

After Wittgenstein

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Introduction

Ludwig Wittgenstein (LW; 1889-1951) was an Austrian-British philosopher. He is largely a historical figure in philosophy today.¹ His work is studied and interpreted primarily historically and philologically. Of today's prolific philosophers, almost only Robert Brandom refers to LW variously, but fundamentally critically. He still, however, even writes of ›our Wittgensteinian

¹ LW is quoted from the German 8-volume edition. Codes for the most important writings: TLP: Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus; PI: Philosophical Investigations; PPF - Philosophy of Psychology - A Fragment (formerly Part II of the PI); PG: Philosophical Grammar; PB: Philosophical Remarks; BIB: The Blue Book; OC: On Certainty. I also use the Big Typescript (BT - Wiener Ausgabe Bd. 11), the Nachlass with the sigles from G.H. von Wright's index (MS, Nr.;Seite; TS, Nr., Seite) and the collection of small writings Philosophical Occasions (PO).

philosophical world.²

In the following essay, I would like to recall LW's basic insights and achievements. What others might make of it for philosophy is beyond my influence.

LW's two main works are TLP (1921/22) and PI (1953). They are far apart in time, but PI refers closely to the first (and during his lifetime only published) book. In the *Preface* to the latter, W. claimed to have "solved the problems essentially once and for all". This seems a hypertrophic claim. For LW could have meant only the philosophical problems mentioned in the context, for which he claimed to show in TLP "that the questioning of these problems is based on the misunderstanding of the logic of our language." LW seems to admit the hypertrophy of this claim in the *Preface* to PI itself, when he writes that he (had to) recognize "grave errors in what I had set down in that first book."

The close relation of the PI to the TLP consists in the fact that it largely consists in or emerges from the self-criticism of that first book. LW had at times (1943/44) aspired to publish TLP and PI at Cambridge UP in one volume, because, as it says in the *Preface*, the new thoughts "could only get their right illumination through the contrast and on the background of my older way of thinking". The project only failed due to the revocation of the already granted permission to reprint the TLP by its original publisher (Kegan Paul).

LW's intellectual development, accordingly, has a very simple form. At the end of her first period from 1911-19, he published a logical-metaphysical system (TLP), which claimed to have essentially solved the problems. After 10 years of absence from continuous philosophical work, also due to this conviction, LW returned to it in 1929 and undertook to thoroughly destroy his first system and transform it into a changed philosophy(-view). This period culminated in the only posthumously published PI.

It is one of the greatest intellectual adventures one can have with a 20th-century philosophical writer to follow this development thoughtfully. That is what this essay invites you to do.

Admittedly, the intention meets with great difficulties. LW was, at least in TLP, a philosopher's philosopher, whose study presupposes knowledge of mathematical logic and its more recent development since Frege and Russell, whom the *Preface* of the TLP also thanks. Further, LW's whole philosophy is a very personal project. Not only did he explicitly hold that work in philosophy is really more work on oneself (on one's own conception; on how one sees things and what one demands of them; cf. BT 407); he also did not want to found a school and be imi-

2 *Tales of the Mighty Dead*, Harvard UP 2002, 210.

tated (MS 134, 143; 146). Finally, although LW declared overview of conceptual relations to be an essential aim in philosophy (PI § 122) and wanted to give a ›lucid exposition‹, the texts of his two main works are in any case prima facie not very lucid. TLP uses a numbering system, but few readers have bothered to actually follow the reading instruction to be taken from it, which is not satisfied by linear reading. PI, on the other hand, LW himself compares to an ›album of landscape sketches‹, but he does not clearly state of which landscape it gives a picture. (PI, *Preface c*) Since he wanted to encourage his readers to think for themselves, they should be able to acquire the picture of the landscape (of the language and the conceptual relations that permeate it) only by working through the sketches.

But in my experience, every effort is worthwhile here. So let's go on the journey.

I. Dissolving conceptual problems - What philosophy should have learnt from Wittgenstein

The philosophical problems

My starting point is LW's standing formula of ›philosophical problems‹. Examples, for what he thinks of, when he uses this formula, he seems to give only in the *Preface* to the PI: "the concept of meaning, of understanding, of a proposition and sentence, of logic, the foundations of mathematics, states of consciousness, and other things." (PI 3e). Actually, he calls them here the "objects" of his philosophical investigations. Except, apparently, for the two examples previously mentioned, they are all also subjects of the TLP. Are they, then, the philosophical problems (or examples of them)?

The question does not allow for a simple, affirmative answer. I will argue the following: In TLP, LW's formula primarily refers to the triad of the fundamental problems of modern epistemological philosophy: realism versus idealism, skepticism (as a consequence of idealism), and solipsism (as a radicalisation of idealism). The descriptive clarification (according to the claim) of the concepts of sense and meaning; thinking (meaning and understanding); of the proposition and logic are the basis on which the afore mentioned philosophical problems are solved.

When, in the *Preface* to PI, W. writes of the grave errors in the TLP, he does not mean the solving of the philosophical problems, but the insufficient descriptive basis for that. The problem of realism vs. idealism, which is fundamental for him in the triad, he believes/considers to

be (re)solved, also on the changed descriptive basis in PI and only now rightly so.

The reasoning: Only in one other place after the *Preface* does LW writes explicitly about the philosophical problems in TLP:

Most of the propositions and questions, that have been written about philosophical matters are not false, but senseless. We cannot, therefore, answer questions of this kind at all, but only only state their senselessness. Most questions and propositions of the philosophers result from the fact that we do not understand the logic of our language.

(They are of the kind as the question whether the Good is more or less identical than the Beautiful).

And so it is not to be wondered at that the deepest problems are really *no* problems.

TLP 4.003

Once again, the philosophical problems are characterised by the criterion of ›misunderstanding the logic of our language‹, insofar as they are said to be based on "our failure to understand the logic of our language." One step further is the claim that the problems are "nonsense" and therefore "*not* really problems".

The only example of a philosophical problem given in the parenthesis of the quotation, being clearly nonsense, makes it difficult to understand the exact sense of the formula. But if philosophical problems are based on misunderstanding of the logic of language and are therefore supposedly nonsense, might not a nonsense example be as good as any other, even if it seems to be fictitious? But even this need not be assumed. If you think of Hegel's treatment of the ideas of cognition and the good at the end of his *Logic*, they are treated as precursors to the absolute idea, which is the perfect logical instance of the central figure of absolute idealism - the so-called identity of identity and non-identity. It is also discussed how close cognition and the good come to the perfect instance of this figure; and this can be described - nonsense, but understandable nonsense - as the question whether cognition or the good are more or less 'identical' with the absolute idea. This is nonsense, because 'identical' is an adjective without comparative (cp. TLP 5.473; 5.4733), but it is understandable. LW, educated Viennese bourgeois that he was, read about Hegel in contemporary works e.g. Spengler (1926; 26, 30, 456, 468-9, 471, 480, 611, 649, 987) and Weininger (whom he esteemed; 1920, 527 (193)). And he, of course, knew Schopenhauer's polemics against Hegel.

The concept of nonsense now alludes to the need to distinguish between sense and nonsense, and thus to the basis of the misunderstanding of our linguistic logic that will turn out to be a lack of distinction between sense and truth/falsehood.

Most important for understanding the attribute ›philosophical‹ for ›problems‹ is a remark on

philosophy (4.112):

The object of philosophy is the logical clarification of thoughts.

Philosophy is not a theory, but an activity.

A philosophical work consists essentially of elucidations.

The result of philosophy is not a number of 'philosophical propositions' but to make the propositions clear.

Philosophy should make clear and delimit sharply the thoughts which otherwise are, as it were, opaque and blurred.

Interpretation remains difficult as no further examples of philosophical problems, characterised by the feature of misunderstanding the logic of language, seem to be given. But appearances are deceptive, and it helps further to pay attention to the fact that Wittgenstein explicitly gives an example of a traditional philosophical problem which simply, in its treatment - the determination of its nonsense - fits exactly into the framework of the generally given characterisation, scepticism (6.51):

Skepticism is *not* irrefutable, but palpably senseless, if it would doubt where a question cannot be asked.

For doubt can only exist where there is a question, a question only where there is an answer, and this only where something *can be said*.

The epistemological, since Descartes traditional scepticism doubts the existence or reality of the (external) world. He starts the controversy between idealism and realism. With this, and with the reminder that one side of this controversy, epistemological idealism, tends to radicalised extremes, it is clear that the LPA not only mentions but explicitly and extensively treats another example of a traditional philosophical problem, solipsism. Hence my thesis: the philosophical problems in TLP, characterised by the misunderstanding of our linguistic logic, whose nonsense can only be demonstrated, are those of scepticism, idealism vs. realism, and solipsism. The basis of establishing their nonsense is the explanation, the clarification of our linguistic logic and its descriptive foundation, the distinction between sense on the one hand, truth-or-falsity on the other.

The brief dismissal of scepticism, for example, is based on (justified by) this foundation in this way: sense is the prerequisite of truth-or-falsity. In order for a proposition to be true or false, it must have/make sense, be meaningful i.e. understandable/intelligible. The existence of the world, which scepticism wants to doubt, is an indispensable precondition already in the di-

mension of sense. For between language and world there exists an internal relation in this dimension, a relation of sense, which cannot not exist (4.014). Therefore, this presupposition already of the sense of propositions cannot be put up for debate again in the subordinate dimension of the truth-or-falsity of propositions. Already the question of the existence of the world - whether or whether-not - cannot be asked because it cannot be answered-and it cannot be answered because nothing sensible at all can be *said* with respect to it. If anything is said at all, the existence of the world is already presupposed. The question of scepticism is thus nonsense, incomprehensible, because it seeks to suspend the presupposition of ability to formulate questions.

It is a confirmation of this interpretation that Wittgenstein, where this stance is concerned, has not wavered . Including his last writing, *On Certainty*, scepticism is briefly dismissed thus (383):

›The argument ‚I may be dreaming‘ is senseless, for this reason: if I am dreaming, this remark is dreamed as well - and indeed it is also being dreamed *that* these words have any meaning.‹

That *everything* he perceives is perhaps only a dream was one of Descartes' arguments for epistemological scepticism. Wittgenstein insists on the consequence of accepting the argument: then the utterance of this radical doubt is also to be taken as dreamed, and even, that the words of this utterance have meaning at all. But if this is assumed, nothing at all can be *said* by this utterance; it must be classified as nonsense, as incomprehensible. The sceptic is thus driven into speechlessness and to that extent refuted. Still the existence of everything - of the world - is the precondition of the sense of sentences (and questions) and of the meaning of words.

It is historically undisputed that the talk of philosophical problems came into Wittgenstein's thinking thanks to a small 1912 book by his "friend Mr Bertrand Russell". It is to him, in addition to "the great works of Frege," that he thanks in the *Preface to the TLP* for owing "a large part to inspiring my thoughts." The writing titled *The Problems of Philosophy* stimulated Wittgenstein in the writing of his first book primarily critically; one can know from Russell's own letters that Wittgenstein did not really appreciate the "shilling shocker" (cp. Monk, 1990, Ch. 3)

Russell explains in the preface of this popular work that it deals primarily with problems of epistemology, not metaphysics, because he believes he can say something positive and constructive about them and that this is not the place for negative criticism. Russell opens the book with a chapter on ›Appearance and Reality‹, in which he discusses Berkeley's idealism, to whom "the credit" is given for having "shown that the existence of matter (as opposed to con-

sciousness) can be denied without contradiction." (14³). In Chapter 2 Descartes is mentioned as the "founder of modern philosophy" and his skeptical doubt as the beginning of philosophy is praised as a great service to philosophy that is still "valuable today." (19) It is also stated that we can "never strictly prove" the existence of things behind the indubitable sense-data (to be understood as the way things are given to us - in perception): "The assumption that the whole of life is a dream in which we ourselves create all our objects is logically not impossible." (22)

In Wittgenstein's words, then, Russell understands scepticism to be "irrefutable." LW diaSc-metrically contradicts Russell: Scepticism, as outlined, is *logically* impossible - because logic is the condition of sense, of intelligibility, and thus presupposes the distinction between sense and truth-or-falsity, and the existence of the world as a condition of sense that cannot be problematised. A direct utterance of the TLP to this effect is very presuppositional and therefore in need of explanation in various ways. For the sake of marking the positions, I include it below, for the time being without further explanation (5.552):

›The 'experience' we need to understand logic is not that such and such is the case, but that something *is*; but that is just *no* experience.

Logic precedes every experience - that something is *so*.

It is before the How, not before the What.‹

With the What of the world, logic is equal-original, because as a condition of sense, of intelligibility, it already presupposes the That of the world, and its sentences/rules/propositions "represent(represent) the scaffolding of the world...", i.e. *are* this scaffolding (as is evident from the context in which Wittgenstein corrects the wording of the thought with the expression ',describe'). The logical propositions presuppose „that names have meaning and elementary propositions make sense.“ (6.124)⁴

Now, in his works, Russell treated the problem of scepticism as fundamental to the problems of realism vs. idealism and solipsism; motivated by an epistemological context. Wittgenstein, on the other hand, in his semantic and logical-metaphysical approach, treated the (pseudo) alternative of realism vs. idealism as fundamental and pivotal, scepticism as an implication of idealism, and solipsism as its possible radicalisation. In doing so, his dissolution of the (pseudo-) alternative remained implicit in the clarification of the logic of our language as the basis of insight into the nonsensicality of philosophical problems, so that it is at least not obvious *prima facie*, that he was concerned with the triad of philosophical problems of modern epistemological philosophy; and these are the problems that are treated as senseless, i.e. dis-

³ Retranslated from the German edition, translated by E. Bubser, Frankfurt/Main 1967.

⁴ Logical propositions "presuppose that names have meaning, and elementary propositions have sense: and this is their connection with the world." (6.124) - Cf. Lange 1989, ch. 1; 1996, ch. XXIV.

solved, by means of the logical-metaphysical theory of LPA which corrects the misunderstanding of our language logic and shows them to be nonsensical.

The basis for dissolving the problems The matter at hand, calls for a more extensive look at the philosophy of logic and the theory of propositions of TLP as a whole. I choose a propaedeutically abbreviated way in connection with Wittgenstein's already mentioned, summarizing remark on logic (6.124). Only the first two principles of the logical-metaphysical system of TLP are important for the dissolution of philosophical problems - the bipolarity principle as a meaning-theoretical principle for propositions, and the propositional connection principle as a meaning-theoretical principle for the constituents of propositions (words), terminologically, "expressions" (cf.3.31).⁵ Both principles are addressed in the following principle: "Only the proposition has sense; only in the context of the proposition has a name meaning." (3.3) The proposition has meaning in that it is a picture (as an expression of thought - 3.1 - the logical picture of the fact - 3). What is defining for a picture is that it agrees or disagrees with reality, is right or wrong, true or false (2.21). It is independent of its factual truth or falsehood (2.22) constitutes the proposition's "sense" (2.221). In the independence of the picture from its factual truth or falsity consists the primacy of sense over truth-or-falsity.

Now the normal propositions of colloquial language are supposed to be logically ordered, just as they are (5.5563), which is conceivable only in connection with the postulate of the unambiguous logical analysis of the proposition into the elementary propositions (5) which determines its sense. The elementary propositions are logically independent of one another (4.211; 5.134), and are taken to be truth-functionally linked. (3.25)

The foundation of the theory of propositions is thus the conception of the elementary proposition, which is supposed to be a direct connection of simple names, primitive signs. Now of these elementary propositions, (which exist, as it were, only in the plural), it is said in remark 6.124 that they are presupposed by logic inasmuch as the latter presupposes "that names have meaning, and elementary propositions have sense; and this is their connection with the world." Further elucidation, then, requires explicating how elementary propositions have meaning because names have meaning.

Of course, elementary propositions also have sense because they each are a picture. (The general picture theory has even already developed in view of the elementary proposition model). But if elementary propositions have sense by the fact that names are directly linked in them

5 For further principles and conclusions from them, cf. Lange 1996, chap. III, and, more briefly, my account in the *Autoren-Handbuch zur deutschen Philosophie des 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Bedorf/Gelhard, Darmstadt 2012, partly translated in the Appendix 137 sqq. Below.

("like the members of a chain" - 2.03), then the redeemability of the conception obviously depends on the understanding of names (simple signs - 3.202 - or primitive signs - 3.26). These are implicatures of a postulate which as of yet still has to be subject to an univocal logical analysis, which the TLP calls "the postulate of the determinateness of the sense". (3.23)

Concerning names, the TLP makes two essential provisions in addition to those mentioned. They refer in a two-sense way to objects as their meaning (3.203). This results from a different perspective on the name-object relation. Viewed, as it were, from the object, „In the proposition the name represents the object." (3.22) Viewed, as it were, from the name, it holds that "The name means the object." (3.203) Now this is one salient place in TLP where its numbering system takes on an argumentative function. According to the principles of the numbering system explained (incompletely) in a note at the beginning of the TLP, the more decimal places its numbering has, the less important the comment is. Thus the 'meaning'-sense of the name-object relation is subordinated to its 'representation'-sense. The thesis that is connected to this - as it were: First representation, then meaning - was 'shown' by Wittgenstein in the TLP only through the differently weighing numbering, but explicitly formulated in the *diaries 1914-1916*, which contain parts of the preparatory work for the TLP, and thereby Wittgenstein emphasised an important, additional aspect:

›If a name designates an object, it thereby stands in a relation to it which is entirely conditioned by the logical nature of the object and characterizes it again.‹ (NB 22.5.15, fifth paragraph from the back)

TLP replaces ‚causing' with 'representing', and 'characterising' with 'meaning', and the formulated assertion is maintained only by the numbering indicating the different logical weight of the two remarks. The emphasised, important additional aspect of the diary remark is the qualification of the two relations 'condition/represent' and 'characterise/mean' - they are said to refer essentially to the 'logical nature of the object'. What is meant by this has to be explained from the context of the TLP, but is completely unknowable in its presentation. To explicate, I will need to elaborate a bit.

A picture, thus also an elementary sentence picture, is supposed to consist of the fact that its elements - in the case of the elementary sentence itself: the names - „are combined with one another in a definite way." (2.14) Thus the picture has a certain structure, and the possibility of this structure is what Wittgenstein calls the "form of the picture": "The form of the representation is the possibility that the things are combined with one another as are the elements of the picture." (2.151) Now, according to these determinations, the elementary propositional picture apparently has its structure because of the immediate behaviour-to-one-another of the names.

One should therefore expect the names themselves to have forms which determine the structure of the proposition, by their concatenation, and therein presuppose its form of the picture as its possibility. But this is not the case. In the rich repertoire of 'forms' in the TLP, the category 'form of the name' does not exist.⁶ There is only the category 'form of the object', explained as the possibility of its occurrence in states of affairs (2.0141). Judging from the diary note and the primacy of conditioning prior to characterising clearly expressed in it, Wittgenstein's idea was that names, by virtue of the representational relation to their objects, absorb the forms of the objects (possibilities of occurrence in states of affairs), as it were.⁷ This explains the absence of the category 'form of a name'. The elementary propositions serving as truth-function bases of propositions would thus have an 'ontological' foundation in the representation relation between names and objects. And logic, insofar as it presupposes, according to 6.124, that elementary propositions have meaning (as have names), was also 'ontologically' based on the structure or 'form' of the world expressed in the forms of objects (cf. 2.022). For this conception of a logic with an ontological foundation, I would like to appropriate the term ›logical objectivism‹, usually explained differently in literature, according to which logical propositions are the "scaffolding of the world" itself (cf. 6.124) and do not only characterise or describe this scaffolding for the propositions of language.

Given logical objectivism, the resolution of the realism vs. idealism controversy looks like this: The realist insists on the independence of reality or the world (note that I am *here* not following the distinction between the two terms in TLP) from our representation of it in language. In this he can rely on the fact that whether our propositions are true or false is dependent on reality, on the how things are, and not on us. The idealist, on the other hand, understands reality or the world as dependent on us (our consciousness; our language; our thought). He can depend on that reality is accessible to us, 'given' to us, only linguistically, and that is, only in terms made by us. In doing so, both opponents in their endless debate make the common presupposition that only one or the other can be the case. Wittgenstein's conception leads to the dissolution of the controversy by eliminating precisely this shared presupposition of the adversaries. According to it, in many respects both can be the case at the same time. There is an internal relationship between language (thinking) and the world in the dimension of sense - in this respect the idealist is right: the What and How of the world is only given to us linguistically. But whether our propositions describing the world (as ›reality‹ according to the terminology of the LPA - cf. 2.04 and 2.063) are true or false depends on the primacy of sense over truth-or-falsity

6 This observation is due to Henry Le Roi Finch: *Wittgenstein - The early Philosophy*, New York 1971, 151.

7 Almost a 'smoking gun' as evidence for the correctness of this interpretation is that Wittgenstein in 'Some Remarks on Logical Form' (1929), Wittgenstein explicitly explains his TLP remark 2.1511 ('The image is so connected with reality; it reaches up to it') as follows: 'by this I meant that the forms of the entities are contained in the form of the proposition which is about these entities'. (PO, 34).

and the independence of the sense of pictures from their factual truth or falsity, on how it really is, which situations are facts that verify or falsify our propositions. In this respect the realist is right. Insofar as in different respects idealist and realist are both right, and the clarification of our linguistic logic with the fundamental distinction of sense vs. truth-or-falsity proves the compatibility of their two views, the controversy is thus dissolved. But this is only true under the presupposition of logical objectivism, which, with the that of the world, presupposes simultaneously a logical structure that is peculiar to it, that, via the representative relation of simple names to their objects and their form, passes over, as it were, into language, and that sets limits to possible sense.

It was precisely from this presupposition that Wittgenstein, in his self-criticism leading to the second major work, saw that it had to be abandoned and transformed into a linguistic-descriptively redeemable conception. This is also why he did not again claim explicitly to have essentially solved the problems of philosophy in a definite way. But in what follows, I defend the view that the "grave errors" the *PI Preface* sees in TLP do not concern the resolution of the philosophical problems, but only the descriptive basis upon which that dissolution has taken place. Whether the altered linguistic-descriptive basis - which in the TLP was, after all, not exclusively descriptive at all, but in crucial respects - ›elementary proposition‹, ›name‹, ›extensionality‹⁸ and ›logical analysis‹ - postulatory and constructive - permits the defence/maintenance of the seemingly presumptuous claim must first be investigated.

The Resolution of the Problems - additions and (cleared up) difficulties

In the interest of clearly marking *a terminus a quo*, I have refrained from difficulties for my thesis in this outline given so far. Also, unaddressed points remain which I would like to now focus on.

The most important philological point concerns the only passage that might call into question my clear distinction of philosophical from logical (and other) problems - the passage where Wittgenstein writes of 'our problems'. It reads (5.5563):

›All propositions of our colloquial language are actually, just as they are, logically completely in order. - The most simple thing we ought to give here is not a simile of truth, but the complete truth itself.
(Our problems are not abstract but perhaps the most concrete that there are).‹

This talk of problems is maximally inclusive. In 'our problems' the logical ones are certainly

⁸ In the philosophy of logic, the 'extensionality thesis' is the view according to which there can only be truth-functional links between propositions. (cf. TLP 5, 5.3)

included (and the others too) in the context (which under 5.556 ff. concerns the possibility of a hierarchy among elementary propositions). But the factual problem of understanding remains: One will not be able to claim of the logical problems the characteristic of the philosophical problems which rest on the misunderstanding of the logic of language - they may still be unexplained or not sufficiently obvious, but not misunderstood. One can make mistakes in logic (3.325, 5.4731), but one cannot actually misunderstand it. For 'misunderstanding' must surely mean: understand something other than was meant - but logic as a condition for understanding means nothing. Nor does any speaker mean anything logical (unless he philosophizes): if what he says is understandable, he acts according to the rules of logic linguistically; if not understandable, he does not.

I therefore interpret the fact that Wittgenstein speaks of our problems, thereby includes the logical ones, and certainly would have called all his problems also philosophical ones (the - ethical - problems of life are perhaps excluded.) to be explained by a distinction from another context - the difference between research perspective or research process and representation /exposition. From a research perspective, in which Wittgenstein dealt with all his problems at different times (such as his preliminary work on TLP) and was philosophizing, an inclusive use of 'problems', also including 'philosophical problems', is understandable/accepted/adopted. In the perspective of representation/exposition philosophical problems, defined by the feature of being based on the misunderstanding of the logic of our language, are distinct from the other, especially logical, problems - they are only illusory problems that need to be critically dissolved.

The philological point is also a factual one in the perspective of ›learning from Wittgenstein‹. As is well known, at the end of TLP, Wittgenstein revokes its propositions, viewed immanently, as nonsense. (6.54) The basis of the verdict is the fact that TLP uses formal terms like ›object‹, ›number‹, ›fact‹ and others in propositions, but the clarification of their logical roles as variables explicitly prohibits this (4.126 b):

›That anything falls under a formal concept as an object belonging to it, cannot be expressed by a proposition. But it shows itself in the sign of this object itself. (The name shows that it signifies an object, the numeral sign that it signifies a number, etc.)‹

The question regarding the nonsense verdict is whether it also includes propositions/sentences like this one, in which the logic of our language is clarified. Many interpreters did not want to believe this (beginning with Russell's *Introduction* to the TLP), especially well-meaning ones who wanted to learn from Wittgenstein independently of the purpose of interpreting

his writings. They developed the view that although the verdict of nonsense is TLP-immanently consistent, also for the propositions clarifying the logic of language, it is because Wittgenstein tries to say something in them that can only be shown/demonstrated. But this is also legitimate in a train of thought that wants to lead to the correct logical view of the world (as a ladder that has to be thrown away after it has been climbed - 6.54).

The disadvantage of this benevolent interpretation is that it must distinguish between two kinds of nonsense, insightful nonsense and outright nonsense.

An important current controversy between, e.g., Peter Hacker and the representatives of a 'new Wittgenstein' still mainly concerned with precisely this question.⁹ Hacker has advanced a crucial methodological argument against the views that refuse to distinguish between types of nonsense with respect to the TLP: the logical clarifications that are the factual basis of the nonsense verdict are an integral part of the TLP. If they are included in it, the verdict lacks any factual basis and is itself nonsense. But this, by potentiating the nonsense verdict, increases the paradox of the situation which the author finds himself in because of the exposition of his thought process. This cannot be the reasonable outcome of an interpretation.¹⁰ So one should bite the bullet and admit to two kinds of nonsense. Wittgenstein, in the remarks clarifying the logic of language in the LPA, tried to say things that, according to his stated view in the TLP, could not be said, but only shown - so by his own standards he wrote nonsense. But it was insightful nonsense, and therefore legitimate. Without it, his claim to have solved the philosophical problems essentially in a definitive way lacks any intelligibility. And that he did solve them can be shown, as outlined.

Perhaps the greatest difficulty concerns the content of my interpretation of the dissolution of the realism vs. idealism controversy. In the context of the only detailed discussion of a philosophical problem in the proposed sense in TLP, that of solipsism, Wittgenstein says at the end that solipsism coincides with pure realism when carried out rigorously (5.64). His dissolution of the realism vs. idealism controversy (and scepticism as its implication, and solipsism as its radicalisation) thus does not mark a position beyond the controversy, but is taking a side within

9 The interpretative approach of a 'new Wittgenstein', whose central thesis on the TLP is that the propositions clarifying logic are included in the verdict of nonsensicality in 6.54 and other interpretations merely chicken out of it, was inaugurated by Cora Diamond. Cf. 'Throwing away the Ladder: How to read the Tractatus', in: Dies.: *The realistic Spirit: Wittgenstein, Philosophy and the Mind*, Cambridge/Mass. In the anthology *The New Wittgenstein*, ed. Alice Crary/Rupert Read, London 2000, Peter Hacker was given the opportunity to respond to the views of the representatives of this interpretative approach (353-383).

10 Cp. Peter Hacker: 'Philosophy', in: Hans-Johann Glock (ed.): *Wittgenstein - A Critical Reader*, Oxford 2001, 323 - 347, here 328. - My view differs from Hacker's only in nuances - especially with regard to the character of the 'lucid presentation' of grammatical relations that Wittgenstein declares in PI to be the goal of philosophical clarification (section 122) and with regard to the formula's understanding of philosophical problems. Hacker does not seem to consider necessary, even with regard to the TLP, the distinctions I am struggling to make here. Moreover, I think that an apologetic interpretation should not deny things that the author explicitly says - that "any attempt to answer them (sc. the philosophical problems) is mere nonsense" (329 - cf. on the other hand 4.003: "We cannot ... answer questions of this kind at all, but only establish their nonsense").

it. In addition, his logical objectivism must also be seen as a form of (Platonist) realism in the context of logical-philosophical positions. And finally, if one does not restrict the historical context of the TLP to Frege and Russell¹¹, as analytical exegetes tend to do, but takes into account that Wittgenstein was very much influenced by Schopenhauer since his youth, so that the whole conception of the TLP of the relation between subject, language/thought and world can be interpreted as an attempt at a realist transformation of Schopenhauer's 'world as conception'¹², my interpretation seems to become completely indefensible.

This difficulty only arises, however, on the premise that Wittgenstein himself advocated solipsism in the TLP. This is a widespread and probably also the predominant view among interpreters. But it has been emphatically contradicted by David Pears and myself. I do not want to repeat here the - to my mind, correct - interpretation of TLP 5.6 ff., but I want to remind of the reasons against a solipsistic interpretation.

1. Wittgenstein does not ask *whether* solipsism is a truth and answer this question in the affirmative, but asks to what *extent* it is a truth. This rules out the possibility that solipsism is simply right.

2. Indeed, what he means must first be ascribed to him; he does not say, "The world is my world." There is no talk at all of the consciousness of epistemological solipsism with regard to Wittgenstein's solipsist.

3. And there can be no question of it, because the "thinking, presenting subject does not exist." (TLP 5.631) But its uniqueness would have to have been claimed by an epistemological solipsist. The meaning of Wittgenstein's remark is: Neither the presenting subject of knowledge, which the modern epistemology from Descartes to Schopenhauer thought, exists, nor a thinking subject, which seems to follow the conception of language of TLP, according to which sections of reality are represented by thinking the sense of propositions. In place of an active, imagining subject there is only an "extensionless point" (5.64) as the point of reference for/of representation of the world by the propositions of language¹³; instantiated in every case of the thinking of propositional senses (like Kant's ›I think‹, which must be able to accompany all my ideas).

4. Solipsism (as radicalised epistemological idealism) is supposed to coincide with pure

11 Hacker also still does this: "The conceptions of philosophy Wittgenstein was familiar with as a young man, were primarily those of Frege and Russell, and derivatively, via Frege's polemic, with the psychologists' empiricist tradition in Germany". ('Philosophy', op. cit., 324). One wonders where Wittgenstein's Kantianism, also seen by Hacker, came from (325), which is stronger than Frege's (because, unlike Frege's, it includes Kant's reflexive conception of philosophy), so it cannot come from the latter alone. The source was Schopenhauer.

12 I did this in *Wittgenstein und Schopenhauer*, Cuxhaven 1989.

13 David Pears has called Wittgenstein's conception of the subject in the TLP that of a "sliding peg egocentrism" and explained it (in: *The false prison*, 2nd ed., Oxford 1988, 233). The position is related to solipsism, but not solipsistic, because the subject does not exist only once as a 'sliding peg'. Every speaker and hearer, when and insofar as they think the meaning of sentences, is the subject. Kant's formulation (in an admittedly different context) that there is a 'subject thinking in us' (KrV B 770) gives an idea of the 'sliding peg'.

realism (TLP 5.64). In philosophical disputes, proving to a controversial view that it cannot be distinguished from its diametrical opposite should be understood as intending a radical critique of the view in question.

5. Solipsism in its core is a radicalised scepticism. Wittgenstein considers this *ex professo* to be "nonsense" (TLP 6.51) and it would be contradictory if he were to proceed differently with solipsism.

If in the critical treatment of solipsism Wittgenstein aims at a third option between radical solipsism (I am thinking the propositions of language) and idealism (all subjects think the propositions of language only for themselves), then his thesis of the collapse of solipsism and radical realism is also to be taken either as such a third position - that would be compatible with the resolution of the controversy realism vs. idealism - or to be read purely dialectically as a proof of the senselessness of solipsism (refer to my 4th reason against a solipsistic interpretation). In either option, the strong realist colouring of Wittgenstein's treatment of solipsism (and the realism of his logical objectivism) does not contradict the outlined resolution of the realism vs. idealism controversy, because in this resolution, after all, both opponents are proven right in different respects, i.e. in no way, as it appears in 5.64, does one side (solipsism) bring the other (realism) to fall.

Finally, I would like to add to the sparse information of the historical context of the philosophical problems in the TLP, because this will provide the topic and the interpretation with the appropriate broad perspective. Following the TLP's *Preface*, the limitation of its historical context to the "great works of Frege" and the suggestions of his (then) friend Bertrand Russell, which still prevails among analytic exegetes, is incomplete - Schopenhauer's metaphysics of the ›World as Representation‹ (not as ›Will‹) (cp. Anscombe 1971, 11f.) is an essential part still also of the LPA. Thus, in the genealogy of TLP belong two philosophers, Schopenhauer and Frege, who were both Kantians in certain respects. Now, it is well known, Kant already tried to reconcile idealism and realism as 'transcendental idealism' and 'empirical realism'. To Wittgenstein's direct Kantian instigators, this attempt at mediation by Kant fell apart - Schopenhauer became a radical idealist in his preference for the First Edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Frege an equally resolute realist. Assuming that Wittgenstein perceived this and found it deeply unsatisfactory, one presumably has the intellectual motive, in the background, for his proposal of the resolution of the controversy. An indication of this interpretation being correct is that Wittgenstein, in a letter to Frege (not preserved) on the latter's treatise *Der Gedanke*, apparently defended the ›deep reasons for idealism‹, which he had to do because, after all, in the resolution of the controversy he had proved the idealist right where the dimension of sense is concerned. This is supported by Frege's explanation in a preserved letter that he could not see ›the

deep reasons for idealism.¹⁴

Philosophical problems - the extended term/concept The observable changes in Wittgenstein's use of the formula of philosophical problems are, of course, related to the transformation of his whole conception into the one then presented in PI. If they are to be described synoptically, various characterisations are possible. The definitional feature of being based on the misunderstanding of the logic of language is retained, but the use of the formula becomes more inclusive. In terms of what has been argued in the TLP, this can be expressed thus: Wittgenstein later only talks about philosophical problems at all from the research perspective. Not for nothing is the title of the second major work is 'Philosophical *Investigations*'.¹⁵ One can also say: the philosophical problems are no longer separated from the logical ones. It must be noted that the aspects of ›logic‹ relevant to philosophy expand into ›grammar‹, where the philosophically relevant grammar of a proposition, for example, is understood to mean: 'all the conditions (the methods) of comparing the proposition with reality. That is, all the conditions of understanding (of the sense).' (PG IV.45 c) The extension of logic to grammar as the entire conditions of sense for all units of language is, systematically speaking, a consequence of the liberalisation of the concept of proposition. Since Wittgenstein realised "that what we call 'proposition', 'language', is not the formal unity I imagined (in TLP; my addition), but the family of more or less related entities", that is, that 'proposition' and 'language' are family resemblance terms, he abandoned the two defining principles of bipolarity and propositional context that were fundamental to the TLP theory, restricting bipolarity to a wide range of empirical sentences, the propositional context principle as senseless/meaningless (*Wiener Ausgabe* vol. 2, 165 - 10.1.30; cf. PB II.14). He therefore formulates his synoptic explanations of 'meaning' (sense) only for words [the use in language - PU § 43(for a large part of cases, not all); that which is explained in an explanation of meaning - PU § 560]. The explanatory second sentence of the explanation for ›grammar of the sentence‹ in PG applies also to the smaller units of language which propositions are formed of, the words, because the distinction between 'sense' and 'meaning', according to which sentences have sense and words (names) have meaning (3.3), is abandoned.¹⁶ Analogically, the philosophical problems in the extended use become grammatical problems (misunderstandings) because the kinds of misunderstanding that have given rise to the traditional philosophical problems of modern epistemology also are exemplified by simpler linguistic mis-

14 Frege's letter is cited in Ray Monk: Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius, op. cit. 190. All of Frege's extant letters to Wittgenstein have been published. Frege's letters to Wittgenstein are published by the Brenner Archive, Innsbruck.

15 Wittgenstein also thought it important to note from Augustine: "... quia plus loquitur inquisitio quam inventio ...Augustinus.)" (Z 457)

16 However, Wittgenstein goes on to write predominantly of the 'sense' of the proposition, not its 'meaning'.

understandings. Finally, the shift in the use of 'philosophical problems' can be described as the meaning of the formula becoming detached from the 'problems of philosophy' in Russell's and TLP's sense. Realism vs. idealism, scepticism and solipsism are philosophical problems among many other philosophical problems.

The inclusive philosophical problems remain however the reference point of the grammatical considerations (PU §§ 90 b, 109) of philosophy. Also a clear overview (in German: ›übersichtliche Darstellung‹) of grammatical relations (PU §122) is intended at only insofar as it is necessary for the resolution of philosophical problems.¹⁷ The motto is: "We see problems in philosophical thought in places where there are none. And philosophy is supposed to show that there is no problem there." (PG I.9 a) "For philosophy, these are the philosophical problems, i.e. the certain individual inquietudes which we call 'philosophical problems. Their common denominator extends as far as what is common between different areas of our language." (PG X.141 a) An example of a philosophical problem then looks like this (PG X.141 b):

›If we now consider a certain philosophical problem, such as that: 'How is it possible to measure a period of time, since past and future are not present and the present is only a point?'-; the characteristic thing about it is that here a confusion expresses itself in the form of a question which does not acknowledge this confusion. That the questioner is *redeemed* from his problem by a certain change in his mode of expression.‹

The questioner's confusion in the example is based on his exclusive orientation in understanding what measuring a period of time means, to the measurement of lengths and other spatial quantities. This confusion does not recognise that the measuring of time has its own standards, its own standard processes (such as the rotation of the earth on its axis or the position of the sun as the standard for determining the time of day; the revolution of the earth as the standard for determining the unit of a year, etc.), as the measurement of length must assume the standard metre as the reference for measuring rods. The distinction of the methods of measuring time from those of measuring other dimensions makes the confusion disappear, dissolves the problem, relieves the questioner of his problem.

The Changing Resolution of the Realism vs. Idealism Problem In a revealing critical statement on the TLP, Wittgenstein said on July 1, 1932: "Unclear to me in the tractat were the logical analysis and the ostensive definition. I thought at the time that there was a 'connection between language and/with reality'." (WVC, 209f.). As shown, in TLP Wittgenstein assumed a connection of logic with the world, in that elementary propositions have sense and names have

17 Cf. Wittgenstein: Vorlesungen 1930-1935, Frankfurt am Main 1984, 270 f. The passage is cited in the section 'Semantics'.

meaning. (6.124) But he did not deal explicitly with ›ostensive definition‹ in TLP. Instead, there is a provision on ›elucidations‹ as the only possible explanations for ›names‹ or ›elementary signs‹, and the self-criticism cited makes it very likely that Wittgenstein thought of ›ostensive definitions‹ as necessary for these ('inner') explanations. Insofar he did know of an 'ostensive explanation' in TLP. The remark (3.263) reads:

›The meanings of primitive signs can be explained by elucidations. Elucidations are propositions which contain the primitive signs. They can, therefore, only be understood when the meanings of these signs are already known.‹

That which conveyed the familiarity with the meanings of the primitive signs, which is already required/presupposed for an understanding of the explanations, would be, according to the interpretive hypothesis, the ›inner ostensive definitions‹ whose impossibility forms the central point of the later argument against the possibility of a radical, private language (PU §§ 258, 380 b).

Now, the internal relation of language and world in the dimension of sense hinged on the relation name-object in the TLP and thus, in connection with the basic distinction of sense vs. truth-or-falsity, the resolution of the controversy realism vs. idealism. At the same time, the conception of the propositions of logic as the ›scaffolding of the world‹, which I called ›logical objectivism‹, was connected to it. (6.124) Accordingly, from a systematic point of view, it is at this point that the transformation of the conception of the relation between language and the world starts. This transformation leads to a changed understanding of the internal character of this relation, which can be language-descriptively redeemed.

For the new understanding of the internal relation between language and the world can be shown in a description of a common linguistic practice, in the description of the ›ostensive explanation‹ of (initially) expressions for perceivable things. Such explanations of meaning are possible for all such expressions by using 'this -> is (an)...!' in conjunction with a pointing gesture. The elements of reality pointed to in such explanations thus become paradigms to which the meaning of the expressions is ‚calibrated' (This lucky expression ('geeicht'/'calibrated') is by David Pears: cp. 1988/89 passim). These paradigms (example: a colour table) are ›instruments of language‹, belong to language, even if not to the ›language of words‹ (cp. PU § 16). They internalise elements of reality as constituting the meaning of expressions, they found the internal relation of language and reality (world). This transforms the conception of language as a whole (PG IV. 46 c; 55 c):

›One would like to distinguish between rules of grammar which make 'a connection between language

and reality', and those which do not. A rule of the first kind is 'this colour is called >red<', - a rule of the second kind: ' $\neg \neg p = p$ '. There is a misconception about this difference; language is not something to which a structure is given, and which is then fitted to reality.<

>The connection between 'language and reality' is made by the word explanations, - which belong to grammar (in German: >Sprachlehre<, which exactly means >the teaching of language<), so that language remains self-contained, autonomous.<

Explanation of meaning becomes constitutive of meaning; the meaning (of an expression) is 'what the explanation of its meaning explains'. (PU § 560) Neither are names or any primitive signs exempt from this (as in the TLP, where their understanding was presupposed for the understanding of their >elucidations<). An important implication of talking about 'grammar' is that, in a >theory of meaning< (of which Wittgenstein definitely did not want to speak), the explanations of meaning must have a form¹⁸ that makes them suitable for teaching language. The determination that language is *autonomous* sums up the transformation of the relation between language and reality (world); for it must be said of TLP that in it language was *heteronomous*, dependent on a logical structure of the world that was supposed to represent the propositions of logic. (This structure was to structure language essentially in that the names >absorb< the forms of their objects, "that the forms of the entities are contained in the form of the proposition, which is about these entities" - PO 34) More elaborate characterisations of the >autonomy of grammar< often emphasise the 'arbitrariness' of the rules of grammar (PG X. 133 a, h):

>Grammar is not accountable to any reality. The grammatical rules first determine the meaning (constitute it) and are therefore not accountable to any meaning and insofar arbitrary.<

>The rules of grammar are arbitrary in the same sense as the choice of a unit of measurement. But surely this can only mean that it is independent of the length of the object of measurement; and that not the choice of one unit is 'true', the other 'false', as the indication of length is true or false. This is, of course, only a remark on the grammar of the word 'unit of length'.<

On the basis of the conception of the autonomy of grammar, however, the resolution of the controversy between realism and idealism now looks exactly as it did in TLP - the idealist is right for the dimension of sense, meaning and their explanations, the realist for the dimension of truth vs. falsity, or, because in the liberalised conception of propositions there room not only

18 Under the question of the form of a 'theory of meaning' for a natural language, in the 70s of the previous century and since, first between Donald Davidson and Michael Dummett, a linguistic-philosophical discussion has been conducted that could largely have made superfluous by a better perception and knowledge of Wittgenstein's conceptions of language and philosophy.

for descriptive statements (as in TLP), for the dimension of fulfilment vs. non-fulfilment. Still, the assumption of the adversaries is false, that only one of them could be right. This erroneous assumption could be expressed in terms of the transformed conception thus: Language (grammar) could only be either autonomous or only heteronomous. And this error is based on the lack of distinction between meaning and sense on the one hand, fulfilment vs. non-fulfilment on the other.

However, Wittgenstein describes the controversy differently in the context of his transformed conception (PU section 402 b):

›For this is what the disputes between idealists, solipsists, and realists look like. The one attack the normal form of expression as if they were attacking an assertion; the other defend it as if they were stating facts that every reasonable man recognizes.‹

Still, the distinction between sense and truth-or-falsity, with the primacy of sense, is the basis. But because sense is no longer rooted in the logical structure of the world (via the forms of objects and their relation to their names), the judgement of the metaphysical conceptions of idealism, solipsism and realism loses the appearance of constituting a truth-question. In the dimension of sense, on the basis of an autonomy of grammar, questions are no longer to be decided between true or false, but between useful or useless, applicable or not applicable, expressively appropriate or inappropriate. Wittgenstein must therefore concede to the criticised positions that they are possible conceptions. This he realised in his second critique of solipsism in *The Blue Book*. If the solipsist (which is now thoroughly understood in terms of consciousness and epistemology, no longer merely, as in the TLP, metaphysically) insists that only he really experiences, that only he really feels pain, for example, then it must be conceded to him that he proposes a possible notation in which the pain of others and simulation are then accounted for in a different way. For the solipsist's felt pain, it might simply be said 'there is real pain now', of another's pain 'he behaves as (the solipsist behaves) if there is real pain'. (cf. BIB 96¹⁹) But the solipsist is mistaken in claiming, that his notation is 'true', the common one 'false'. Wittgenstein explains this with the parable of various possible demarcations of the county of Devonshire. (BIB 92 f.) The question of the correct delimitation does not arise, because it is a question of convention and not a question of fact.

It is in the sense of the objection 'convention, not fact' against the solipsist that PI section 402 says that some - namely idealists and solipsists - "attack(ed) the normal form of expression as if they were attacking an assertion." And that the others - namely, the realists - "defend it ...

19 Retranslated from the German, where *Das Blaue Buch* is in vol. 5 of the paperback *Werkausgabe*. The code BIB is used for the German version of BB.

as if they were stating facts which every reasonable man acknowledges." The controversy between the two is meaningless as one that intended to pose and decide a question of truth, because it belongs to the dimension of sense that precedes truth-or-falsity. It would be very impractical to have to express oneself in the way the idealist and solipsist suggest. Idealist talk of the world as our 'imagination', for example, would not allow us to distinguish between 'the world' and 'the imagination of the world', even though our imaginings often enough miss the mark of what is really the case, and we have to take painful note of this, for example, when intentions and attempts at action fail. But this does not make our normal mode of expression a realistic one in the metaphysical sense which claims to grasp the facts alone really and correctly.

Because in ordinary use ›*problem*‹ is the opposite of ›*solution*‹, but philosophical problems require *dissolution* and are perhaps the only ones 'to be (dissolved) in the proper sense' ('like a lump of sugar in water' - BT 421), there should really be no talk of problems in the sense of the 'great' 'philosophical problems' of realism vs. idealism etc.: "The word 'problem' might be misapplied when applied to our philosophical perplexities." (BIB 77) For the general form of a philosophical problem (in the extended sense) is "I do not know my way about" (BT 421, PU § 123) and ignorance can only be eliminated by investigation and overview, not by 'discovering' solutions: "The philosophical problem is an awareness of the disorder in our concepts, and fixed by ordering them." (BT 421)

To the extent that one is prepared to see²⁰ that Wittgenstein's rectification of the metaphysical positions is descriptively adequate in terms of the nature of the controversy, one will acknowledge that he has achieved a definitive resolution for the realism vs. idealism (scepticism, solipsism) controversy on the basis of the conception of the ›*autonomy of grammar*‹ (which has taken the place of ›*logical objectivism*‹ of TLP). This, with regard to the 'big'²¹ 'problems of philosophy' in the narrower sense of TLP, is something philosophy should finally learn from Wittgenstein.²²

20 Wittgenstein saw that philosophical conceptions are also affectively based and that the difficulty of being convinced by philosophical clarifications is or can be not only one of the intellect but also of the feeling: "As I have often said, philosophy does not lead me to any renunciation, since I do not renounce saying something, but give up a certain word connection as meaningless. In another sense, however, philosophy then requires a resignation, but of the feeling, not of the understanding. And that is perhaps what makes it so difficult for many. It can be hard not to use an expression, as it is hard to hold back tears, or an outburst of anger/rage." (BT 406)

21 In the extended use of 'philosophical problem' (of the form 'I don't know my way about'), there is also an explicit denial of a difference between major and ordinary problems (cf. BT 407).

22 The key problem of Robert Brandom's semantic theory - the determinacy of conceptual content - is still determined by a taking seriously of scepticism as a philosophical position, albeit in the form of the consummating scepticism of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. But what is proven to be meaningless cannot be taken philosophically seriously.

Philosophy with logic

A possible illustration of the thematic-structural structure of the TLP would be a round cone standing on a horizontal base plane with a flattened top (so that it can stand up). Through the round cone, parallel sections to the base plane would be laid, which naturally have a smaller surface area than the base plane.

What I have dealt with so far concerns the base and consequences from the views located on it in LW's self-criticism, i.e. the problems of philosophy in narrow sense understood (realism vs. idealism, scepticism, solipsism) and their dissolution as the comprehensive purpose of the TLP. A first cut not far from the base contains what gives the title of this section 'Philosophy with Logic'. At further levels marked by cuts up the cone are ontology, philosophy of language (explanation of basic language-related concepts; model of language use), psychology and semantics (philosophy as description of language). On the smallest area of the flattened top belong the two basic semantic principles of TLP, bipolarity and sentence context. The following account goes along with this model broadly speaking. Since TLP is also the continuous reference point of LW's self-criticism, the model also provides the starting points for the longitudinal sections of the development of his thought as I shall demonstrate. The clarity of the model in separating the levels, however, is also misleading insofar as the levels interpenetrate in LW's account. Thus, in the treatment of the problems of philosophy and their dissolution, reference already had to be made to the conceptions that can be justifiably elaborated upon only in ontology, psychology, language model, etc.

I speak of philosophy *with logic* and not *of logic* because, as will be shown, an a priori ontological interpretation of logic is specific to TLP. In the end LW is interested in logic purely philosophically, for reasons of constructing his system. His proposals for improving the logic of Frege and Russell/Whitehead, which was significant for him, are also philosophically motivated. He does not limit himself to making clear the foundations of logic in language and linguistic activity, therefore there is not only one philosophy of logic.

Nevertheless, what belongs to a philosophy of logic must be the first topic. Frege is the starting point and is therefore rightly named in the *Preface* as one of LW's two great analytical influences. Frege founded *mathematical* logic by applying the mathematical function/argument notation to language. His fundamental, terminological innovation was to decompose the simplest grammatical subject-predicate propositions into argument and function rather than into logical subject and logical predicate, as in syllogistics.²³ A proposition like 'Caesar con-

²³ I am adopting here Glock's account in: Wittgenstein-Lexikon, transl. By E. M. Lange, Darmstadt 2000, 13. (Engl. Oxford 1996)

quered Gaul' is analysed not into the subject 'Caesar' and the predicate 'conquered Gaul' but into a function 'x conquered Gaul' for which 'Caesar' serves as the argument. The value of this function is true (e.g. if we insert 'Caesar') or false (e.g. if we insert 'Alexander'), depending on whether the proposition resulting from inserting is true or false. In this way, concepts like the one expressed by 'x conquered Gaul' are treated as functions that map arguments to truth values. The simple, atomic formula in Frege's *Concept Script* is made up of an argument expression and a function name. The argument expressions are names of objects, and the concept-words name functions. In the next step, Frege extends this idea to the logical links by which molecular formulas are formed. Negation, for example, is a one-place function that maps one truth value to the opposed truth value (if 'p' is true, then 'not-p' is false and vice versa). Propositions are thus treated as proper names of one or other of two 'logical objects'²⁴, ('the True' and 'the False'), and they are argument expressions for the function names denoting the logical links (conjunction, alteration etc.). Finally, 'All Greeks are bald' is not analysed as the subject 'All Greeks' and the predicate 'are bald', but into the complex concept-expression 'if x is a Greek, then x is bald' and the quantifier 'For all x'. The quantifier expresses a second-level function that maps terms (first-level functions) to truth values, to the True if the term has the value true for *all* arguments, to the False otherwise. ('Some Greeks are bald' is treated accordingly).

This apparatus made it possible to give the first complete axiomatization of first-order logic - including proofs containing multiple generalities, characteristic of mathematical reasoning - and to present mathematical induction as the application of a purely logical law. LW, like Russell before him and many after them, was rightly fascinated by the enormous progress that these innovations of Frege's brought about. In his first publication while still a student, he compares them to the scientific revolution that the Copernican system brought about in the world view. (cp. PO 2-3) But he quickly came to having to make philosophical objections to the application of the innovations to a clarification of linguistically constituted understanding.

The function-argument analysis of simple sentences holds an essential property of subject-predicate sentences. Essentially they are complex signs, that is compounds of signs, in which the linked signs have different roles. The first constituent of a subject-predicate sentence *names* what the proposition says something about, the second *says* it. In function-argument analysis, this becomes: the function states what is said, the argument determines whether what is said is true (whether the value of the function for the chosen argument is what is true) or false. Frege has clarified the difference between the roles of function and argument with a chemical metaphor: the function is 'unsaturated', essentially in need of complementation by arguments, the argument, on the other hand, is 'saturated', an independent expression, which ad-

24 Which Frege believed to have discovered by analogy with chemical elements - *Nachgelassene Schriften*, ed. Hermes, Kambartel, Kaulbach, Hamburg 1983, 211 ('Introduction to Logic').

mittedly can only exercise its role dependent, as an insertion-instance for functions. Frege has therefore already formulated a version of the propositional context principle²⁵: Only in the context of a proposition does a word have meaning; only as an insertion-instance to a function does an argument have meaning.

Wittgenstein first has adopted these basic insights without reservation. Like Frege and Russell²⁶, he thinks of the proposition "as the function of expressions contained in it." (3.318) He maintains the essential composition, complexity of propositions, and holds that apparently the equivalence proposition / complex sign is a tautology (28.5.1534). That the values of the elementary propositional functions are 'true' and 'false' becomes the fundamental semantic principle for a proposition for him - the principle of bipolarity: what is to be a proposition (a proposition, a 'picture') must essentially be capable of being both true and false. (2.221; NB 94) And the independent-dependent role of arguments in propositional functions (words in the sentences) becomes the second fundamental semantic principle of propositional context, essential to the meaning of words (3.3, 3.314).

But already where this principle is concerned Wittgenstein saw the necessity to deviate from Frege's conceptual determinations. The primacy of propositions over words he formulated thus: "Only the proposition has meaning; only in the context of a proposition does a name have meaning." The difference is at first merely terminological: whereas Frege applied 'sense' and 'meaning' to constituents of sentences as well as to whole sentences - 'the True' and 'the False' are supposed to be the *meanings of sentences*, their *sense* is supposed to be a 'mode of presentation (being given)' of either the True or the False - Wittgenstein reserves the semantic expression 'sense' for sentences, that of 'meaning' for constituents of sentences (words, expressions). The terminological difference, however, has great factual consequences. For if, as in Frege, propositions are supposed to have meanings, too, by analogy with the way in which names (words) have meanings, then propositions, although essentially complex signs (composed of words), must somehow also be names. Wittgenstein thought this to be wrong. He saw that this error was forced by Frege's generalization of function-argument analysis beyond simple propositions to complex propositions (composed of simple propositions). A (two-place) logical propositional conjunction is also treated by Frege as a function name, and the function as an expression that maps pairs of propositions to truth values. But then propositions have then to be taken as names due to the only binary manifold of the function-argument terminology.

›Frege has said "propositions are names"; Russell has said "propositions correspond to complexes."‹ Both is false; and especially mistaken is the statement, "Propositions are names of complexes."‹ (NB 97; cf.

25 *Foundations of Arithmetics* (1879), § 62.

26 I will mention Russell in the following, but not deal with him in detail.

Wittgenstein therefore needed a different explanation of propositional connectives than Frege's conception of function, because the latter immediately denied its correct basic insight from the application to simple sentences - that sentences are essentially composite signs in which the constituent parts play different roles - in the generalization to complex sentences. (Frege's talk of sentences as 'compound names' - TLP 3.143 - analogous to labels as complex object-designating expressions, Wittgenstein considered unprincipled.²⁷) Wittgenstein came to conceive of sentence connectives as 'operations' that must not be confused with functions (5.25). For the conceptual treatment of propositions as names in complex propositional functions cannot be based on the nominalisation of propositions in terms of expressions 'that p' in colloquial language. Colloquially, 'that p and that q' is, according to a standard analysis²⁸, a compound singular term and not a sentence, nothing is said yet, no move has been made in the language game.

The conception of connectives (and then also of quantifiers) as operations led to LW's basic logical idea that logical constants "do not represent" (4.0312), that they are not function names, do not denote 'logical objects'. He has tried to explicate the difference between operations and functions by a number of features, not all of which are sound (cp. Glock, 225f.; Baker, 1988, 106-108).

But neither these features nor their soundness need be of interest here. As for the independence of operations over functions, philosophical arguments have had the decisive weight for LW. Complex propositional functions are simply further functions, further forms of propositions. Operations, however, do not mark forms, "but only the difference of forms" : „It gives expression to the difference between the forms." (5.241, 5.24) "The occurrence of the operation does not mark the sense of the sentence. (-) After all, the operation says nothing, only its result, and this depends on the bases of the operation." The functional view of propositional connectives, by being forced to treat the constituent propositions that are connected (the bases of the operation) as names, cuts off the sense of the complex proposition from the sense of the constituting propositions. This is what makes them inadequate. Functions and operations are simply different types of means of formation for complex expressions in language, and not noticing their difference in type also damages the sense connection of a complex proposition with the sense of its constituents.

27 Wittgenstein was ironic about Russell's corresponding conviction: "Russell's 'complexes' are said to have the useful property of being composite, and to combine with this the pleasant property of being able to be treated like 'simple objects'. ... then it would not have been inconsistent to claim of a simple object that it is complex." (NB 100 f.)

28 An even simpler conception of 'that p' is as a pro-sentence [analogous to pro-nomina for singular expressions (names, labels)]. Cp. Brandom 1994, 299-305.

LW's critique of Frege's conception of logic, presented so far, is essentially the consequence of his determination to hold on to the distinction between names (singular terms) and propositions, for all propositions, not just atomic ones. In doing so, he unwaveringly maintains the function-theoretic analysis for atomic propositions, but is forced to a different conceptual version of propositional connectives - as operational expressions, not function names.

Frege arrived at his function-theoretic analysis of atomic propositions partly because, against syllogistic logic, he wanted to distinguish strictly the logical relations of the falling of an object under a concept and the falling of a concept under a concept. Syllogistic logic chooses the second case as its paradigm and therefore analyses elementary propositions as subject terms and predicate terms. Frege chooses the first case as paradigm and therefore analyses into argument and function. Please note that both paradigms lead to an *ex ante* regulation of the possible forms of propositions, both are theoretical anticipations - neither can make an exclusive claim to describe *the* logical form of elementary propositions. LW holds to Frege's conception as far as elementary propositions are concerned, and holds to it against Frege's function-theoretic analysis of complex propositions.

LW's operational conception of logical connectives and quantifiers now has far-reaching consequences for the three questions that became generally disputed between him, Frege and Russell. What is logic after all? What are the logical propositions? What role do inference rules play in logic?

Frege and Russell answer the first question unanimously to the effect that logic is a science and, like all sciences, searches for laws, in logic, according to Frege, for the 'most general laws of being true'²⁹; for the laws that express the most general features of empirical reality, according to Russell. LW, on the other hand, comes to the view that logic is not essentially a science seeking general laws, but the most general condition of sense, of intelligibility in general, and as such is *a priori* to pre-scientific understanding and the sciences alike. This is partly connected with the answer to the second question: For Frege and Russell, the laws of logic were essentially general propositions, precisely laws. Wittgenstein, after an intermediate step³⁰, came to the view that the generality of logical propositions should not be understood as a generalization of propositions, but as a formal generality, and that the propositions themselves should be understood as tautologies, meaningless propositions at the limit of language, which all *say* the same thing, namely nothing (5.43), but very much *show* different things:

›The correct explanation of logical propositions must give them a peculiar position among all proposi

29 *Nachgelassene Schriften*, 139 ['Logic', (1897), Introduction].

30 In which he considered logical propositions to be generalisations of tautologies (Letter to Russell Nov./Dec. 1913; cf. NB 100)

tions.

....

The fact that propositions of logic are tautologies, *shows* the formal - logical - properties of language, of the world.

That its constituent parts, linked in this way give a tautology, characterizes the logic of their constituent parts.

In order that propositions connected together in a definite way may give a tautology they must have certain properties of structure. That they give a tautology when *so* connected shows therefore that they possess these properties of structure.

....

The propositions of logic demonstrate the logical properties of propositions by combining them into propositions which say nothing. (6.112, 6.12, 6.121)

The generality of logical propositions is 'essential', formal validity, and not the generality of being fulfilled by all instances. (6.1231-2)

Only the operational conception of logical connectives is able to hold this because, unlike the functional conception, it is free of ontological implications for itself (it does not require any 'logical objects'). Wittgenstein's conception secures its formality to formal logic.

Inference rules, finally, for Frege and Russell were further laws of logic, but for Wittgenstein they are only technical aids for easier recognizing tautology (6.1262) and "senseless" and "superfluous" where they are "supposed to justify conclusions." (5.132)

The understanding of the propositions of logic as tautologies also contains an implicit criticism of the axiomatic conception of logic, which Frege thought necessary because logical laws are infinite and cannot be brought into overview without the distinction of plausible basic laws. LW must also recognize propositions such as 'it rains or it does not rain' (as saying nothing about the weather - 4.461) as (tauto)logical propositions because "an ungeneralized proposition ... can just as well be tautological as a generalized one" (6.1231) And because all logical propositions are on a par and there are not essentially logical basic laws and derived propositions (6.127), logic cannot essentially require axiomatization.

LW's corrections of function-theoretical logic so far presented contain rigidities, including those that lead to dogmatism, but as such they do not yet have metaphysical implications. Thus the principle of bipolarity, according to which a correct proposition must be able to be both true and false, is at least a terminological dogmatism. For LW himself calls logical propositions *propositions* (a kind of propositions), but tautologies are not bipolar (as propositions proper must be according to TLP 3.3), but necessarily true. LW wanted to restrict the necessary truth to tautologies - they are the 'analytic propositions' (6.11). Propositions that would be 'synthetic

a priori' are supposed not to exist. But that would be to have to be shown for each and every proposal of a proposition to be synthetic a priori - how it is analytic - , and not established dogmatically ex ante. (LW himself later started to doubt that propositions like 'this is blue, therefore not red, yellow, green, etc.' - cf. 6.3751 – express analytic truth, or, which comes to the same, that all logical inference is based on the form of tautology; and that colour-exclusion is not 'synthetically a priori' but analytic would first have to be shown by a suitable conception).

LW's strong understanding of the propositional context principle - the possible occurrence of an expression in a sentence should not only be a necessary but also a sufficient condition for its meaning - leads straight into the dogmatism of logical analysis. Wittgenstein once expressed the intuition guiding him by the formulation "the proposition(s) represent(s) the facts as it were on its own terms". (NB 5.11.14) The strong understanding of the context principle, in conjunction with this intuition, leads to the conclusion that the proposition in itself must contain everything that determines its meaning (allows its meaning to be determined). And this leads to the "demand of the determinacy of sense" which is equivalent to the demand of the possibility of simple signs (unanalyzable names for absolutely simple things) (3.23) and also to the demand of logical analysis, of which there should be only one for each proposition (3.25). These are dogmatic a priori consequences, and they already have metaphysical consequences in the postulates of absolute simplicity as the endpoint of analysis. But these consequences and postulates alone would not be compelling for the of LW's philosophy of logic being metaphysically embedded, because they themselves are not compelling. (One could understand the propositional context principle as only a necessary, but not sufficient condition for word meaning and would be rid of unwanted consequences).

This also applies to the construction of the logical system, which LW follows up on his descriptive corrections of Frege and Russell. He summarized his rejection of logical constants in favour of operations in the thesis that the only logical constant is the elementary proposition itself (5.47), because it already contains all logical constants. This leads to basing logic exclusively on the essence of the proposition (because the propositions of logic, as tautologies, show only the logical properties of propositions) and to making the characterisation of the general propositional form the central theoretical task, because it is "the description of the one and only general primitive sign of logic" (5.472). Only in this construction does logic appear as the fascinating "domain of questions... whose answers lie - a priori - symmetrically, and united into a self-contained, regular entity." (5.4541) The construction presupposes "that everything that can be said at all a priori about the form of propositions must also be possible to say at once." (5.47) But why should it not be possible to say it step by step, by way of recursive definitions? Nor is the construction of the logical system obligatory, and has for itself no metaphysical ex-

tensions. For the fact that logic presupposes that names have meaning and elementary propositions have sense, and even that therein lies their connection with the world (6.124), admits of a modest, non-metaphysical reading.

Ontology

What ultimately makes the metaphysical embedding of the philosophy of logic in TLP inevitable is simply the ontological notion of fact in the way LW makes use of it. Of course, I have only artificially not used the term 'fact' in the present account of LW's philosophy with logic. For he formulated his insight into the central role of propositions and their essential compositeness from expressions playing different roles by means of the concept of fact from the outset, taking as fact both what 'really corresponds' to the proposition as its meaning (Sinn) (NB 104) and the proposition itself, this as a 'symbolizing fact' (NL 105). In this terminological decision the basic intuition of the picture theory of the proposition is pre-decided, that proposition and fact must be homologous and in analysis even isomorphic:

›In 'aRb' it is not the complex which symbolizes, but the fact that the symbol 'a' stands in a certain relation to the symbol 'b'. Thus facts are symbolized by facts, or more correctly: that in the symbol something definite is the case says that in the world something definite is the case.‹ (NB 98; cf. 3.1432)

LW formulated his basic conviction of the essential difference between names (simple signs) and propositions (complex signs) with the concept of fact in this way: "Only facts can express sense; a class of names cannot." (3.142; cf. NB 105)

Now this inevitably has metaphysical implications. For in order for facts to be used to symbolize (represent) facts, they must exist. Wittgenstein took as his *whole* theoretical task,

"To state the essence of the proposition. (-) That is, to state the essence of all facts of which the proposition *is* the picture. (-) To state the essence of all being." (Tb 22.1.15; cf. 5.471-1)

In a quasi-transcendental theory of the possibility of propositions, the fact of propositions and thus of facts must be presupposed just as in Kant's theory of the possibility of empirical knowledge the fact of empirical knowledge must be presupposed so that the ›conditions of possibility‹ may be inquired into.

This is why the TLP begins with the ontology of the world as a totality of facts. And this is why, among the facts of which the ontology explains the world to consist, the distinguished fact is that we make pictures of facts to ourselves (2.1). (In a lower-level explanation of the explanations of this proposition of the TLP it is stated that the picture is a fact; 2.141.)

The fact-character of pictures implies, because sentences as facts picture facts, the fact-character of sentences (and the propositions expressed by their assertive use). (3.143) LW here says only that the "sentence sign" is a fact. But it is a point of the picture theory that the proposition - "the propositional sign in its projective relation to the world" (3.12) - is also a fact, that the intentional and internal relation of the proposition to the fact or the fact, is reduced to something factual, homology or even isomorphism of proposition and fact. That this is insufficient is shown by the question: Why, in the case of an isomorphic relation, is the picture the picture of the fact and not also, reversely, the fact the picture of the picture? Self-critically, Wittgenstein commented on this error thus:

"A wrong conception of the functioning of language naturally destroys the *whole of* logic and all that is connected with it, and does not at any point produce only a slight disturbance. (-) If one removes the element of intention from language, its whole function collapses with it." (PR III.20, 63)

Because thoughts are logical pictures of facts (3) and are essentially expressed in sentences, thoughts are also facts. (5.542; cf. letter to Russell 19.8.1919) This now has consequences for the form of the execution of the task that LW set TLP as a whole, and for which even the theory of the proposition is only instrumental: to draw the bounds between sense and nonsense ("for the expression of thoughts" in language; *Preface c/d*) and thus to unfold the only thought that the TLP wants to unfold as an organic philosophy in Schopenhauer's sense, and which the *Preface* formulates as the whole sense of the book, proposition 7 as its conclusion. For if one wonders how this task of marking the bounds of sense is solved in the most general and therefore the most far-reaching way, one has to look at the two only seemingly synonymous propositions in the middle of TLP:

3.5 The applied, thought, sentence is the thought.

4 The thought is the meaningful proposition.

Proposition 3.5. delimits the meaning of 'thought' (because it is a first-level explanation of proposition 3) and says: Only that which is expressed or expressible in a sentence that is applied or explicitly thought (and thereby unconsciously translated into its logical analysis) is a thought. And proposition 4 complementarily delimits the meaning of 'proposition', for it is the head proposition of the explicit theory of the proposition. It closes the gap left by 3.5, namely, that there could be sentences, independent units of language usable for communication, which do not express thoughts (a possibility which undoubtedly exists in ordinary language - wishes do not express thoughts but a desire for .../to ..., commands a command, a request to ..., inten-

tion sentences the intention/intent to.... etc.) Because proposition 4 says, only what expresses a thought is a meaningful sentence, the propositional theory of TLP is occupied with descriptive propositions, statements, only. But these explanations for the use of 'thought' and 'proposition' is ontologically based on the fact-character of sentences, to which thoughts are bound as their essential expression. Pictures, thoughts, propositions are thereby bound to the world as a totality of facts, as essential elements of this totality. Thus, the metaphysical embedding of the basic logical assumption of an irreducible type difference between names and propositions by declaring propositions (pictures, thoughts) to be facts has the most comprehensive and absolutely decisive consequences for the theoretical claim of TLP.

Thanks to the epoch-making work of Michael Wolff³¹ on logic, we can now know that the progress achieved by Frege's function-theoretical logic actually looked much greater than it really was, as the Nestroy-motto of *Philosophical Investigations* says.

First³², Frege's claim to replace syllogistics as the proper science of general formal logic was unfounded. The truth-functional logical relations presuppose non-truth-functional ones by means of which they can be defined, but not vice versa. Moreover, Frege's and Russell's logics were not in fact purely formal. The use of truth-functional links entails that the validity of the proposition of the excluded middle and the validity of the principle of arbitrary sufficient justification (enshrined in the truth table for the material implication, which is supposed to be true even if the if-proposition is false) are tacitly presupposed. It further entails that the validity of the syllogistic principle of qualitative existential presupposition is suspended, and is assumed instead that from the negation of any statement (universal, particular or singular) it follows that there *is* something (to which the predicate of the negated statement does not apply) - and this regardless of what is spoken of in the negated statement. The use of quantifiers and individual constants in connection with truth-functional logical connections presupposes: *there are those objects* to which individual constants (or bound individual variables) refer.³³ That is, quite independently of explicit metaphysical inferences or embeddings: Function-theoretical logic makes ontological, substantive presuppositions and is therefore not purely formal.

Frege's and Russell's logic is not the general formal logic, but a special logic of mathematical reasoning and proof that refers directly to operating with letters that denote single individual objects.

Wittgenstein's replacement of truth-*functions* by truth-*operations*, together with his thesis of

31 Michael Wolff: *Abhandlung über die Prinzipien der Logik*, 2nd improved and extended edition, Frankfurt a.M., 2009 (1st. ed. 2004). And: *Einführung in die Logik*, Munich 2006.

32 I have adopted here Wolff's own summary at the end of § 35 of the treatise. (150 sqq.)

33 Cp. Wolff: *Einführung ...*, l.c., ch. 10.

the ineffability of the existence of objects (which is supposed to be shown only by the use of individual variables and constants, cannot be stated - 3.221, 4.1272, 5.53, 5.61)³⁴, can be understood as an attempt to secure, in the function-theoretic framework, the formality of logic and thus the status of function-theoretic logic as general formal logic. Perhaps this attempt can be maintained for the areas of language in which signs are (can be) really used truth-functionally (cp. PI § 3), but as a theoretical proposal with a claim to general validity it has failed, even according to LW's own conviction.

That this attempt still is philosophically immensely instructive, is made clear above all by the wealth of insights that Wittgenstein himself developed from the comprehensive and radical self-critique of the logical-metaphysical system of TLP, some of which are treated in more detail below as ›Lessons from Wittgenstein‹.

Philosophy of Language

34 Wittgenstein's rejection of Russell's 'axiom of infinity' also points to this (cf. NB 9.101914; TLP 5.535).