/ only relationship to reality is the mode of its verification. (MS 107: 177; my translation)

Even if absolute or ethical propositions expressed logical possibilities, they would still lack a mode of verification, and a such be 'senseless' or 'useless'.

Logical Impossibility and Absolute Experiences

Interestingly, Wittgenstein rather immediately picks up the matter of imaginability in relation to sense and logical possibility. Despite the seemingly insurmountable senselessness and uselessness of ethical/absolute propositions, he acknowledges that we are "tempted to use such expressions as "absolute good," "absolute value," etc." and wonders "what have we in mind and what do we try to express?". (LE 1965: 7)

Something he wishes to tie to certain experiences that would, strangely enough, prompt their usage. The experiences themselves, of course, "have taken place then and there, lasted a certain definite amount of time and consequently are describable". (LE 1965: 10)

One such experience, that is, Wittgenstein's own 'absolute' experience "par excellence", is the experience to "wonder about the existence of the world". An experience which incited him to use expressions such as "how extraordinary that anything should exist" or "how extraordinary that the world should exist". (LE 1965: 8)

Wittgenstein, of course, readily reaffirms that such statements are, of course, nonsensical. He clarifies this as follows. Although it makes perfect sense to wonder at something that would be (strikingly) extraordinary in the usual (relative) sense, such as a remarkably large dog. That is, at something that is the case, but which I could imagine not to be the case or to be different:

To say 'I wonder at such and such being the case' has only sense if I can imagine it not to be the case. (LE 1965: 8-9)

It is, however, conversely, nonsense to (say that you) wonder at the existence of the world, because you "cannot imagine it not existing". (LE 1965: 9)
Whence the sense of wonder or surprise?

Put in terms of logical and physical possibility: it would be perfectly sensible to wonder at something physically unlikely yet logically possible, such as a

noticeably large dog. Precisely because we would be speaking of something imaginable that nevertheless need not be the case. We can imagine the existence of such a large dog, but it is its sudden manifestation, as a *physical* possibility, that would surprise us. This of course is perfectly in line with what he would state in BT: What surprises me is a physical possibility, not a logical one!” (BT: 318)

However, to argue that one could not imagine the world *not* to be the case, or that one could not imagine the world to be otherwise, would in light of BT, come down to the senseless affirmation of a logical necessity.

That is, we would be confusing a logical necessity (grammatical rule) for a physical possibility (empirical proposition); and although it is perfectly sensible to wonder about the latter it is senseless to wonder about the former. Hence, when Wittgenstein argues in LE that “it is nonsense to say that I wonder at the existence of the world, because I cannot imagine it not existing” it becomes apparent, from the vantage point of BT that Wittgenstein is senselessly affirming a logical necessity (grammatical rule) to highlight the logical impossibility of wondering about or being surprised by ... a logical necessity (grammatical rule). (LE 1965: 8) Indeed, “wondering at the existence of the world” is then, as he indicates, as nonsensical as “wondering at a tautology”, according to Wittgenstein. (LE 1965: 9) Again, as he puts it in BT, “surprises do occur in the world, but not in grammar.” (BT: 63) Yet, it would appear that Wittgenstein’s absolute experience “par excellence”, nonsensical as it may be, precisely relates to being astonished not by a physical possibility, but by a logical necessity or a grammatical rule.

As such, I would argue that for Wittgenstein an absolute experience consists in being surprised by logic or by grammar, which seems to be in line with his own words at the end of the lecture:

Now I am tempted to say that the right expression in language for the miracle of the existence of the world, though it is not any proposition in language, is the existence of language itself. (LE 1965: 11)

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Solipsism and How to Read Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* 5.62

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Abstract

It is well known that Wittgenstein's ideas of solipsism in *Tractatus* 5.6 are derived from Schopenhauer. It is also well known that the passage "die allein ich" in 5.62 is ambiguous, meaning possibly that there is a language that only I understand or that there is only one language that I understand. Since an essay by Hintikka in 1958, scholars have usually opted for the latter reading. But I am not convinced. The former reading should not be completely dismissed. To show this, I point out another ambiguity in 5.62 that it seems to me has been overlooked so far.

1. Solipsism and some of its historical roots

Wittgenstein did not read much classical philosophy. He mostly picked up ideas here and there. To better understand his notion of solipsism in a wider context, I give a brief account of relevant ideas before Wittgenstein.

In his book *De anima* Aristotle gives rich accounts of perception, imagination, and memory. He discusses the outer senses and the "common sense, or "common perception," (κοινή αἴσθησις), a place in the soul where the information from the five senses is united and reflected upon. The soul takes on the "form" and "essence" (μορφή and εἶδος) of objects, and "at the side" (ἐν παρέργῳ) it perceives that it perceives. Regarding language, in his *De interpretatione*, he said that words are symbols of impressions and passions *in the soul*, and only indirectly refer to objects in the outside world. "What is in the sound is a symbol for the passions and impressions in the soul; and the written is a symbol for what is in the sound" (ἔστι μὲν οὖν τὰ ἐν τῇ φωνῇ τῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ παθημάτων σύμβολα, καὶ τὰ γραφόμενα τῶν ἐν τῇ φωνῇ, *De interpretatione* 16a; my translation). Words thus primarily refer to passions in the soul and only indirectly to external objects. All human beings have the same impressions, but languages are conventional and vary. Aristotle gave a rich picture of the soul.

During the Middle Ages, the nature of mental representation and "mental objects" was much discussed. These objects are mind-dependent, which created worries about their ontological status. Many concepts were introduced during that time, such as *esse intentionale*, *repraesentativum*, *obiectivum*, and *apparens*. I believe that these concepts were seeds for later idealist views. The

worry arose that we might perceive only inner mental objects and not the real objects in the world outside. The real objects might be veiled. We would be excluded from the outside world. Thus, the idea of a metaphysical solipsism arose. Scholars such as Thomas Aquinas even argued that there is a language in the soul (*lingua in corde*). Medieval scholars did not only follow Aristotle, they also created an even richer picture of the soul.

Descartes wanted to make a new start, but like so many others until today, he was still much entangled in the vocabulary and concepts of the Middle Ages. According to him, we are thinking substances (*res cogitans*), set apart from external objects (*res extensa*). In his *Meditationes*, he famously introduced a methodological solipsism. But his ideas of *idea* and *repraesentatio* were problematic. They were ambiguous regarding the question whether they are mind-dependent. The ontological status of ideas and representations and how they refer to their objects remained an unsolved problem. It was the old problem of mental objects from the Middle Ages.

Kant conceived of a metaphysical self that is different from *res cogitans*. There is only a transcendental “I think” that “accompanies” and gives formal unity to mental representations (*Vorstellungen*). The world as we know it is not the world of things themselves, but only the world of mind-dependent appearances (*Erscheinungen*). Similarly, the deeper motives of our actions are unknown to us. The self and our will have become something transcendental. I believe these were repercussions from medieval ideas about mental objects. Schopenhauer followed Kant in much of this. He says the self is like an eye that does not see itself, our representation is the whole world, we vanish but make ourselves the center of the world, and our microcosm is the macrocosm (see Hacker 1989: 88, 94).

Wittgenstein read Schopenhauer as a boy of fourteen (Anscombe 1965: 12, 168) and again when he was twenty-six and worked on the *Tractatus* (Hacker 1989: 89-99). His ideas of solipsism are derived from Schopenhauer and indirectly from Kant and the Middle Ages. But he did not read Aristotle. His views about solipsism remained entangled in idealist views and stand in stark contrast to ideas he developed from Frege and Russell.

2. Solipsism in *Tractatus* 5.6

In the *Tractatus*, language mirrors the world. Thoughts are like pictures and models, isomorphic to their objects. Howard Mounce gives the example of books arranged on a table as physical signs (Mounce 1981: 22-5). Zalabardo speaks of bottles, cups, pencils, and sharpeners that are spatially arranged in various ways (Zalabardo 2015: 48f). Nothing is said about the perceiving, thinking, and understanding subject. Wittgenstein avoids psychology (Wenzel 2022: 3). Language has meaning by itself, comparable to Frege's thoughts (*Gedanken*) that exist in a third realm, waiting to be "grasped." Wittgenstein metaphorically speaks of elements of the picture that have "feelers" and "touch" reality (2.1515). Again, the perceiving, imagining, remembering, thinking, and speaking subject does not matter for the supposed mirror-like isomorphism between language and reality. This is very different from Aristotle, who gave detailed account of the soul, the "common sense," and perception in his book *De Anima*, as I have indicated above. (See also Wenzel 2011: 20-22).

In German, there are two words, "*Darstellung*" and "*Vorstellung*," which are both translated as "representation" in English (Wenzel 2011: 15). Kant's first *Critique* is all about *Vorstellung*. But the *Tractatus* is all about *Darstellung*. A *Vorstellung* is something mental, while a *Darstellung* is something physical, like a sketch on a piece of paper or a model made of physical items, something one can manipulate and show to others. The idea of a "*Vorstellung*" occurs only once in the *Tractatus*, and there it is rejected: "*Das denkende, vorstellende, Subjekt gibt es nicht*" (5.631). Kant would not have said such a thing, even less would have Descartes and philosophers of the Middle Ages said so.

The self that matters in the *Tractatus* is a metaphysical self. Influenced by Schopenhauer, Wittgenstein compares it with the horizon of the visual field and says it is the "limit" of the world. But there is a difference. In Kant, the "I think" and the categories matter for objects *in* the world and their *individual* constitution as objects of *appearance*. In Wittgenstein, the self is the limit of the world and matters only regarding the world *as a whole*. Kant offered a rich account of the subject as having faculties of cognition by means of which it apprehends, recognizes, and even determines objects. There is nothing like this in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*. There is only language that seems to exist by itself, mirroring the world, and ready to be used like Frege's *Gedanken*. It is all

about *Darstellung*, not *Vorstellung*. The soul in the *Tractatus* has shrunk to a point, without faculties, without imagination, memory, and inner or outer senses. There is no Aristotelian *sensus communis*, or “common sense.” In the *Tractatus*, the soul has no parts and no inner structure. “A composite soul would no longer be a soul” (5.5421), Wittgenstein says.

This is very different from Aristotle and the philosophers of the Middle Ages, who gave rich accounts of the soul and its parts and functions. In the *Tractatus*, the soul has disappeared, which is due to an influence of Kant and Schopenhauer on the early Wittgenstein. But these idealist philosophers were still Aristotelian enough to give accounts of perception and cognition. Kant explains cognition in terms of faculties, namely sensibility, the power of imagination, and understanding. He gives an account of categories and schematism. The *Tractatus* does not deal with cognition at all. In the *Tractatus*, there is only a metaphysical self, a self that has shrunk to a point. Wittgenstein followed Frege in avoiding psychology. The self is isolated from the external world. It is only its outer limit. “The subject does not belong to the world: rather it is the limit of the world” (5.632). This is a kind of solipsism. One may say it is a “thin transcendental solipsism.” Thought in the *Tractatus* is not a process. Cognition is not a topic. Time and consciousness seem not to matter. Thought is something static as in Frege, existing by itself in a third realm, ready to be “grasped” (*fassen*) as Frege says.

3. Reading *Tractatus* 5.62

Daß die Welt *meine* Welt ist, das zeigt sich darin, daß die Grenzen *der* Sprache (der Sprache, die allein ich verstehe) die Grenzen *meiner* Welt bedeuten. (5.62)

That the world is *my* world, shows itself in the fact that the limits of *the* language (the language that alone I understand) mean the limits of *my* world. (5.62, my translation)

It is well-known that the passage “die allein ich” is grammatically ambiguous and can be read in two ways: “die (allein ich)” and “(die allein) ich,” meaning “there is a language that *only I* understand” and “there is *only one language* that I understand.” In the former reading, I am singled out. In the latter, a

language is singled out. Since Hintikka's 1958 essay, scholars have agreed on the latter reading: "(die allein) ich," i.e., saying that there is only one language that I understand.

But when I read the passage for the first time, I read "die (allein ich)," and so did Anscombe in 1959. She corrected herself in 1963, after having read Hintikka's interpretation (Anscombe 1965: 167). Others have followed Hintikka, such as Stenius (1960: 221), Black (1962: 309), Mounce (1981: p. 91), and Tang (2011: 604-5).

But I am not fully convinced. The reading "die (allein ich)" singles out the subject as the only person who understands that language. It sets the subject apart from others, who do not understand it. That would be a feature of solipsism regarding other minds. The reading "(die allein) ich" singles out the language as the only one I understand. Others might understand that language as well. Or they might not understand it. If others understand it, I will not be alone. I will not be set apart from them. We might be in the same boat, so to speak. This would not be a feature of solipsism. It would be contrary to solipsism. Hintikka goes for this reading. It fits the idea that the self is a metaphysical-transcendental self, a formal feature that we all share. There is only one such self. This would also fit Kant's "I think," a feature that applies to all of us as finite rational cognizing beings.

Thus, thinking of the Kant-Schopenhauer background and the transcendental "I think," Hintikka's reading "(die allein) ich" fits well. But why have Anscombe and I read the passage the other way and read "die (allein ich)"? I think there is a good reason for this. When one reads continuously from the beginning of 5.6, one gets the impression of "die (allein ich)". We can see this as follows. In 5.6, it says: "The limits of *my* language mean the limits of *my* world," and not "The limits of *the* language mean the limits of *the* world" (italics mine). One gets the impression that what is meant is *my* language and not a general language in general that all human beings share. This gives an impression of solipsism and some weight to the die (allein ich)" reading. This I think explains Anscombe's original reading as well as my first impression.

Of course, in the end, Wittgenstein had the idea of a disappearing self and the idea of a language that does not require a thinking subject. Similarly, he liked

Lichtenberg's "Es regnet." There is no real subject in this sentence. It just rains. Seen in this light, whether one says "my language" or "the language" seems not to make any difference. But still, I doubt that the "die (allein ich)" reading is out of the picture. In the following, I will give more evidence for this, by pointing out another peculiar problem in the text.

There is an additional problem in 5.62 that as far as I can see has not been noticed and discussed in the literature so far. The original German before the bracket reads "die Grenzen *der* Sprache," and the article "der" is highlighted. In the sentence the words "*der*" and "*meine*" are highlighted. This makes one think that similar to how he thinks of "my" word, he thinks of "my" language. Therefore, it seems to me that emphasizing "der" makes one think of other languages, at least possible ones, that are different from my language. This then changes the picture.

Wittgenstein himself emphasized the article "der," and it seems to me he thought of *the* language in contrast to other real or possible languages. These would be languages that others speak, and I myself might not understand these languages. No matter whether one reads "die (allein ich)" and "(die allein) ich," one then thinks of other possible languages. But then one also thinks of other possible speakers of these languages. This sets me apart from these speakers, which puts some weight on the "die (allein ich)" reading. I am not sure how strong this weight is, but it seems to me that the fact that Wittgenstein highlighted the word "der" has not been recognized in the literature. But as I have explained, it explains Anscombe's original reading as well as my first impression. It puts more weight on solipsism, as does already the earlier sentence 5.6.

Interestingly, translators have taken the article and the highlighting differently. In the 1922 Ogden translation, the article is preserved. But it is not highlighted. In the introductory note it says "the proofs of the translation and the version of the original ... have been very carefully revised by the author himself." If this is true, Wittgenstein approved of the highlighting in the original German and the omission of it in the English. In the 1962 Pears & McGuinness translation, the article is simply omitted. Both translations by the way preserve the ambiguity of the German "die allein ich," translating it as "which alone I."

4. Conclusion

Let me briefly summarize and conclude. If one takes Wittgenstein's original emphasis seriously, it sounds as if there were several languages, hence several worlds, and hence several selves, which indicates solipsism of other minds. If on the other hand there is only one language, then it seems there is only one self, a thin metaphysical-transcendental self, and there is only one world. We then all share that metaphysical-transcendental self. This is not an ordinary empirical solipsism of other minds. That Wittgenstein's idea of solipsism is not the ordinary one, has already been pointed out by many scholars. But it seems to me not to be very clear what exactly Wittgenstein meant when he highlighted the article "der." The emphasis on "der" gives the impression that there are other languages and other speakers. This then invites the "die (allein ich)" reading and gives more weight on ordinary solipsism of other minds. I believe that this feature should still be in the picture. Thus, there might be more to the ambiguity than commentators seem to admit.

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Acknowledgement

For helpful comments I wish to thank Peter Hacker, Shawn Standefer, and Paisley Livingston.

A Note on Wittgenstein and Bataille: On the “General Intention” of Religion

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Abstract

The paper compares Georges Bataille’s and Ludwig Wittgenstein’s accounts of religion, and discusses Bataille’s distinction between the “general” and the “specific practical” intentions of religion.

1. Introduction

References to the French writer and philosopher Georges Bataille are rare in studies of Wittgenstein’s thought. There are many good and persuasive reasons for this, despite the facts, firstly, that the two thinkers were contemporaries, secondly, that Bataille visited and gave lectures in Cambridge in 1949, and thirdly, that Bataille and A.J. Ayer met several times in Paris in the 1950s. There is no indication that the paths of Bataille and Wittgenstein ever crossed or that either ever became significantly aware of the other. It is possible that Bataille heard about Wittgenstein from Ayer or from his friend Blanchot, who made passing references to the *Tractatus* and its reflections on the limits of language and the unsayable. In the case of Wittgenstein and Bataille, we are dealing with two different characters and movements of thought. On the one hand, the descriptive and analytical, on the other, the personal and eclectic. Here, Wittgenstein’s philosophy of language, there Bataille’s heterology. On the rare occasions that Bataille’s name crops up in discussions of Wittgenstein, it is a case either of a somewhat “arbitrary” association, or of an account of contemporary historical context, or of a passing comparison. Neither does Bataille crop up in the few studies on Wittgenstein and surrealism, despite some possible similarities between the two: on the one hand, between the collage techniques of surrealism and Wittgenstein’s reordering of text fragments, on the other, between Wittgenstein’s taste for inventing or constructing hypothetical language-games and the aims of surrealism, insofar as both seek “to provide a new interpretation of our surrounding world, to uncover its *hidden* truths”; thus “Wittgenstein’s method, as with surrealism, does not involve building a new

construction out of new material, but only 'rearranging what we have always known' [PI 109], like the 'rearrangement of books in a library' [BB 44]" (Gitsoulis 2021:77).

But despite the significant differences, Wittgenstein and Bataille do have certain things in common. Namely, they are both concerned: firstly, with identifying and mapping the fundamental horizon of experience that the religious attitude presupposes; secondly, with determining the ambiguous nature of this horizon; and thirdly, with critiquing Frazer's intellectualist and utilitarian reconstruction of magic and religion. Both Wittgenstein and Bataille seek to highlight the experiences that are preconditional to the utilitarian or instrumental use of religion. Wittgenstein and Bataille both have strong reservations about any attempt to reduce the experience and meaning of the religious attitude to rational or discursive statements. In the nineteen-thirties, both were frequent readers of Frazer's *The Golden Bough*.

Accordingly, when reading the clutch of publications that Bataille wrote about the cave paintings at Lascaux, in which he lays out his ideas on transgression, art, magic, religion and the sacred, and in which he presents his critique of Frazer, one is almost inevitably reminded of Wittgenstein's remarks on religion and Frazer. In the following, I will seek to clarify this impression and the implied parallels.

2. Man's Fundamental Desire, or the Return to Intimate Life

In the clutch of articles about Lascaux and in the monograph *Prehistoric Painting. Lascaux or the Birth of Art* (1955), Bataille restates his decisive distinction between the world of work, the realm of things, and the world of inner experience, the realm of intimacy. In his description of the transgression of the world of work towards an opening of the realm of intimacy, he introduces a distinction between the "general" and the "particular" intention of magic and religion. The clarification of this distinction leads into a critique of Frazer.

Bataille's description of the general intention of religion revolves around a number of considerations, the central leitmotifs of which are transgression and intimacy. The latter, *intimité*, denotes a kind of immediate experience. It

entails a presence, a sense of being overwhelmed, and an intensity in various types of experience and perception. In general terms, *intimité* denotes the mode of experience and attitude that contrasts with *aliénation*: a reified mode of being. *Intimité* refers to an attitude that transcends the world of work. To work implies a purposeful and instrumental relationship to the world, whereas *intimité* denotes a surrender to the inner world. Sorrow, weeping, laughter and erotic experience (the ecstatic and excessive experience) are all examples of *intimité*, which also entails a loss of self and the experience of immediacy: it is the sense of being overwhelmed and vanquished by the inner world. Bataille identifies this personal and fundamental orientation as the essence of the religious attitude, which can thus be regarded as a way of life that recognises and ascribes validity to that which is overwhelming and non-discursive; the aspect of inner experience that is beyond the rational, practical and utilitarian.

In religion, intimacy is attained by following the path of non-purposeful play. Play (*le jeu*) entails the negation and hence transgression of the realm of things, the realm that stands for duration and future. Through the negation of play, "the moment" makes itself felt. The negation of play gives validity to the "moment". It achieves a transgression of the realm of things, leading to a re-establishing of the realm of intimacy. This transgression amounts to a suspension of the need for "time or duration", which obscures or "hides" inner life. The transgression of play essentially annuls that for which duration is a prerequisite, hence also the calculating and instrumental mode of being. With this, one is brought back to the disposition of intimacy. In play, everything is given in "the miraculous moment". The person who plays emancipates himself from the realm of things. Play, the rite, religion constitute a movement towards the restoration of something lost.

According to Bataille, play satisfies the human longing for the world of intimacy, from which people have distanced themselves through work. Art, magic and religion set man free from the enslaving yoke of labour. For Bataille, the cave paintings at Lascaux are a legacy of *Homo ludens*: the person who attains a humane world by indulging in play through the practice of art, magic and religion. Art, magic and religion transcend the world of work.

Religion is a game, a form of play. Religion constitutes access to and an expression of a world that is different from that of work. This is the “general” intention of religion. “Religion [...] is the search for lost intimacy” (OC VII:315).

Concerning the practical “particular” or utilitarian intention of religion, Bataille points out that every civilisation or culture creates art, and practices magic and religion under different conditions, what Bataille calls different “pretexts”. In this respect, art and religion are framed within the realm of things. The “external justifications” for an expression of art or of religion assert themselves in extension of the inherent or “internal justification” of that expression, insofar as each is also embedded in a given practical context in the world of work (OC IX:340). The utilitarian intention is thus derivative and of a secondary nature. In short: “every work [of art or religion] reveals a specific practical intention that adds itself to that general intention I wish to bring out” (OC IX:42).

Bataille is concerned with the features of art, magic and religion that are presupposed by the “specific practical”, utilitarian intention. He conducts basic research. His interest is directed towards the decisive “general intention” or “movement”, but he recognises that a concomitant of this movement is a “narrow” utilitarian or “practical intention” (OC IX:37). This is, however, an intention that overlaps with the “general intention”. The “specific practical intention” is the aspect that includes the instrumental meanings of magic and religion. And this can be ascribed to the fact that magic and religion are framed within the world of work. It is this additional aspect that raises the question of the functional or utilitarian intention of religion. For Bataille, both intentions are operative, but Frazer and others, in their studies of magic and religion, focus exclusively on this “practical particular”. Frazer overlooks the “general intention” of religion.

In his critique of Frazer and other “academic” accounts of religion, Bataille points out that the interest in the “practical particular intention” overshadows or supplants the “general intention”: *le jeu* and the transgressive. Bataille’s treatment constitutes a challenge to the widespread assumption that magic and religion serve an exclusively utilitarian function. But this renders both practices merely instrumental; it reduces them to “simple calculating machines”, to operative strategies. And this disregards the fact that both are

driven by "man's fundamental desire, regardless of era or region, to be filled with wonder" (OC IX:341). The "practical particular intention" is present, but according to Bataille it presupposes and unfolds against the background of a preconditional horizon: the "general intention". "Any given work of art's [or religion's] specific intention is thus of small account if one considers the constancy and universality of that overriding purpose" (OC IX:37).

3. The Flea and the Dog or the Community of Life

One trait that Wittgenstein and Bataille share is a focus on the "general intention" of religion. Wittgenstein agrees with Bataille that religious statements and forms of action can have a utilitarian and referential form: their "particular intention". But for Wittgenstein as for Bataille, this form is not its primary concern. In all the remarks on religion to be found in Wittgenstein's late philosophical writings (from MS 139a to MS 176), his fundamental interest is the "general intention". Wittgenstein's interest in religious language is essentially an outcome of his efforts to identify the conditions and common framework that we have to presuppose in order to explain the use of language in general. In parallel with this, on several occasions he tentatively explores the "particular intention".

In *A Lecture on Ethics*, in conjunction with a consideration of such experiences as "wondering at the existence of the world", the feeling of being "*absolutely safe*", the feeling of being guilty, "and I could have added others" (LE 43), Wittgenstein notes that the language of ethics and religion uses similes. In his *Remarks on Frazer's Golden Bough*, he suggests, like Bataille, that one characteristic of magic and religion is the use of a principle of "personification"; in the case of magic, it is "based on the idea of symbolism and language" (RF 125). He stresses that our thinking and attitude, in particular in relation to magical and religious forms of action, presuppose the rich and extensive background that is part and parcel of human life: "It goes without saying that a man's shadow, which looks like him, or his mirror-image, the rain, thunderstorms, the phases of the moon, the changing of the seasons, the way in which animals are similar to and different from one another and in relation to man, the phenomena of death, birth, and sexual life, in short, everything we observe around us year in and year out,

interconnected in so many different ways, will play a part in his thinking (his philosophy) and in his practices, or is precisely what we really know and find interesting” (RF 128–129). Rush Rhees adds: “What is done and spoken in the ritual refers to something important in the lives of the people who practice it: to sunrise at the solstices or equinoxes, to planting and harvesting, to the coming of the rainy season, to birth, to marriage, to burial, to going into battle, etc.” (Rhees 1982:72). In *Lectures on Religious Belief*, Wittgenstein suggests that, lying at the root of religious practice are “pictures” (LEC 71) of a kind that cannot be regarded as literal descriptions, hypotheses or theories about factual conditions. “The whole *weight* may be in the picture” (LEC 72). These pictures and their content are connected to the conditions of human life and its forms of action. In his late writings, Wittgenstein points out the existence of a family resemblance between, on the one hand, “the foundation” of the religious attitude and belief and, on the other, the complex “pattern of our experience that is hard to describe” and which forms the basis of our reactions to and understanding of other persons’ behaviour and psychical states (MS 174:2). Here Wittgenstein is calling attention to the fact that our use of concepts to determine other people’s feelings and states is comparable to certain religious uses of language. “If someone can believe in God with complete certainty, why not in other minds?” (MS 137:67a). I could give further examples. But let me summarise instead. Like Bataille, Wittgenstein is primarily concerned with identifying and drawing attention to the aspects of life and experience that the religious uses of language presuppose. “The *surroundings* of a way of acting” (RF 147). The “general intention” of religion; the complex and interwoven domains that invest religious statements with life. The domains of religion are internally related to *Lebensprobleme*. Elsewhere, he writes: “A religious question is either a question of life or it is (empty) chatter. This language game – one could say – gets played only with questions of life. Much like the word “Au-weh” does not have any meaning – except as a scream of pain” (DB 91).

Religious actions and utterances do not in principle include proposition-like statements, insofar as the grammar of such actions and utterances can be explained primarily in terms of a reaction to “what is constantly there and constantly crucial in [our] lives”. Religious utterances are expressions and declarations of feelings, attitudes and values. Hence also Wittgenstein’s

criticism of Frazer's description of magical acts and religious rites as derived from hypotheses or theoretical assumptions about the world and the processes of nature. Taking aim at Frazer, he points out: "In the ancient rites we have the use of an extremely developed gesture-language" (RF 135). Drury writes: it is "the need to express something; the ceremonies were a form of language, a form of life. Thus, today if we are introduced to someone we shake hands; if we enter a church we take off our hats and speak in a low voice: at Christmas perhaps we decorate a tree. These are expressions of friendliness, reverence, and of celebration. We do not believe that shaking hands has any mysterious efficacy, or that to keep one's hat on in church is dangerous!" (Drury 1973:x). Wittgenstein writes: "It was not a trivial reason, for really there can have been no *reason*, that prompted certain races of mankind to venerate the oak tree, but only the fact that they and the oak were united in a community of life, and thus that they arose together not by choice, but rather like the flea and the dog. (If fleas developed a rite, it would be based on the dog.)" (RF 139)

4. The Tightrope Walker, or on the Edge of an Abyss

Wittgenstein employs a variety of images as illustrations when exploring and highlighting the "general intention" of religion, its roots in "die unendlichen Variationen des Lebens", in the "Umgebung" of human life. One of these is the well-known image of the tightrope walker. In this simile, Wittgenstein emphasises that the religious attitude rests on the foundation of what is "immediately given" in life, in contrast to the idea that religion and religious belief and action are based on (theoretical or historical) evidence ("wisdom") or empirically verifiable observations (sensory experience). Religious belief and the validity of this attitude are internally related to the intricate and multifaceted nature of a person's life and experience. This foundation is different in nature from that of the scientific or rational attitude. And for that very reason, i.e. that the religious attitude does not draw support from scientific, historical or ordinary criteria of validity, the person of a religious attitude (the tightrope walker) gives the appearance of walking "on nothing but air". Yet this is not the case! For the foundation is simply something other than what we usually expect when justification is demanded. Wittgenstein writes: "An honest religious thinker is like a tightrope walker. It almost looks as though he were walking on nothing but air. His support is the slenderest

imaginable. And yet it really is possible to walk on it" (CV 73). To use the words of Bataille, religious belief "is a leap into the unknown, with animality as its impetus" (OC VIII:81). Or in a very different formulation of Wittgenstein's: "Religious similes can be said to move on the edge of an abyss" (CV 29).

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Wittgenstein and Conceptual Engineering

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Abstract

Conceptual Engineering is an approach to assess the concepts we use in language and implement revisions to the defective concepts. According to Wittgenstein's view in the *Philosophical Investigations*, although some concepts have blurred boundaries and their definitions lack exactness, they are not necessarily defective. This view of Wittgenstein may seem to contradict the central idea of conceptual engineering. In this paper, by examining Wittgenstein's view in comparison with Waismann's open texture argument, Carnap's explication thesis, and the theory of conceptual engineering, I argue that although Wittgenstein does not consider the inexactness of concept as a defect, as he is concerned with whether a concept serves our goals, he would accept the idea to engineer concepts when they malfunction in serving specific goals. Moreover, I demonstrate that Wittgenstein's observation that mathematicians introduce changes to mathematical concepts when convinced by proof provides insights into the practice of applying conceptual engineering to mathematics.

Conceptual engineering is becoming a popular topic of meta-philosophy recently, attracting attention in philosophy, law, and psychology. Cappelen (2018:3) defines conceptual engineering as the process of assessing and improving our representational device, namely, concepts. Similarly, Chalmers (2020) defines it as an approach to evaluate, design and implement concepts. The essential idea of conceptual engineering is that because the concepts we use in our language may be defective, we should assess these concepts and improve them to serve various purposes. This idea seems to be what the later Wittgenstein would reject as he asserts that there is no ideal language. In this article, I argue that Wittgenstein's view is not necessarily incompatible with the theory of conceptual engineering.

Open Texture Argument, Explication Thesis, and the Later Wittgenstein

Although conceptual engineering is a relatively new term, the idea is not. It is widely believed that there were two forerunners of conceptual engineering: Waismann and Carnap. In 1945, Waismann introduced the concept of open texture. In Waismann's view, most empirical concepts are open-textured, not fixed. The following is what he defines as open texture:

Open texture is a very fundamental characteristic of most, though not of all, empirical concepts, and it is this texture which prevents us from verifying conclusively most of our empirical statements. Take any material object statement. The terms which occur in it are non-exhaustive; that means that we cannot foresee completely all possible conditions in which they are to be used; there will always remain a possibility, however faint, that we have not taken into account something or other that may be relevant to their usage; and that means that we cannot foresee completely all the possible circumstance in which the statement is true or in which it is false. There will always remain a margin of uncertainty. Thus the absence of a conclusive verification is directly due to the open texture of the terms concerned. (Waismann 1945, 123)

Waismann's concept of open texture is that although we usually understand the meaning of empirical concepts, such as "cat" and "gold," and communicate with these concepts without too many misunderstandings, there are scenarios in which we are not able to verify whether an object is a referent of a particular concept or not. Waismann elaborates:

Suppose I have to verify a statement such as 'There is a cat next door'; suppose I go over to the next room, open the door, look into it, and actually see a cat. Is this enough to prove my statement? Or must I, in addition to it, touch the cat, pat him and induce him to purr? And supposing that I had done all these things, can I then be absolutely certain that my statement was true? (Waismann 1945: 121)

For Waismann, because it is always possible for this kind of borderline case to emerge, the concepts we use in our language can never be fixed, rather they remain open-textured. Waismann's concept of open texture is widely believed to be influenced by later Wittgenstein. In particular, there is an obvious affinity between Waismann's instance of "cat" above and the following paragraph of *Philosophical Investigation*:

I say, "There is a chair over there." What if I go to fetch it, and it suddenly disappears from sight? "—So it wasn't a chair, but some kind of illusion." — But a few seconds later, we see it again and are able to touch it, and so on. —"So the chair was there after all, and its disappearance was some

kind of illusion." —But suppose that after a time it disappears again—or seems to disappear. What are we to say now? Have you rules ready for such cases—rules saying whether such a thing is still to be called a "chair"? But do we miss them when we use the word "chair"? And are we to say that we do not really attach any meaning to this word, because we are not equipped with rules for every possible application of it? (PI 2009:§80)

Baker and Hacker (1983) point out that although Waismann's concept of open texture is significantly influenced by PI§80, it is a misunderstanding of Wittgenstein's viewpoint. According to Baker and Hacker's reading, Waismann's idea of open texture presupposes "a distorted conception of what it is for a set of rules to be complete (or incomplete)" and says that the concept of a chair is an open-textured one means that rules of how to use this term are incomplete. (Baker&Hacker 1983:170) For Waismann, the completeness of the definition is conceivable but practically impossible. On the contrary, Wittgenstein takes the pursuit of this completeness as nonsense. Based on this observation, Baker and Hacker argue that because the concept of open texture is correlative to the completeness of definition, and Wittgenstein considers the completeness of rules to govern the use of a term to be nonsense, it can be inferred that Wittgenstein would reject the concept of open texture. Although that Baker and Hacker's observation of the difference between Waismann's view and Wittgenstein's original idea is plausible, we must not overlook the fact that both Waismann and Wittgenstein advocate that concepts are not fixed and can be changed. From the perspective of conceptual engineering, it is not critical whether the completeness of the definition is a utopia or nonsense. What is more important is that Waismann and Wittgenstein have a consensus that concepts have no clear boundaries and hence are not fixed but open to changes. However, accepting the open-texture nature of the concept merely shows that Wittgenstein shares the same basic stance with modern conceptual engineers. To find out whether Wittgenstein's view is compatible with the theory of modern conceptual engineering, we need to take a closer look at Wittgenstein's remarks and the view of conceptual engineers. In the following sections, I shall consider two possible objections to the idea that Wittgenstein would accept the theory of conceptual engineering and argue that they are not plausible.

Intentional and Unintentional Conceptual Engineering

For Wittgenstein, the use of language is not governed by any explicit rules. The reason that most people seem to have a consensus on the meaning of a concept is that we share the same form of life. Based on this view of Wittgenstein, some might argue that even Wittgenstein admits that concepts can be revised or replaced, he would maintain that conceptual changes are caused by the changes in what most people mean when using these expressions, not because some philosophers or experts suggest that a concept should be revised in a specific way. In other words, conceptual changes just happen in the language in an unpredictable way; therefore, it is futile for philosophers to initiate conceptual engineering activity. Thus, Wittgenstein would reject the idea of conceptual engineering. I shall demonstrate that this objection is not plausible.

Cappelen(2018: 35-36) indicates that conceptual engineering activities can either be intentional or unintentional. It is possible that we are engaged in conceptual engineering activities without having any awareness of it. For instance, one is engaged in the activity of revising the concept of “marriage” if she uses the term in an extended meaning, even if she denies it. On the other hand, engineering projects like what Haslanger (2000) and Scharp (2007) propose are intentional, as they are aware of the deficiency of concepts they want to eliminate and have set clear goals, i.e., what kind of concept we should have. Hence, even if, for Wittgenstein, all conceptual changes in practice are unintentional, he is partially in agreement with modern conceptual engineers. Apparently, for conceptual engineers, it is intentional conceptual engineering that is worth more discussion as there is not much they can do to unintentional engineering. Would Wittgenstein agree with conceptual engineers that our concept should be intentionally engineered to serve a specific purpose? In PI, Wittgenstein remarks:

We want to establish an order in our knowledge of the use of language: an order for a particular purpose, one out of many possible orders, not *the* order. For this purpose we shall again and again *emphasize* distinctions which our ordinary forms of language easily make us overlook. This may make it appear as if we saw it as our task to reform language.

Such a reform for particular practical purposes, an improvement in our terminology designed to prevent misunderstandings in practice, may well be possible. But these are not the cases we are dealing with. The

confusions which occupy us arise when language is, as it were, idling, not when it is doing work. (PI: §132, italics Wittgenstein's)

Although the central idea of PI §132 is that the task of philosophy is not to reform language for practical reasons in specific scenarios but to deal with the confusion that arises in language, it is worth noting that here Wittgenstein explicitly admits the possibility of implementing revisions in the concepts we use for practical purposes, such as reduce misunderstanding. That is to say, despite the fact that Wittgenstein does not consider engineering concepts as a major task for philosophers, he has no intention to deny the possibility and value of intentional engineering activities.

Similarly, in *Remarks on the Foundation of Mathematics*, Wittgenstein points out that in mathematics, concepts are engineered by mathematicians intentionally:

Can I say: “A proof induces us to make a certain decision, namely that of accepting a particular concept-formation”? Do not look at the proof as a procedure that *compels* you, but as one that *guides* you. —And what it guides is your conception of a (particular) situation.

But how does it come about that it guides *each one* of us in such a way that we agree in the influence it has on us? Well, how does it come about that we agree in *counting*? “That is just how we are trained” one may say, “and the agreement produced in this way is carried further by the proofs.” (RFM 1978: IV 30, italics Wittgenstein's)

One important idea of RFM is that mathematical proofs lead to conceptual change and conceptual formation in mathematics. Wittgenstein points out that when a proof is discovered, mathematicians must decide whether a concept should be revised accordingly. Although usually, mathematicians can easily reach a consensus on what decision to make because they were trained in a similar way, the decision-making process should be neglected. That is to say, for Wittgenstein when mathematicians are convinced by a proof that a concept should be changed, they are aware of the conceptual change they introduce and why they implement such changes. In other words, in this case, mathematicians are engaged in intentional conceptual engineering activities.

However, the remarks in PI §132 demonstrate that Wittgenstein is not keen to engineer concepts for practical purposes, as he implies that the defective concepts are not the main source of our confusion. Similarly, in an earlier paragraph, Wittgenstein remarks:

A main source of our failure to understand is that we don't have *an overview* of the use of our words. —Our grammar is deficient in surveyability. A surveyable representation produces precisely that kind of understanding which consists in 'seeing connections'. Hence the importance of finding and inventing *intermediate links*. (PI: §122, italics Wittgenstein's)

Here Wittgenstein points out that the biggest deficiency in our language is the lack of surveyability. This is to say, failing to see the interconnections between concepts is the main source of trouble that we have in language. This viewpoint explains why Wittgenstein is not quite interested in engineering single concepts. As indicated in PI §132, for Wittgenstein, improving single defective concepts might help us prevent misunderstanding to some extent, but the biggest problem in language cannot be solved by improving each defective concept. Rather, it can only be solved by seeing and creating connections between different concepts. Therefore, we can see that Wittgenstein has little motivation to engineer individual concepts, not because he wants to downplay conceptual engineering activities, but because he intends to focus on the more crucial problem that causes bigger trouble to our language and understanding.

In fact, the significance of interconnection between concepts has been noticed by some conceptual engineers. As Cappelen (2018: 158) observes, if we change the meaning of "freedom," the meaning of related concepts such as "responsibility" will also be changed. Although this causal chain of conceptual change can be considered as an objection to the feasibility of conceptual engineering projects, it has not been sufficiently investigated. While admitting this objection does make a good point, Cappelen's reply is not satisfying. He claims that because the process of conceptual change is "incomprehensible and inscrutable"; therefore, how the change of one concept will influence

other related concepts is unpredictable (2018: 158). Cappelen's response above reinforces Wittgenstein's view that the lack of an overview of the connections between concepts is a source of significant problems in our language.

What Are the Goals of Conceptual Engineering Activities?

Another possible objection is that Wittgenstein would be skeptical that there is a correct answer for what are defective concepts and how we should improve them, as he rejects the idea that there can be any ideal language. Carnap, another forerunner of conceptual engineering, argues that philosophers should engage in the activity of explication. For Carnap (1950), the explication of concepts is a crucial process to substitute an inexact, prescientific concept with an exact one to serve our scientific purposes. Carnap believes that inexactness is a significant defect of concepts that makes them less fruitful. This view of Carnap is coherent with the modern theory of conceptual engineering but not consistent with Wittgenstein's position. In PI (§66-§88), Wittgenstein proposes the idea of family resemblance and argues that concepts are not always rigidly bounded, but concepts with blurred boundaries, or inexact in Carnap's term, can still be used. It seems that for Wittgenstein, the vagueness or inexactness of concepts is not necessarily a defect that needs to be solved, which implies that he would not advocate the idea of engineering concepts that are inexact. However, it must be noted that the acceptance of the inexactness of concepts is not unconditional. For Wittgenstein, the inexactness of concepts is not a defect only when the inexact concept is usable. In PI §88, he emphasizes that an inexact concept can be usable, whereas the exactness can be useless. Hence, we can infer that what Wittgenstein considers as defects of concepts are those factors that harm the usefulness of a concept. As he remarks:

“Inexact” is really a reproach, and “exact” is a praise. And this is to say that what is inexact attains its goal less perfectly than does what a more exact. So it all depends on what we call “the goal”. (PI: §88)

Wittgenstein's view above has an obvious affinity with the theory and practice of modern conceptual engineers, who take the deficiencies of concepts as context-dependent and have a practice-focused perspective. For Wittgenstein, what is important for a concept is not whether it is rigidly defined or not but

whether it plays the role it should play in language. Similarly, conceptual engineers initiate engineering projects because some concepts we use are not good enough to serve important practical goals, not because they lack exactness. For instance, Haslanger (2000) suggests that the concept of woman should be revised to serve our goal of fighting for justice. For Haslanger, despite that the old concept of woman is usable in the sense that it does not cause misunderstanding, it is not usable for serving our goal to fight for justice. What Wittgenstein rejects is the attempt to change a concept merely because it lacks exactness while ignoring the context it is being used and the fact that it functions quite well in that context. But he would advocate an intentional engineering project if its goal is to replace a partially unusable concept with a more usable one. Hence, although for Wittgenstein, unified deficiencies of concept do not exist, he would admit that there are various kinds of defects of concepts that are highly context-dependent, and case-by-case examination is necessary when deciding whether these defects will make a concept less usable. He would advocate the idea of intentionally engineering concepts if the defects have made the current concepts not usable for our important goals anymore.

Conceptual Engineering in Mathematics

Finally, as an instance of the practice of engineering concepts, let us examine Wittgenstein's idea on how mathematical concepts are formed and changed. As indicated in the previous quotation from RFM, Wittgenstein stresses that in mathematical practice, mathematicians create new concepts or modify old concepts when proof convinces them to do so. According to Frascolla's reading:

From powerful and sophisticated means for establishing truth, mathematical proof is transformed into a tool of persuasion for producing conceptual changes that are not justifiable in any justifiable way except than in terms of the shared inclination to accept them, generated by the proof. (Frascolla 1994: 142)

Wittgenstein's idea to consider proof as a tool to induce conceptual changes not only shows that he admits that intentional conceptual engineering happens in mathematics, but more importantly, he raises an insightful point that the defects in concepts are detected in practice, not in theories. In

mathematics, the practice that helps mathematicians discover the defect of concepts they should improve is mathematical proof. Similarly, in other fields, conceptual engineering projects should be implemented when the current concepts lose part of their utility to serve important social and political purposes. As mathematics is a field that has not been investigated much by conceptual engineers, except by Tanswell (2018), Wittgenstein's viewpoint could contribute to the discussion of the applying conceptual engineering approach to mathematics by proposing a practice-focused observation of the connection between proof acceptance and conceptual change.

Conclusion

Despite the fact that as a forerunner of conceptual engineering, Waismann's open texture thesis is inspired by Wittgenstein, Wittgenstein's view that it is nonsense to demand ideal language and exactness in concept seems to imply that he would reject the idea of conceptual engineering. However, I have demonstrated that although for Wittgenstein, the central problem of the deficiency in our language is caused by lack of surveyability, not the defects in each concept, he admits that engineering individual concepts could serve various practical purposes. For Wittgenstein, lack of exactness is not a good reason to intentionally engineer a concept, but when a concept is not playing the role it should play, intentional conceptual engineering can be a solution. A good example that illustrates Wittgenstein's position is his observation that mathematicians make decisions on whether a concept should be revised when a proof is discovered. This practice-oriented observation that mathematicians are engaged in intentional conceptual engineering activities provides answers to the question of whether the conceptual engineering approach can be applied to mathematics and how conceptual engineering activities can be implemented in mathematics.

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