WITTGENSTEIN'S THEORY OF THE SELF

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"Tis certain there is no question in philosophy more abstruse than that concerning identity, and the nature of the uniting principle, which constitutes a person. So far from being able by our senses merely to determine this question, we must have recourse to the most profound metaphysics to give a satisfactory answer to it." (Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature, p.189)

"How the 'I' that thinks can be distinct from the 'I' that intuits itself (for I can represent still other modes of intuition as at least possible), and yet, as being the same subject, can be identical with the latter; and how, therefore, I can say: "I, as intelligence and thinking subject, know myself as an object that is thought, in so far as I am given to myself as something other or beyond that which is given to myself in intuition, and yet know myself, like other phenomena, only as I appear to myself, not as I am to the understanding" -- these are questions that raise no greater difficulty than how I can be an object to myself at all.... (Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, p. 167.)

"The I, the I is what is deeply mysterious." (Wittgenstein, Notebooks, 1914, p.80)

PREFATORY NOTE

The present study seeks to shed some light on one of the more obscure aspects of Wittgenstein's early philosophy; his views about the self. That these views (1), from a coherent whole, (2), are philosophically of the greatest interest and important and, (3) are an indespensable part of the whole Tractarian account of logic, language and the world, it is the aim of this essay to demonstrate. (Additional incentive derives from the fact that every critic and commentator to date has either ignored or, more usually, misinterpreted these views.)

My concern throughout has been to provide an accurate interpretation of the Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus, and so a word should be said about my use, at times considerable, of the Notebooks,1914-1916 and the retrospective parts of Zettel and Philosophical Investigations. My justification is the usual one: nothing I say, I am satisfied, fails to fit the Tractatus. The other works have been used only to clarify and amplify interpretations that emerged originally from the Tractatus itself.

At no point have I hesitated to deal at length with Wittgenstein's logical and linguistic doctrines, for just as his theory of the self is incomprehensible in isolation, so too are his logico-linguistic theories without the theory of the self. Indeed, the most impressive thing to

emerge from this study is the unity and consistency of Wittgenstein's early thought.

References to works other than those of Wittgenstein are provided in full in the Notes, and references to Wittgenstein's writings are incorporated in the text, abbreviated as follows:

(T)	Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus; by proposition number, (usually unqualified).
(N)	Notebooks 1914-1916; by date of entry (usually unqualified)or by page number.
R.F.M.	Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics; by section number.
P.I.(1)	Philosophical Investigations, Part One; by section number.
P.I.(2)	Philosophical Investigations, Part Two; by page number.
Z	Zettel; by section number.

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Professor A. Shalom, who, though he would not agree with everything in this thesis is nevertheless responsible in large part not only for its existence but also for the form it has taken. My gratitude is also due to Professor N. L. Wilson, for his many astute criticisms and helpful suggestions, and to Professor I. G. Weeks, with whom freqent and protracted discussions of Wittgenstein have proved invaluable.

ANALYTIC TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFATORY NOTE

Statement of intention, list of abbreviations, acknowledgments.

INTRODUCTION

(1). "The I, the I is what is deeply mysterious."

A skeletal outline of Wittgenstein's approach to the problem of the self is provided, based on the distinction betweenwhat can legitimately be said, and what can only be shown. It is argued that Wittgenstein did not in practice conform to what his avowed theory would lead the reader to expect. The theory of the self is placed, provisionally, in context of the other theories of the Tractatus, which is here conceived as a Kantian work, whose problematic is: the transcendental conditions for the possibility of the world. The thesis to be defended in the present study is that the self is one, perhaps the most important of these conditions.

(2). Facts, Objects and States of Affairs

Some terminological fencing and clearing is effected in this section and the next. The relations in which such ontological terms as world, fact, state of affairs and object stand are examined.

(3). Propositions, Pictures and Names

The way names refer and the way propositions have sense is examined, and the infamous picture of theory of language is outlined, showing that language constitutes

a "mirror image" of reality. This is important, for the self is, in a certain sense, identical to the language it understands.

PART ONE: WHAT CAN BE SAID

(1) The Soul

The reasons for Wittgenstein's commenting on the existence of the empirical ego are given, viz: The threat to the principle of extensionality offered by "intensional propositions". Wittgenstein is led to conclude that the soul (or mind) does not exist.

(2) The Thinking I

Other arguments are formulated for the non-existence of the empirical self, and a "no ownership" theory is propounded, though it is argued that this is not an entirely appropriate label. The conclusion is that there is no "thinking", but only "thoughts".

(3) The Thought

Frege's notion of "the Thought" is examined, and shown to be defective, and Wittgenstein's alternative more acceptable. The Tractarian accounts of assertion, reference and sense are examined, showing precisely how Wittgenstein is able to use Occam's razor to deny the existence of the thinking subject. Finally, the status of the empirical self is outlined. It turns out to be no more than an aggregate of facts, with no principle of unity or identity. Comparisons are drawn between this and the Humean analysis of the self.

PART TWO: WHAT CANNOT BE SAID

(1) Introduction

The distinction between what can and what cannot be said is drawn more finely than was possible initially, and the importance of this distinction is emphasized.

(2) The Metaphysical I

The claim that the metaphysical I is "a limit of the world" is examined, with particular reference to the Kantian parallel in the transcendental unity of apperception - but with this difference: Wittgenstein's world is not a phenomenal world. This leads to an analysis of the claim that the world and the self are identical.

(3) Solipsism

The simplicity of objects, and the indefinability of primitive signs is shown to lead to a radical linguistic solipsism, out of which Wittgenstein's metaphysical solipsism grows. The claim that solipsism and realism coincide is examined.

(4) The Willing I

The willing I is perhaps the most important concept for an understanding of what Wittgenstein is trying to achieve in the Tractatus, for it is the willing I that gives sense to the world. This section is subdivided as follows:

(i) Generality: the metaphysical lacunae in the theory of generality propounded in the Tractaus are bridged

by Wittgenstein's doctrine of "the mystical". This essentially involves "seeing the world aright", i.e. as "a limited whole". The world is limited by the willing self through the attitude which it adopts towards the world.

(ii) Ethics: The attitude to the world which is the will is the source of all value. Ethics is seen to be, like logic, a transcendental condition for the possibility of the world. The difference between a "happy world" and an "unhappy" world" is explored.

(iii) Personal Identity: The production of an adequate principle of individuation for persons is not a task that Wittgenstein set himself in the Tractatus. The Notebooks, however, contain hints which can be developed into a theory that fits the Tractatus well. The principle of individuation is the world. This is explained, and it is shown that if this theory is accepted, a new interpretation of the Tractatus emerges. Despite its title, and the positivistic interpretations to which it has fallen prey, the Tractatus turns out to be a work whose primary intent is neither logical nor metaphysical, but ethical.[1]

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1. It was only after the completion of this thesis that I had access to the recently published Proto-Tractatus of Wittgenstein, In the "Historical Introduction" to that work is quoted a letter that Wittgenstein wrote to one Herr Ficker, It nicely bears out the conclusions reached in the present study. Wittgenstein writes thus:

> .....it will probably be a help to you if I write a few words about my book. You see, I am quite sure that you won't get all that much out of reading it.

> Because you won't understand it; its subject matter will seem quite alien to you. But it isn't really alien to you, because the book's point is an ethical one. I once meant to include in the preface a sentence which is not in fact there now but which I will write out for you. What I meant to write, then, was this: My work consists of two parts: the one presented here plus all that I have not written. And it is precisely this second part that is the important one. My book draws limits to the sphere of the ethical from the inside as it were, and I am convinced that this is the ONLY rigorous way of drawing those limits. In short I believe that where many today are just gassing, I have managed to put everything firmly into place by being silent about it.

Vide: L.Wittgenstein, Proto-Tractatus, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971, pp. 15-16. The letter is undated, but was probably written in 1918.

INTRODUCTION

1. The I, the I is what is deeply mysterious (N. 5.8.16)

It is fortunate that Wittgenstein's treatment of this subject manifests that discrepancy between avowed intent and actual practice which characterizes so much of both the Tractatus and the Investigations. Fortunate, because had he taken himself at his word, had he done what he claimed to be doing, it seems unlikely that he would ever have put pen to paper.

The broad outline of Wittgenstein's theory of the self is as follows: First there are those propositions about the self that are well-formed. These constitute the totality of meaningful assertions (true or false) that can be made about the self, and embody all that can be known about it. They are empirical propositions, and consititute a part of natural science, for "the totality of true propositions is the whole of natural science," (4.11.) Philosophy, of course, is not one of the natural sciences, "The word 'philosophy' must mean something whose place is above or below the natural sciences, not beside them" (4.111). So whatever can be thought, known or said about the self will have to be considered as a part of psychology, physiology, anthropology, sociology. Anything that can legitimately be said about the self will be of no philosophical interest.

Secondly, there are those aspects of the self that are of philosophical interest; the transcendental, ethical and metaphysical aspects. But about these we can say

nothing, for we would be attempting to say what can only be shown; "What can be shown cannot be said", (4.1212). And so the frustrating conclusion is this: "The correct method in philosophy would really be the following: to say nothing except what can be said, i.e. the propositions of natural science, i.e. something that has nothing to do with philosophy." (6.53) So runs the 'official theory'.

In fact, however, Wittgenstein transgresses his self imposed boundaries in two ways: he is drawn into saying a great deal that is of philosophical interest about the empirical self, and he also contrives to say much about what is ineffable -- the transcendental self.

I shall argue that it was as the result of certain refractory consequences of his theory of meaning that Wittgenstein was forced into commenting on the nature of the empirical self. These comments constitute the only excursion into the empirical realm that the author of the Tractatus makes, for, like Kant and Husserl, Wittgenstein was a transcendental philosopher, enquiring into the ground and limits of experience and the world. Wittgenstein's problematic was entirely Kantian, being of the form: How is it possible that ....? What are the necessary conditions for the possibility of ....? We can perhaps characterize Wittgenstein's ultimate concern as a quest for the necessary formal conditions of the possibility of a "meaningful" or "significant" world.

Or, to put it in his own more colloquial terminology, it is a quest for the meaning of life, (for "the world and life are one" (6.521)) In the Notebooks Wittgenstein outlined his programme thus:

> My whole task consists in explaining the essence of the proposition.
>
> That is in giving the essence of the fact, whose picture the proposition is.
>
> In giving the essence of all Being. (21.1.15 my italics.)

This was modified in the Tractatus to read:

> To give the essence of a proposition means to give the essence of all description, and thus the essence of the world. (5.4711 my italics)

The programme is clear. The meaning of the world is to be discovered, not as Kant thought in the categorical activity of the mind, but rather in "the essence of the proposition", which is the essence of language.[1] Language is nothing more than "the totality of propositions" (4.001). Logic is the transcendental condition for the possibility of meaningul language, and because language and reality share the same logical form, logic is also the transcendental condition for the possibility of the world. As Wittgenstein phrases it: "Logic pervades the world; the limits of the world are also its limits." (5.61) "Logic is transcendental", (6.13).

The logico-linguistic doctrines propounded in the

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1. By "language" Wittgenstein means: any language whatsoever - i.e. any system of signs which has a determinate sense.

Tractatus have been well covered by the critical and exegetical literature that abounds on the subject. But they have been covered to the exclusion of other, equally important theories contained in the Tractatus; for example: Wittgenstein's mysticism, his ethical theory and his theory of the self. Nor are the remarks on these topics mere arbitrary adjuncts to a central body of doctine that could stand without them. One cannot, for example, understand why "Logic is transcendental" unless one also understands why "Ethics is transcendental", (6.421). And one cannot grasp the relation between language and the world -- the so-called picturing relation -- unless one can account for such remarks as "I am my world","the world and life are one" and so on. The World I shall argue, is a far more problematic concept in the Tractatus than the usual, simplistic account of the picture theory would lead us to believe. Logic limits the world, (5.61), but we must not overlook the fact that the world is limited in other ways, most notably by the self (5.632). Indeed, in the Notebooks Wittgenstein states explicitly that "... the subject is not a part of the world, but a pre-supposition of its existence" (2.8.16). Precisely how the self is a limit of the world, and what relations obtain between logic, ethics and the self will be the subject of the second part of this essay. In the first part I will examine Wittgenstein's account of the empirical self.

(2) Objects, Facts, and States of Affairs

In this section and the next, I attempt some terminological fencings and clearings, especially with regard to such crucial concepts as object, State of affairs, name and proposition. These terms are employed frequently in the subsequent sections of this thesis, and it is incumbent upon me to say, albeit briefly, how I understand them.

There is an almost insuperable difficulty which faces anyone who would elucidate systematically the concepts mentioned above, as they are used in the Tractatus. The problem is that in that work they are defined exclusively in terms of each other. A fact, for example, is what corresponds to a true proposition. An elementary proposition is composed entirely of names, and a name is that linguistic entity whose meaning is a simple object. A state of affairs is what an elementary proposition pictures, and so on. Ontological and semantic terminologies are inextricably intertwined. They are mutually self supporting. The best that one can hope to do, then, is to show how the ontological conepts emerge from the semantic framework of the Tractatus and then, reversing the process, use the ontological theory to elucidate the semantic terminology. This may smack of cirularity -- but I think that in fact the meanings of the relevant terms become clear in the process, thus pragmatically rebutting the charge.

Wittgenstein's ontology is gloriously simple. He

allows only two irreducible categories of things: objects and states of affairs.[1] Objects are actual, simple and immutable, while states of affairs are "complexes of objects", and are possible, complex and changeable.

D.F.Pears has called Wittgenstein's notion of an object "the darkness that lies at the heart of the Tractatus." It is the view of the present writer that this is the darkness of obscurity rather than profundity. No one, it would seem, (least of all the author of the Tractatus) is able to suggest a plausible actor to fill the rôle created by the notion of an object. There are arguments[2] that prove that an object can be neither sense datum, material point nor universal. "Our difficulty", wrote Wittgenstein in his Notebooks, "was that we kept on talking about simple objects, but were unable to mention a single one." (21.6.15).

Two passages worth quoting here. Both are from Wittgenstein's later writings. They reveal the philosophical motivation that lies behind his earlier insistence on the existence of simple objects:

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1. Facts, as we shall see, can be plausible treated as a sub-class of states of affairs.

2. The reader is referred to two excellent articles which deal with the problem of what an object could possibly be for Wittgenstein: "Wittgenstein's Notion of an Object", (The Philosophical Quarterly, vol. 13, no.50, January 1963, pp.3-15.) and "A New Interpretation of the Tractatus examined", (Philosophical Review, vol. LXXIV, April 1965), both by D.Keyt. I do not intend to deal with this problem, but will content myself, as does Wittgenstein, with outlining the formal properties which an object must possess.

> "A name signifies only what is an element of reality. What cannot be destroyed; what remains the same in all changes." -- but what is that? -- Why it swam before our minds as we said the sentence! This was the very expression of a quite particular image: of a particular picture which we want to see. For certainly experience does not show us these elements. We see component parts of something composite. (...) we also see a whole which changes, (is destroyed) while its component parts remain unchanged. These are the elements from which we construct that picture of reality. (P.I.(1),59).

Earlier, Wittgenstein had written:

> Supposing we ask: "How can one imagine what does not exist?" The answer seems to be: "If we do, we imagine non-existent combinations of existing elements." A centaur does not exist, but a man's head and torso and arms and a horses legs do exist. "But can't we imagine an object utterly different from anyone which exists?" - we should be inclined to answer: "No; the elements, individuals, must exist ...."
> (Blue Book, p.31)

These quotations, while they adequately express the picture which forced itself upon the young Wittgenstein, are nevertheless misleading in so far as they suggest that the ontological intuition which they embody preceeded or emerged independently of the semantic docitrines propounded by the Tractatus. Both chronologically and thematically his concept of an object was subsequent to, and dependent on his notion of a name. This, in its turn, was dependent upon Wittgenstein's logical atomism and his whole analytic programme. Hide Ishiguro, in her essay "Use and Reference of Names"[1], expresses what is perhaps

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1. Studies in the Philosophy of Wittgenstein, ed. P.Winch p.21

the most sensible attitude to the problem of the object in the Tractatus:

> The objects of the Tractatus are not particular entities in any normal sense, but entities invoked to fit into a semantic theory, so, when Wittgenstein later rejected the independence of elementary propositions he was able to rid himself of this particular notion of objects as well, without altering his theory of names or reference in any fundamental manner.

In other words it does not really matter what an object is,[1] as long as it possesses those characteristics which will enable its existence to guarantee (1) the independence of elementary propositions, (2) the determinate sense of all propositions, and (3) the possibility of logical analysis. We can begin with the demand that analysis be possible.

I think that we must accept, as one of Wittgenstein's basic presuppositions, that the propositions of every-day language can be analysed into their basic components; that the propositions of ordinary discourse, the meanings of which are implicit and complex, can be broken down into a series of propositions which are entirely explicit and whose components are logically simple. Wittgenstein nowhere argues in favour of this, but merely presents it as an "obvious" demand. In the Notebooks, for example, he writes:

> But it is clear that components of our propositions can be analysed by means of a definition, and must be if we want to approximate to the real structure of the proposition. At any rate, then,

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1. Of course, given Wittgenstein's theory of meaning, we cannot say what an object is: "Objects can only be named. Signs are their representatives. I can only speak about them: I cannot put them into words. Propositions can only say how things are, not what they are." (3.221)

there is a process of analysis. (9.5.15)

And in the Tractatus we read simply that "It is obvious that the analysis of propositions must bring us to elementary propositions.." (4.211, my italics). The criterion which Wittgenstein formulates for the completion of a process of analysis is the proposition's being "just as complex as its reference", (9.5.15). The analysed proposition will then have the same logical form as the situation which it represents, and this, Wittgenstein hoped, would put an end to the pseudo-problems with which philosophy is plagued, and which arise from the "cloudy" nature of ordinary language. (cf. 4.002 & 4.0031). Analysis, it was hoped, would provide philosophers with a perspicuous notation incapable of generating baseless philosophical perplexity. [1]

Given that analysis is possible, Wittgenstein infers that it must have a terminal point. "It seems to me", he wrote in the Notebooks, "that the idea of a simple is contained in that of a complex, and in the idea of analysis", (4.6.15). Earlier he had written:

> If it is true that every defined sign signifies via its definitions, then presumably the chain of definitions must some time have an end. (9.5.15).

But if we agree that analysis is possible, and has an end,

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1. Wittgenstein is insistent that this "perspicuous notation" will be philosophically important, but will in no way challenge the status or ordinary language which is, "just as it stands, in perfect logical order" (5.5563).

then that end must be "the simple", for anything complex can, ex hypothesi, be further analysed.

Ordinary propositions are analysed into elementary propositions which are composed entirely of these "simples", i.e. primitive signs or names. These names must be related immediately to the elements of reality which are their meanings, Wittgenstein argues, if language is to be possible at all. That is to say, they cannot signify indirectly, as does a description for example. An elementary proposition must be "a truth-function of itself," for if it is not, then whether one proposition has sense will depend upon whether another proposition is true. (2.021) In other words, if an elementary proposition is not a truth function of itself, if it does not tie onto reality directly, independently of the truth-value of any other proposition, then we become entangled in a vicious infite regress. Suppose that E_1 is an elementary proposition which, (per impossibile), contains an "irreducible complex", i.e. a sign whose meaning is not a simple object to which it directly refers, (e.g. a definite description). Wittgenstein argues that before E_1 can be understood, another proposition, E_2, which asserts that the complex mentioned in E_1 exists, would have to be known to be true. But if E_2 also contained an irreducible complex, in order to understand it we would have to know the truth of another proposition E_3, which would assert the existence of the complex mentioned in

E_2 .... and so on. And so:"It is obvious that the analysis of propositions must bring us to elementary propositions, which consist of names in immediate combination.", (4.211, myitalics). It is only by having elementary propositions which are truth functions of themselves that this vicious regress can be avoided. We can demand, then, that at some point in the process of analysis there emerge logically proper names, or primitive signs, which signify by standing proxy for some element of reality. These elements of reality must also be simple, because they are the meanings of the primitive signs, and if they were complex, the primitive signs would be capable of further analysis. "The requirement that simple signs be possible is the requirement that sense be determinate" Wittgenstein writes in the Tractatus, (3.23), but in the Notebooks he had written: "The demand for simple things IS the demand for definiteness of sense", (18.6.15). They are one and the same demand.

So far then, it would appear that objects must exist, and that they must be simple, But there is more to be said. Objects must also be without material qualities if elementary propositions are to be independent, (or, what comes to the same thing: names must have no sense). Wittgenstein only makes this point in passing:

> It is clear that the logical product of two elementary propositions can neither be a tautology nor a contradiction. The statement that a point in the visual field has two different colours at the same time is a contradiction. (6.3751)

Incidentally: objects are colourless. (2.0232) Qualitiesare only produced "by the configuration of objects" (2.0231), and can only be represented by propositions. Names have neither sense nor connotation, (cf. 3.221, 3.203, 3.144).

Though objects do not possess qualities, (e.g. temporal duration, colour, size, movement or whatever), they do, however, possess properties; both internal and external properties. To explain how this comes about, we must make the transition from objects to the second ontological category: states of affairs. A state of affairs is no more than a possible "complex of objects." Wittgenstein says that in a state of affairs "Objects hang in one one another like links in a chain" (2.03). I take this metaphor to mean that no third thing is involved in transforming objects into states of affairs. Relations are not objects or "subsistent entities", which participate with the objects-proper in forming states of affairs. This point is made again at 3.1432

> Not: "The complex sign 'aRb' says that a stands to b in the relation R," but rather: "That 'a' stands to 'b' in a certain relation says that aRb."

And so it would appear that neither properties nor relations appear in elementary propositions. From the fact that elementary propositions consist entirely of names in immediate kombination, Wittgenstein concludes that states of affairs are composed entirely of simple

objects which are immediately combined. "The configuration of objects in a situation corresponds to the configuration of simple signs in the propositional sign" (3.21). In other words, "aRb" could not be an elementary proposition, for the sign "R" is not a name, it does not denote what is an element in reality.

A state of affairs, then, is what corresponds to an elementary proposition, if it is true, (cf. 4.0141). But what if it is false? Exactly the same holds for a false elementary proposition as for one that is true: both picture a state of affairs. The difference is this: "If an elementary proposition is true, then the state of affairs exists; if an elementary proposition is false, then the state of affairs does not exist." (4.25). And so a state of affairs is not a fact, it does not necessarily exist. It is rather a possible "situation". In short, then, Wittgenstein analyses both the meaningfulness and the truth-value of elementary propositions in terms of the existence of corresponding non-liguistic entities. Possession of meaning implies that the objects, named by the primitive signs which compose the elementary proposition, exist. The truth-value, on the other hand, depends upon the existence or non-existence of the relations which, the proposition asserts, exist between these objects. Suppose that "abc" is an elementary proposition; it is true only if there is an existent state of affairs constituted by objects a, b and c, standing to each other in the relations

that "abc" says that they are.[1] "abc" is false if these relations do not exist. But if either a, b or c does not exist, the proposition is not simply false but meaningless.

To return now to the nature of objects and their internal and external properties; objects are simple and unchanging, they possess no material qualities, and in isolation cannot even be considered part of the world, (1.1). An object only comes to life, so to speak, in its relations, both possible and actual, with other objects. "If I can imagine objects combined in states of affairs, I cannot imagine them excluded from the possibility of such combinations", writes Wittgenstein, "It is essential to things that they be possible constituents of states of affairs" (2.0121 & 2.011). The external properties of an object are those relations which it does have to other objects, and its internal (or essential) properties are those which it might have.

If a name is to attach uniquely to an object then there must be what P.T.Geach has somewhere called a "nominal essence" of that object, otherwise all names would be interchangeable. As an elementary proposition is composed entirely of names, the absence of a nominal essence would have the effect of making all propositions synonymous i.e. meaningless. Objects are simple, unchanging,

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1. Given, of course, a rule of projection, cf. 4.0141, and see below, Section 3 of this Introduction.

without qualities, and if they are to be uniquely nameable their nominal essence can only be their internal properties. This is the point that Wittgenstein makes at 2.01231: "If I am to know an object, though I need not know its external properties, I must know its internal properties." (my italics). Now, from 2.0123, which reads: "If I know an object I also know its possible occurrences in states of affairs", it is safe to assume that "(sum of) internal properties", "essence" and "possible occurrences in states of affairs" are synonymous, when used with reference to objects. We are also told that "The possibility of its occurring in states of affairs is the form of an object."[1] (2.0141).

There is one ontological term that I have so far avoided using, viz: "fact". It is defined thus by Wittgenstein: "What is the case -- a fact -- is the existence of states of affairs" (2.01). Later he modifies this definition to read:

> The existence and non-existence of states of affairs is reality. (We also call the existence of states of affairs a positive fact, and the non-existence of states of affairs a negative fact) (2.06).

This seems clear enough: A fact is a similar sort of thing to a state of affairs, but with the difference that the latter is merely possible, while the former actually

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1. The synonymity of "essence", "form" and "sum of internal properties" is relevant to arguments advanced in Part Two of this thesis, and will be referred to again therein.

exists. It would appear that a (positive) fact is a whole whose parts are existing states of affairs. If this is the case it should be impossible for Wittgenstein to talk of "non-existent facts", and, indeed, he does not do so, though he can, and does, talk of "non-existent states of affairs". (e.g. 2.06).

Unfortunately, however, Wittgenstein's usage of ther term "fact" is far from consistent. He employs the term in a number of senses which the present writer is incapable of rendering univocal. Sometimes a fact is merely a "state of affairs," sometimes "an existing state of affairs", sometimes "existing states of affairs," and yet again, "existing and non-existing states of affairs." Even more unfortunate is the fact that Wittgenstein's whole theory of facts seems to be fundamentally incoherent, over and above mere terminological inexactitude. I shall briefly outline wherein I think this incoherence lies, define (rather indeterminately) the sense of "fact" that will be employed in the remainder of this thesis, and thereafter use the term as infrequently as possible.

In a letter to Russell, dated 19.8.19, Wittgenstein wrote:

> What is the difference between Tatsache and Sachverhalt?" Sachverhalt is, what corresponds to an Elementarsatz if it is true. Tatsache is what corresponds to the logical product of elementary props when this product is true. (N. page 129)

The most crucial difficulty, and one which this quotation

highlights, is the nature of the relation that facts bear to states of affairs. Suppose that a, b, and c are simple objects. The complex: abc will then be a state of affairs, and "abc" will be the corresponding elementary proposition. Now, developing the hint given by Wittgenstein in the above quoted letter, we can posit a number of states of affairs: abc, def, ghi. To these would correspond a non elementary proposition: "abc & def & ghi. " (The presence of truth functional connectives is enough to ensure that this proposition is not elementary, (4.5312 with 4.22)). According to the above letter, the complex : abc def ghi is a fact and not a state of affairs. And so it would seem that a fact is a synthesis of like parts which form a whole which is of the name type as the parts. only larger. (This would not be so if "&" stood for some element in reality, but Wittgenstein calls it his "fundamental idea" that the logical constants do not represent, (4.0312)). An analogy might help to make this clear. Instead of "object", "state of affairs" and "fact" let us consider respectively: "flower", "bunch" and "bouquet". A flower by itself, (or indeed any number of flowers), cannot be considered to be a bunch, unless certain conditions are fulfilled. In the first place, there has to be more than one flower, and in the second, the flowers must stand in a certain relation to each other. A bunch, however, consists entirely of flowers. A bouquet we can define as a bunch of bunches. A bouquet

is thus a whole of the same type as its parts, whereas there is a categorical difference between a flower and a bunch. (A bunch is not a sort of flower, but a bouquet is a sort of bunch). And analogously for objects, states of affairs and facts.

Difficulties begin to emerge, however, when we remember that elementary propositions must be truth-functionally independent. This means, as we have seen, that they cannot represent material qualities. Yet ordinary propositions are analysable, without remainder, into elementary propositions, and it is obvious that material qualities can be represented at the level of ordinary language. So where do they disappear to? At what point, and how, do they emerge? Two things are certain: If qualities are absent from elementary propositions but present in ordinary propositions, then the relation of states of affairs to facts is not the simple relation we have been examining, and the relation between elementary and ordinary propositions is one for which simple truth-functional connectives are incapable of accounting. This I feel is one of the points at which the Tractarian system breaks down completely. It is as if, on the analogue considered above, both flowers and bunches are colourless and odourless, but when two or more bunches are added together, they suddenly and inexplicably burst into riotous bloom.

I have specified how the terms "objects" and

"state of affairs" are employed, both in the Tractatus and in this thesis, and I have tried to show that ultimately no coherent account can be given of a Wittgensteinian fact. I shall nevertheless continue to talk of facts where this is unavoidable, and I shall mean by "fact": "existing state of affairs". The questions that the indeterminacy of this definition begs are not questions that need concern us in the remainder of this thesis.

(3) Names, Propositions and Pictures

Any philosopher who would enquire into the nature of language, or the relation of language to reality has at his disposal a plethora of terms from which to construct a working vocabulary. Among these terms are: Proposition, sentence, expression, statement, sign, symbol, name, meaning, sense, reference and assertion. Wittgenstein employs all of these, and in addition he creates a number of new terms, and uses others in a new or extended sense, e.g. elementary proposition, picture, say, show, and proto-picture. It is well beyond the scope and aim of this section to give an adequate analysis of all of these terms, and I will restict my examination to the more central and more problematic of them, in particular; "Satz" and "Name", (usually, but not always translated "proposition" and "name" respectively.)

At 3.34 Wittgenstein distinguishes between the accidental and the essential features of any sign:

> Accidental features are those that result from the particular way in which the propositional sign is produced. Essential features are those without which the proposition could not express its sense.[1]

This quotation concerns the essential and accidental features of propositions, but the principle it embodies can easily be modified to fit other linguistic units. In the Notebooks Wittgenstein makes the same distinction with regard to names:

> The simple sign is essentially simple
> It functions as a simple object. (What does that mean?)
> Its compsition becomes completely indifferent.
> It disappears from view. (21.6.15.)

A name or primitive sign may therefore have parts, but these parts are "accidental" to it, qua name. Its function is to stand proxy for a simple object, and as far as concerns its adequately performing this function, it might as well be simple. Wittgenstein's names are logically proper names:they denote a simple object and have neither sense nor connotation. They come together in an elementary proposition, which, in contrast, is essentially complex and has sense but does not refer. The sense of an elementary proposition is the state of affairs which it pictures, and which, rightly or wrongly, it asserts to exist, (4.21).

What are the necessary conditions for something's being a picture of something else? In the first place

1. I shall continue for the moment to employ the standard translation of "Satz" - though I enquire, below, into the aptness of this translation.

that which is to picture must exist, and in the second, it must be logically complex. It is, in other words, by definition, a fact. (see 2.14, cf. 3.14, 3.141). Only a fact can be a picture. The corollary of this is that situations cannot be given names (3.144). Frege had construed propositions as complex names, but Wittgenstein objected that if this were the case, then a flase proposition would seem to name nothing. A name that names nothing, however, is not a name at all, and so Frege's construal seems to result in the assimilation of false to meaningless propositions. Wittgenstein's repeated insistence that a state of affairs can be described but not named, that propositions are not names but pictures, having sense but not reference, results at least in part from his desire to avoid the difficulties of Frege's position as he saw them.

A necessary condition for something's being a picture, then, is that that "something" be a fact. But not all facts are pictures. What then are the sufficient conditions of a fact's being a picture? And what is it a picture of?

Because of the restrictions placed by Wittgenstein on names and naming, only a state of affairs can be pictured, (assuming, as I am, that facts from a sub-class of states of affairs). In order for a fact to be a picture of a state of affairs, two conditions must be fulfilled: (1) there must be a one-to-one correlation between the

elements of the picturing fact and the pictured state of affiars; and (2) their respective forms must be identical, given a rule of projection. A rule of projection sanctions the transfer from one form to the other. (i.e. from language to reality or from one notation to another, (4.0141)).

It must be understood that these conditions are in no way intended to be an analysis of what is normally implied by one thing's being a picture of another. They are a highly technical specification of the conditions necessary for the determinateness of sense which Wittgenstein demands of all propositions (both elementary and molecular). As such, the first condition is, I think, intuitively obvious. If one picture element could stand for two or more objects, then the relations between objects would be unspecified, and the sense of the picture would be indeterminate with respect to these relations. The second condition is a demand that picturing fact and pictured state of affairs have the same form. "Form" is defined by Wittgenstein as "the possibility of structure" (2.033). The contrast intended by these two terms can be elucidated as follows: if a and b are two simple objects, (and "a" and "b" two primitive signs), then, corresponding to the proposition "aRb". (if it is true) will be a structure: "a-in-a-certain-relation-to-b". There will also correspond a form: "something in that same relation to something else". Form is the possibility

of objects in general being related as they are in fact are, or as it is claimed by a proposition that they are. To put it briefly, "aRb" shows a structure, and "xRy" a form.[1] A structure is transformed into a form when variables are substituted for names in an elementary proposition. aRb, and cRd, have the same form (xRy), but they are different structures. As Wittgenstein uses the term, no two complexes can have the same structure; if they did, they would be identical.

Form is what one thing must have in common with another, if one is to be a picture of the other, (2.161). The relations obtaining between elements of the picture (propositional sign) must be the same as those obtaining between the simple objects in the state of affairs of which it is a picture, given a rule of projection.

The notion of a rule of projection is obscure in the Tractatus. There is only one reference to it, at 4.0141.

> A gramaphone record, the musical idea, the written notes, and the sound-waves, all stand to one another in the same internal relation of depicting that holds between language and the world. (4.014)
>
> There is a general rule by means of which the musician can obtain the symphony from the score, and which makes it possible to drive the symphony form the groove on the gramophone record, and, using the first rule, to derive the score again. That is what constitutes the inner similarity

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1. That "aRb" etc. are not elementary propositions is irrelevant to the present argument. But it is worth pointing out, for it explains why "R" in "aRb" is not transformed into a variable. "R" would not occur in an elementary proposition as it is not a name.

> between these things which seems to be constructed in such entirely different ways. And that rule is the law of projection on which projects the symphony into the language of musical notation. It is the rule for translating this language into the language of gramaphone records. (4.0141)

One of the difficulties which faced Wittgenstein we can formulate as a dilemma: either (1) propositions are composed entirely of names, or (2) they are not. If, (2), they are not, then the sense of a proposition is going to be indeterminate, and this, he thought, was impossible. If, (1) they are composed entirely of names, then, prima facie, it seems impossible that they can say anything. (This point has perhaps struck the reader on this thesis, at those points where I have referred to an elementary proposition: "abc". The obvious question is: How can "abc" say anything? It is just a list of names.) The notion of a rule of projection is, at least in part, I suspect, designed to resolve this contradiction. Wittgenstein is committed by the arguments we examined earlier, to the first alternative, and so he must find some way of allowing that a series of names can say something. Wittgenstein's first move is to deny that "a proposition is a mere jumble of words", (5.415). A propositional sign, in other words, is composed of elements which stand to each other in determinate relationships. The totality of these relationships is the logical form of the propositional sign. The elements themselves are, of course, names or primitive signs. So it follows that "abc", our putative elementary

proposition, is not, despite appearances to the contrary, a mere list (or jumble or class or string) of names. It is a fact. The names stand in specific relations to each other, (e.g. "a" is to the left of "b" which is to the left of "c", and so on).

This still, of course, does not explain how a complex of names can say anything - even granted that it is not merely an aggregate of names. It is here that rules of projection are called for. A rule of projection sanctions the translation of the relations existing between the pictorial elements (names) into the relations existing between the simple objects which constitute the sense of the proposition. A simple example of a rule of projection might be as follows.[1] In the elementary proposition "abc" that "a" is to the left of both "b" and "c", implies that a is to the left of both b and c in the state of affairs comprised by objects a, b and c. And so we see that, even though an elementary proposition consists only of names (i.e. contains no verb, no predicates etc.) yet it is none the less capable of having a sense. It is, in other words, a proposition.

The word "Satz" occurs in over two hundred of the numbered remarks (or "Sätze" as Wittgenstein calls them), of the German text of the Tractatus. There are, in addition

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1. Wittgenstein provides more complicated examples at 4.0141, cf. also 3.1432.

numerous occurrances ofderivative and cognate expressions, such as "Elementarsatz,", "Satzzeichen", "Satzgefuge" and "Satzvariable". "Satz" is usually translated as "proposition".[1]

According to one widely held view, to every well-formed sentence, corresponds a proposition. To the sentencce: "Caesar loved Cleopatra", for example, there corresponds the proposition that Caesar loved Cleopatra. Employing C.S.Peirce's distinction between type and token, we can say that "Caesar loved Cleopatra" is the same sentence type as, but different sentence token to "Caesar loved Cleopatra". The sentence in question, considered both as type and as token, consists of three words, begins with the letter "C", and so on. It is, in other words, describable in what I shall call "semantically neutral terminology". It is simply what appears between the inverted commas. The corresponding proposition, in sharp contrast, does not suffer from type/token ambiguity, is not describable in semantically neutral terminology, and is an altogether more nebulous sort of entity. As I am employing the term, that Caesar loved Cleopatra is the same proposition as that Cleopatra was loved by Caesar, or as that it is not the case that Cleopatra was unloved by Caesar.

Wittgenstein uses the two terms "sign" and "symbol" to signal this distinction. "A sign" he writes at 3.32

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1. Professor N.L.Wilson has suggested, in conversation, that perhaps "sentence" would be a better translation. I do not agree, for reasons that will emerge as we proceed.

"is what can be perceived of a symbol". As something "that can be perceived", it is describable in semantically neutral language, it suffers from type/token ambiguity (cf. 3.321), but a necessary condition of its being a sign is that it is already a symbol. In the same way a necessary condition for something's being a sentence is that it is a well-formed and complete linguistic unit. Criteria for completeness must, I think, ultimately rely on semantic considerations. And so, while a sentence must have a meaning if it is to be a sentence and not, for example, a mere jumble of letters or words, it is not necessary to take account of what that meaning is when it is considered qua sentence. This is partly the point that Wittgenstein makes at 3.431:

> The essence of a propositional sign is very clearly seen if we imagine one composed of spatial objects, (such as tables, chairs and books), instead of written signs.

The "complex of spatial objects" could be described in semantically neutral language, as if it were a non-significant fact. But, of course, it is not a non-significant fact, and a necessary condition of the description of the spatial complex being the description of a sign, is that the complex already has a sense.

A Wittgensteinian propositional sign, (Satzzeichen), can plausible be taken to correspond to a sentence, as I have employed the term, and thus stands in contrast to a symbol or proposition. The question still remains,

however, as to what symbols or propositions are. Wittgenstein partly defines a proposition as a "propositional sign in its projective relation to the world" (3.12). This "projective relation" is the relation that holds between the elements of the propositional sign and the elements of the state(s) of affairs which is (are) its meaning. A proposition is not therefore describable in semantically neutral terminology; mention must be made of its sense. Indeed Wittgenstein seems to think that in order to state identity conditions, reference need only be made to its sense. Compare the following:

> A proposition has one and only one complete analysis. (3.25.)

> Instead of "This proposition has such and such a sense", we can say "This proposition represents such and such a situation". (4.031)

> To understand a proposition means to know what is the case if it is true. (4.022)

A proposition is completely understood if its sense is known, and its sense is the state of affairs which it represents. Since each proposition has a unique sense, it would seem that identity of sense is a necessary and sufficient condition for propositional identity.

But this is not, of course to say that a proposition is identical to its sense. Indeed this is impossible, for "a proposition does not actually contain its sense", "A proposition includes all that the projection includes, but not what is projected." (3.13). And so we have not as yet answered the question: What is a proposition? We have

said what it isn't; (sign, token, sentence-type, meaning), and we have provided identity conditions. So what is a Wittgensteinian proposition? Roughly, to begin with, it is what a sentence says; it is that which can be either true or false. Now a necessary condition of the possible truth or falsity of a proposition is that it is a picture of a state of affairs: "A proposition can be true or false only in virtue of being a picture of reality" (4.06). This is not, however, a sufficient condition of the possession of a truth value. If a proposition were merely a picture of a possible state of affairs, then it would not say anything, though it would have a sense. The sense of a proposition is nothing more than a possible "complex of objects". A book lying on a table which is next to a chair, (following the hint at 3.1431), is simply not the sort of thing that can possible be either true or false, yet this is the sense of a proposition. This is another reason for denying that a proposition is identical with its sense or meaning.[1] That it has a sense is a necessary condition of its being a proposition; and a sufficient condition is that it asserts that this sense (i.e. the state of affairs in question) exists, or does not exist. By asserting the existence of the unique situation which it depicts, a proposition, so to speak

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1. This point has been convincingly argued, but in more general context by R.Cartwright. Vide: "Propositions" in R.J.Butler (Ed.) Analytic Philosophy pp. 81-103

comes down off the fence, commits itself to one of two possibilities, and so lays itself open to empirical refutation. A proposition says that what it means exists, (which is by no means the same thing as saying that it has a meaning, cf 3.332).

In conclusion, then, we wish to maintain the following, concerning Wittgenstein's terminological usage: A Tatsache (fact) is an existing Sachverhalt (sate of affairs). A Satzzeichen (propositional sign, sentence) is a Tatsache and is obtained by describing a Satz (proposition,assertion) in semantically neutral language. A Satz is a Symbol, it has a unique sense which is the Sachverhalt which it depicts. But, in addition to the Sachverhalt which it pictures, a Satz also makes an assertion about the existence, (or in the case of a negative proposition: the non-existence) of what it pictures. A proposition is identical with this assertion.

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PART ONE

WHAT CAN BE SAID: THE EMPIRICAL EGO

PART I: WHAT CAN BE SAID

1. THE SOUL

The first remarks on the nature of the self occur at 5.541 - 5.422, and they concern the empirical self or "soul", as the standard English translation has it. As the soul is the proper object of study of psychology, (5.5421 & 5.641), and is that which "believes", "has the thought..." etc, the German "die Seele" would have been better translated "mind", for this is clearly what Wittgenstein meant by the word in all its occurences, except, possibly, 6.4321. I shall however, continue to follow the established convention, merely pointing out that the word "soul" is employed shorn of all religious connotations. The soul is simply that which thinks, intends, believes and so on. And, as we shall see, it does not exist.

Why does Wittgenstein feel the need to comment on the existence of the soul, when, as we have seen, his concern was with formal conditions for the possibility of the world? The following considerations, I believe, make such an excursion imperative.

"A proposition is a truth-function of elementary propositions" (5), and conversely: "Elementary propositions are the truth arguments of propositions", (5.01). This is the kernel of Wittgenstein's logical atomism. Ordinary propositions, if they are to have the determinate sense that Wittgenstein demands, (3.23) must be built up out of

elementary propositions, because it is only at the level of the elementary proposition that language "hooks onto the world directly." The rules governing the building up of elementary into molecular propositions are the rules of truth-functional logic, outlined at 5.101. This doctrine is generally referred to as the principle of extensionality, which was stated by Russell as follows:[1]

> I. The truth-value of any function of a proposition depends only upon the truth value of the argument, i.e. if p and q are both true or both false, then any sentence containing p remains true or false, as the case may be, if q is substituted for p.
>
> II. The truth-value of any function of a function depends only on the extension of the function, i.e. if whenever fx is true, gx is true, and vice versa, then any sentence about the function f remains true or false, as the case may be, if g is substituted for f.

In the Tractatus this is summarized thus: "propositions occur in other propositions only as the bases of truth operations", (5.54. See also 4.41, 4.51, 5.501, 5.234 & 5.3). In other words, one proposition cannot occur in another proposition without its determining the truth-value of the latter.

Now there is a certain class of propositions which I shall call intensional propositions,[2] which prove, prima facie, refractory to this type of truth-functional analysis.

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1. B. Russell, Inquiry into Meaning and Truth, p.211

2. This name is quite arbitrary, and is merely meant to stand in contrast to the term "extensional". The distinction between "intensional" and "intentional" is not relevant here.

Intensional propositions contain component propositions, and the truth value of the former is independent of that of the latter. Consider the statement: "I believe it is raining", let us call it "P". P contains the component proposition "it is raining", call it "p". The truth value of P is independent of the truth value of p, for I can believe that it is raining even though it is not, and it can be false that I so believe, even though it is in fact raining. Now this strikes right to the heart of Wittgenstein's whole theory, for if we allow that intensional propositions constitute a bona fide exception to the principle of extensionality, then many of the must fundamental tenets of the Tractarian system will have to be abandoned, (e.g. the whole analytic programme, the independence of elementary propositions, the necessary existence of objects, the definiteness of sense of all propositions, and so on.) It is therefore incumbent upon Wittgenstein to provide some alternative account of intensional propositions, showing that they do not constitute a threat to the principle of extensionality. This he does in sections 5.541 to 5.5421, and it is here that he is drawn into commenting on the nature of the soul.

The paradigmatic form of intensional statements is: A f's (that) p, where "A" refers to or names an individual, "f" is a verb such as "believes", "asserts", "denies", "thinks", etc., and "p", any proposition. We seem, in fact, to have a proposition which asserts the obtaining

of a relation between an idividual, A, and a complex, p, and this was indeed the way that Russell had analysed intensional statements.[1] Now, quite apart from truth functional considerations, this way of construing these propositions was not open to Wittgenstein, who repeatedly insists on the categorical difference between facts and things, (it is the very first distinction he draws in the Tractatus, see 1.1). His whole theory of meaning depends upon his successfully distinguishing things, (names or objects) from facts, (propositions or states of affairs). Only by doing this can he avoid Frege's disastrous assertion that propositions are composite names (4.431). And so, when the intensional statement: A believes that p, is fully analysed, there can be no reference to an individual, A. Wittgenstein's theory of judgement must make no reference to a judge!

Wittgenstein was not only following the dictates of the internal logic of the Tractatus, he was also explicitly criticizing Russell's theory of judgement, (5.5422), and offering a more consistent, though far from intuitively obvious alternative. Russell stated his theory of judgement as follows:[2]

> Let us consider a complex object composed of two parts, a and b, standing to each other in the relation R. The complex object "a-in-the-relation-R-to-b" may be capable of being perceived; when

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1. B. Russell, Principia Mathematica, 2nd Ed., Vol. I, p.43
2. loc. cit.

> perceived, it is perceived as one object. Attention may reveal that it is complex; we then judge that a and b stand in the relation R. This judgement of perception, considered as an actual occurrence, is a relation of four terms, namely a and b and R and the percipient.

Wittgenstein objected to the Russellian account, an objection which he communicated to Russell in a letter of June, 1913.

> ....I can now express my objection to your theory of judgement exactly: I believe it is obvious that from the proposition "A judges that (say) a is in a relation R to b", if correctly analysed, the proposition: "aRb v~aRb" must follow without the use of any other premise. This condition is not fulfilled by your theory.

Russell seems to have found this a valid objection, for a month later Wittgenstein wrote: "I am sorry to hear that my objection to your theory of judgement paralyses you". This same paralysing objection makes its appearance in the Tractatus at 5.5422. Though the remark is rather cryptic it is further amplfied in the "Notes on Logic",[1] written two months after the above quoted letter:

> Every right theory of judgement must make it impossible for me to judge that "this table penholders the book".... the structure of the proposition must be recognized, and then the rest is easy.

In summary we can say that Wittgenstein's analysis of intensional propositions must fulfill the following requirements:

1) Intensional propositions must be shown to be, on analysis, either truth-functional, or mal-formed.

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1. N., p.96

2) There must be no recourse to the possibility of objects entering into relations with facts.

3) It must be impossible for a piece of nonsense to be a judgement.

4) The deficiences of the Fregean, Bradelian and Russellian theories must be overcome.

The required analysis of intensional statements is provided at 5.542. It is short and, as J.O.Urmson has remarked, "it is a passage of almost impenetrable obscurity"[1]

> It is clear that "A believes that p", "A has the thought p" and "A says p" are of the form " 'p' says p ": and this does not involve a correlation of a fact with an object, but rather a correlation of facts by means of the correlation of their objects.

Now in fact this analysis of the logical form of judgement fulfils the four conditions listed above, and so is both consistent and adequate within the terms of the Tractatus. What concerns us here, however, are the implications which Wittgenstein draws from this analysis. These implications are stated in the succeeding proposition:

> This shows that there is no such thing as the soul -- the subject etc. as it is conceived in the superficial psychology of the present day. Indeed a composite soul would no longer be a soul. (5.5421)

The 'obvious' interpretation of 5.5421 runs something like this: "Wittgenstein is here talking about the soul or

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1. J. O. Urmson, Philosophical Analysis, Oxford, 1967 Oxford University Press. p. 133

mind. He says that it exists, but not as conceived by contemporary psychology. The psychologist conceives the soul as complex, and a complex soul would be a contradiction in terms. The soul must therefore be simple." Some credibility is given to this reading by the remark at 5.641: "the philosophical self is not the human body, or the soul with which psychology deals, but rather the metaphysical subject, the limit of the world." Obviously, then, the soul is not a philosophical concept, but belongs to the natural sciences -- even if they do misconceive it.

But here the "obvious interpretation" breaks down, for it leads to this dilemma: as an empirical entity the soul can only be one of two things; either it is an object, and simple, or it is a fact, and complex. If it is an object and simple, it is incapable of picturing, thinking, believing or what have you. If on the other hand it is a fact it is necessarily complex, and hence "no longer a soul". One alternative leaves us with an object picturing a fact, an 'impossibility' which the theory was precisely designed to avoid, while the other, Wittgenstein flatly asserts, "ein Unding ist".[1]

The conclusion seems to be at this point that the soul does not exist at all. Psychology does not merely

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1. Again Kant comes close to maintaining the same doctrine, and for the same reasons; Vide: second Paralogism; on the simplicity of the soul. "Although the whole of the thought could be divided and distributed among many subjects, the subjective "I" can never be thus divided and distributed, and it is this "I" which we presuppose in all thinking." Critique of Pure Reason, trans. Kemp Smith, London: Macmillan, 1933 (A 354)

misconceive the soul through its superficiality, it is rather, in its entirety a misconception -- it is trying to study something that does not exist. That this was in fact Wittgenstein's considered position will become clearer when we have examined "the thinking I", which is the soul under a different guise.

2. The Thinking I

The considerations rehearsed in the preceding section lead to the conclusion which Wittgenstein states, only apparently dogmatically, at 5.631: "There is no such thing as the subject that thinks or entertains ideas." Wittgenstein is not denying that thinking occurs, but merely that there is a subject that does the thinking. There exist, in other words, only thoughts. In his lectures (as recorded by G. E. Moore), Wittgenstein "quoted with apparent approval Lictenbergs saying: 'Instead of "I think" we ought to say "It thinks!" ('It' being used, as he said, as 'Es' is used in 'Es blitzet')".[1] "Now it is becoming clear", Wittgenstein wrote in the Notebooks, "why I thought that thinking and language were the same. For thinking is a kind of language. For a thought too is a logical picture of the proposition, and therefore just is a kind of proposition" (12.9.16).

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1. G. E. Moore, Philosophical Papers, London: George Allen and Unwin, 1938, p. 309.

This is the only solution open to Wittgenstein commensurate with the ontology outlined in the opening propositions of the Tractatus, for if the "world is the totality of facts, not of things", and "each can be the case or not the case while everything else remains the same", then it follows that a thought, which is a fact, cannot be, in the last analysis, logically dependent upon any other fact. Thought cannot be dependent upon a subject to think it. And so, what ever the subject is it cannot be the 'possessor' of thoughts or experiences, or the 'medium' in which these occur. P.F.Strawson has called this "the no-ownership theory of the self",[1] and as far as Wittgenstein's analysis of the empirical self is concerned, this is not an inappropriate label. If one were to furnish a complete list of everything in the world, then thoughts would appear on this list, being facts. But the subject who had these thoughts could not be itemized (see 5.631), because no such subject exists as an empirical entity. "The I is not an object" (8.8.16) and it is not a fact (5.5421), so it does not exist "in the world":

> Where in the world is the subject to be found? The subject does not belong in the world: rather it is a limit of the world. (5.632 - 5.633)

To apply the phrase "no-ownership doctrine" to the Tractarian theory as a whole, however, is nothing short of inept. The willing I and the metaphysical I are the

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1. P. F. Strawson, "Persons", Minnesota Studies in the Philosophy of Science, Vol II, 1958

possessors not only of all experience, but of the world itself.

This is to anticipate, however, and at the moment our concern is with the empirical self, and the reasons for the belief in its existence being "mere superstition", (4.8.16). Yet another approach, leading to the denial of the existence of the soul involves the liberal use of Occam's razor. "Occam's maxim is, of course, not an arbitrary rule, nor one that is justified by its success in practice: its point is that unnecessary units in a sign language mean nothing." (5.47321). It would seem that the sign; "soul" is one of these; and that this is the case can be shown by demonstrating that there is no rôle for the soul in any of the doctrines propounded in the Tractatus. They are meant to function without human intervention, so to speak. I shall restrict my examination, (1) to the central doctrines of the Tractatus and (2) to those, the standard interpretation of which demands the existence of an empirical self.

3) The Thought (i) Assertion.

In "The Thought" Frege distinguished the following:[1]

1. The apprehension of a thought -- thinking.
2. The recognition of the truth of a thought -- judgement.
3. The manifestation of this judgement -- assertion.

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1. G. Frege, "The Thought: A Logical Inquiry", in P. F. Strawson (Ed.) Philosophical Logic, p.22

In all three cases, the Thought, i.e. that which is thought, judged, asserted etc., may be the same, e.g. that p is the case. The Thought is the sense of a proposition that can be true or false. It is objective and atemporal.[1] In Frege's theory of judgement, therefore, there exists a radical dichotomy between the Thought and thinking. Whereas one is objective and eternal, the other is a temporal subjective mental process. Because of this Frege introduced signs into his Begriffschrift to indicate whether a particular proposition, (Thought), was to be asserted, judged or merely entertained.

Wittgenstein saw that this whole approach led to insuperable difficulties. If it is WE who do the asserting, then the thought itself does not assert anything. In which case it is difficult to see how a mental act can be true or false. (I do not know whether Frege regarded the act of assertion as a mental act, like intending, or as a physical act like uttering a sentence, -- in fact it doesn't matter. The important point is that, for him asserting, judging, thinking are all things WE do with propositions (or Thoughts), and not something they do themselves.) As was seen at the end of the last section, Wittgenstein is obliged to offer a different analysis, one which does not give the leading role to the thinking I.

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1. I am employing "the Thought" in a technical sense, and will capitalize it to avoid confusion.

The deficiencies of Frege's account of Thought and thinking are overcome by Wittgenstein in two simple but profoundly important steps:

(1) incorporate all assertive force within the Thought itself, and (2), identify the Thought with the proposition:

> A thought is a proposition with a sense (4)
> A proposition shows how things stand if it is true. And it says that they do so stand. (4.022).
> (my italics.)

And it is precisely this double move that enables Wittgenstein to dispense with the services of the thinking I. If the thought asserts itself, there is no need for an asserter. And if the thought just is a proposition, it is a non-psychological entity and consequently is not dependent for its existence upon a thinker, or mind. We must see exactly how this is worked out in detail.

Fr. G. Colombo, as a comment on Wittgenstein's picture theory, has asked why we should not regard the state of affairs as a picture of the proposition that would normally be said to describe it. Or, more shortly: Why is not the world a picture of language?[1] Miss Anscombe has tried to answer this question, and the gist of her answer is that, there is basically, (logically), no reason why the world should not be regarded as a picture of language. She simply points out that as a matter of fact it is not usually so regarded. "All the internal features" she

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1. Vide G. E. M. Anscombe, An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus. London, Hutchinson, 1959. p. 67.

writes, "are supposed to be identical in the proposition (or describing fact) and the described fact."[1]

This, nowever, is a badly mistaken interpretation, and one to which someone who has elsewhere written so sensibly about assertion ought to have been wise.[2] A proposition, for Wittgenstein, did two things, and not one as the standard interpretation of the picture theory would have us believe. Not only does a proposition "mirror" "picture", "describe" or "show" a certain state of affairs, it also asserts that that state of affairs exists: "A proposition shows how things stand if true. And it says that they do so stand." (4.022). And moreover it is the proposition, qua proposition, that does the asserting, and not (pace Anscombe, Colombo, Pitcher et al.) we who use a proposition to assert. The world cannot therefore have the same status as language, because the world does not assert that any thing is the case. (Nor indeed could it for other reasons; as it is itself all that is the case, there is nothing left which it could assert to exist!)

I have long felt that the terms "description" and "picturing" are misleading when used to epitomize the semantic theory of the Tractatus, for while language is descriptive, this is not all that it is. By ignoring

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1. Vide G. E. M. Anscombe, An Introduction to Wittgenstein.s Tractatus, London, Hutchinson, 1959. p.67
2. Op. cit., p.113 et seq.

the assertive function of language, difficulties are engendered, (like Fr. Colombo's perplexity,) which are not endemic to the Tractatus.

There are two arguments in favour of the interpretation I have offered: one of them is Wittgenstein's, though it does not appear in the Tractatus. In the Notebooks he wrote:

> Can one negate a picture? No. And in this lies the difference between a picture and a proposition. The picture can serve as a proposition. But in that case something gets added to it which brings it about that it now says something. (26.11.14)

In the second place, if a proposition is merely a picture of a possible state of affairs, it cannot be true or false. A picture of an impossible state of affairs is impossible, and so all pictures would be logically on a par.: what they picture might exist. It is only because Wittgensteinian pictures claim that what they picture actually exists, that they are potentially right or wrong, true or false. As D. S. Schwayder has remarked: "Wittgenstein is more to be criticized for his linguistic theory of pictures than for his picture theory of language." [1]

Besides these arguments, there is a certain amount of evidence that this was Wittgenstein's considered opinion, in his treatment of Frege's assertion sign. "⊢". This sign

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1. D. S. Schwayder, "On the picture theory of language", in I.M.Copi and R.W.Beard, Essays on Wittgenstein's Tractatus p. 305.

meant that the ensuing proposition was to be "asserted as true". And what-ever else it may have been, this asserting was something we, as the users of language do:

> As stage thunder is only apparent thunder... so stage assertion is only apparent assertion. ... Therefore it must still always be asked about what is presented in the form of an indicative sentence whether it really contains an assertion. And this question must be answered in the negative, if the requisite seriousness is lacking.[2]

Wittgenstein was contemptuous of this whole approach, both because of its logical shortcomings, (e.g. difficulties over negative propositions and false propositions), and also because of its incipient psychologism. "Frege's judgement stroke: '⊢ '" he writes, "is logically quite meaningless". (4.442). It is meaningless because it is useless: it does not distinguish anything from anything else. It is otiose, because there can be no such thing as an unasserted proposition; propositions are assertions. And so the sign '⊢ ' falls prey to Occam's razor. It is not you or I that says that p, it is " 'p' says p ", (5.542)

I turn now from an examination of assertion to an examination of meaning, (both sense and reference,) and its relation to the non-existence of the empirical ego.

(ii) Meaning

"Meaning" is a potentially dangerous term to employ with reference to the Tractatus, for it has in that context

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2. Op. Cit., p.22

a number of different meanings. The three I wish to concentrate upon are:

(a) To mean; something a person does. (cf. intend)

(b) Reference; something a name has (Bedeutung)

(c) Sense: something a proposition has. (Sinn)

While it is imperative that we distinguish these three meanings of "meaning", they are not metaphysically independent, for only if names have references can a proposition have sense, (6.53, and 3.211 with 3.381), and only if a proposition has sense can we mean it, (5.5422, c.f. 4), and, finally, names only have reference in the context of a proposition, (3.3). So (b) and (c) are mutually dependent, while (a) is dependent upon (b) and hence indirectly upon (c).

The question is now to be answered: To what extent, if any, are (c) and (b) dependent on (a)? Wittgenstein's theory of the self is internally inconsistent if there is any sort of dependence here, for this would furnish the empirical ego with an inescapable metaphysical rôle.

Conspicuous by its absence from the Tractarian account of the workings of language is any mention of a speaker or hearer; someone who will think the thoughts, entertain the propositions, compare them with reality and so on. This omission I believe, was entirely intentional on Wittgenstein's part, though this is a disputed thesis. G. Pitcher, for example, writing about Wittgenstein's analysis of intensional propositions,

like :"A believes that p," says:

> What we are asserting, to summarize, is (a) that a certain propositional sign "p" (which is a fact) occurs in A's mind, and, (b) that there also occurs in A's mind an act of intention, whereby the objects constituting the mental propositional sign are correlated with the objects constituting the fact in the world.... which A's thought is of. [1]

That at some point Wittgenstein must have recourse to some "act of intention" in the setting up of the correlations between name-things and named-things is a particularly widespread misinterpretation. According to Miss Anscombe, for example: "The correlating is not something the picture does, it is something we do." [2] Now one passage in favour of this interpretation might be the following:

> The reason why "Socrates is identical" is meaningless is that there is no property called "identical". The proposition is nonsensical because WE have failed to make an arbitrary determination, and not because the symbol in itself would be illegitimate. (5.473. My italics).

One of these "arbitrary determination", it might be argued, is the correlating of name with object -- or rather: of 'a certain picture element' with 'a certain simple constituent of a possible state of affairs', for a name can only be a name in the context of a proposition, (4.23). We can never simply refer to an object, reference only occurs in propositional contexts. But surely this is the reason why the Anscombe-Pitcher account of the so-called "act of correlation" must be rejected, for such an activity is impossible.

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1. G. Pitcher, The Philosophy of Wittgenstein, p.151, my italics.
2. Op. cit., p.68

It is impossible outside a proposition, and within a propcsition it has, so to speak, already been done. As was pointed out above, reference is a prerequisite of sense and sense is a prerequisite of reference. The two things must therefore be simultaneous, coming together in a well formed proposition as if by magic. (Later in life Wittgenstein did in fact characterize this whole account of reference as "occult" and "hocus-pocus").[1] For the Anscombe-Pitcher act of correlation to be possible, it would have to be possible to refer to, pick out or name objects in isolation, i.e. objects considered independently of the states of affairs of which they are possible constituents. Objects, however, are simple, (2.02), though they do have "internal" and "external" properties: "If I know an object, though I need not know all its external properties, I must know its internal properties", (2.01231). This must not, however, be taken to mean that an object can be know independently of the possibilities of its occurring in states of affairs, for the internal properties of an object are none other than these possibilities:

> Things are independent in so far as they can occur in all possible situations, but this form of independence, is a form of connexion with states of affairs; a form of dependence. (2.0122).
> If I can imagine objects combined in states of affairs, I cannot imagine them excluded from the possibility of such combinations. (2.0121)

1. P.I. (2) XI

It is this impossibility of isolating an object, and hence of giving a meaning to a primitive sign or name outside the proposition, that leads to the impenetrable logical circle that lies at the heart of the Tractatus, vitiating most of the doctrines contained therein. This is how Wittgenstein formulates it:

> The meanings of primitive signs can be made clear by means of elucidations. Elueidations are propositions that contain the primitive signs. So they can only be understood if the meanings of those signs are already know. (3.263).

On the one hand Wittgenstein wants to say that "The meanings of primitve signs must be explained to us if we are to understand them" (4.026), while on the other, he cannot allow reference to the objects which are the meanings of these primitive signs, outside a propositional context (3.3, 4.23). But the proposition must be understood, before the individual referents can be known, (3.263).[1]

That there are great, almost certainly insuperable difficulties here, I do not wish for a moment to deny. Wittgenstein himself has done more than anyone to criticise and demolish this "occult" account of reference, (which is, incidentally, the essence of a "private language"), But, despite the "hocus-pocus" at the centre of this theory, that no "act of correlation" is involved I am sure was Wittgenstein's considered opinion. The possibility of such an act would have broken the logical circle of

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1. This question is examined in greater detail in the section on solipsism, see below.

of 3.623. That this paradox stands, vitiating so much of the Tractarian semantic is strong testament to Wittgenstein's desire to rid the Tractatus of people. And that the whole process is nothing short of miraculous is no reason for believing that Wittgenstein did not subscribe to it at this time.

So far we have seen that Wittgenstein's account of the way propositions assert, (which I believe to be correct), and the way names refer, (which I believe to be manifestly absurd), involve no act of assertion or act of correlation on the part of any speaker, thinker or language user. I come now to the most difficult problem: Is the sense of a proposition something it has de jure, by virtue of its being a proposition and because of its internal features, or de facto, because we have given it one? In other words, is the meaning of language intrinsic to language, or is it, either immediately or ultimately, dependent on an extrinsic significance—endowing act or activity. On the whole, Wittgenstein's answers to these questions would seem to be that language, like logic, functions impersonally and autonomously, solely by virtue of its internal features, (at least at the empirical level, to which I am for the moment restricting myself). The difficulty is to reconcile this view with such apparently contradictory remarks as: "A propositional sign, applied and thought out, is a thought." (3.5 My italics), and: "We use the perceptible sign of a proposition as the projection of a possible state of affairs. The method is to think the sense of the

proposition." (3.11, my italics). These two quotations would seem to suggest that language cannot have sense in complete independence of the significance given to it by people who use it. G.Hallet has expressed this interpretation (somewhat unsubtlely) in these words: "It is the act of meaning which makes our sentence a picture of reality (4.021). To become a thought, a proposition, (4), the propositional sign must be applied and thought out, (3.5). So the problem of discrepancies between signs and meaning is solved in a similar fashion in both Tractatus and Notebooks [no references given]: by the connecting act of meaning the signs."[1]

This interpretation has as its basis a certain metaphysical formula, viz; symbol - sign = meaning, or, meaning + sign = symbol. In other words we take the propositional sign, which is a brute (non-significant) fact, and we endow it with meaning, so that it becomes a symbol. There is some evidence that Wittgenstein occasionally lapsed into this lazy way of characterizing the difference between sign and symbol. (Compare, for example 3.1431 with the remark in the Notebooks: "Things acquire significance only through their relation to my will", (15.10.16.)).The essence of Hallet's view is that a sign is a mere physical thing which is made meaningful by an act of intention. The whole 'sign-plus-act-of-intention' is a symbol.

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1. G. Hallett, S. J., Wittgenstein's Definition of Meaning as Use, p.30 Bronx: Fordham University Press, 1967

Wittgenstein, however, characterizes the difference between a sign and a symbol in this way: "A sign is what can be perceived of a symbol" (3.32). A sign is therefore, and Hallet would agree, a physical thing, (marks on paper, vibrations in the air, etc.), but this is not all it is. Wittgenstein does not say: "A sign is something that can be perceived", rather he says it is "what can be perceived of a symbol". A necessary condition, therefore, of something's being a sign is that it is already a symbol, it already has significance. The phrase "a meaningless sign" is a self contradiction. It follows therefore that there is neither the possibility, of, nor a fortiori the need to take the sign up and transform it into a symbol by an act of intention. If it is a sign then it already has meaning, i.e. is a symbol. This explains the otherwise incomprehensible remark at 5.4732: "We cannot give a sign the wrong sense." Not only does a sign already have a sense, it has a unique sense - (though it is not necessary to consider this sense if we are talking about the sign qua sign.) That every sign has a unique sense is borne out by the remark at 3.25: "a proposition has one and only one complete analysis." If any fact was potentially a symbol, merely waiting for the appropriate act of intention to transform it, then there would be no reason why a propositional sign should not have an indefinite number of analyses, corresponding to the indefinite number of different acts of intention with which it might be endowed with significance. The mistake that Pitcher and Hallett make is to assume that

in order for one to be able to treat something as "simply X", it must be simply X. But we can treat a symbol as a sign, i.e. as having no significance, even though it does in fact have a sense. A sign must be a symbol, otherwise it is not even a sign.

So now it is possible to dispense with the whole business of "acts of intention" and interpret quite literally Wittgenstein's totally impersonal account of the way language works:

> One name stands for one thing, another for another thing, and they are combined with one another. In this way the whole group - like a tableau-vivant, presents a state of affairs. (4.0311)

At this point it only remains to establish exactly what Wittgenstein meant by: "A propositional sign, applied and thought out, is a thought", for we have ruled out what must be the obvious interpretation. Once it is acknowledged that, for Wittgenstein, even a concept like "thought" has been divested of all psychological and epistemological connotations, the apparent contradictions disappear. A thought is nothing more than a well formed proposition, (4). And here Wittgenstein follows Frege. But unlike Frege, Wittgenstein does not need an act of thinking, (judging, asserting etc.) to make it "come alive". "Does not my study of sign languages" he asks, "correspond to the study of thought processes, which philosophers used to consider so essential to the philosophy of logic?".Yes. And it is because language, and language alone refers, names, means, asserts

and pictures, that he is able to do this. D.F.Pears, in a recent study of Wittgenstein,[1] has referred to the "lunar landscape of the Tractatus", and this description is apt, if only because the Tractatus is almost totally uninhabited. The doctrines propounded therein are meant, at least at the empirical level, to function without human intervention. And, indeed, so they must for "There is no such thing as the soul". (5.631 & 5.5421).

On this point, however, Wittgenstein can justly be accused of an overstatement which is potentially misleading. His conclusion ought to have been that, in a certain sense, there is no such thing as the soul or thinking subject. And even if we admit that this is the most important sense, still the qualification needs to be made, for it allows us to conclude, as I think we should, that in a certain sense there is such a thing as the soul or thinking subject. This conclusion is incompatible with the formulation that Wittgenstein gives at 5.5421 and 5.631. It is a conclusion, however, that his theory as a whole allows and invites us to draw.

The analysis of the logical form of intensional statements shows that "there is no such thing as the soul - the subject." It does this by showing that when an intensional proposition - whithin which there seems to occur reference to an individual or a mind - is analysed, all reference to, or mention of this individual disappears. "A believes p"

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1. D. F. Pears. Wittgenstein, p.85

becomes " 'p' says p ". The mind of the individual is reduced to the propositional sign "p" in just those cases where what is believed is proposition p. This analysis holds for everything that A believes, hopes, intends, wishes, denies, asserts or thinks. A, as a thinking conscious being is therefore nothing but a bundle or totality of propositional signs. As we saw earlier, a propositional sign is a proposition regarded as a (non-significant) fact, and a fact is a complex of objects. Now one might well wish to know at this point what sort of objects constitute these psychical facts. Are they the same as the objects consitituting the rest of the world, or is there a separatespecies of psychical object? To put this in more traditional terminology: Is Wittgenstein's theory basically materialistic or dualistic? This question was of no interest to Wittgenstein, who thought that it was a matter for the natural sciences to settle (cf. 5.61). This is how Wittgenstein replied to a question of Russell's about the nature of the objects which constitute a thought:

> I don't know <u>what</u> the constituents of a thought are, but I know <u>that</u> it must have such constituents which correspond to the words of language. Again, the kind of relation of the thought and the perceived fact is irrelevant. It would be a matter of psychology to find out. (N. p.129).

Later in the same letter he wrote:

> Does a Gedanke consist of words?" NO! But of psychical constituents that have the same relation to reality as words. What these constituents are I don't know. (N. p.130).

The conclusion that the mind is nothing more than an aggregate or bundle of propositional signs is a somewhat

counter-intuitive notion, but I think that some sense can be made of it, especially if the equivalent Humean analysis is borne in mind. For a fact to be regarded as a propositional sign, as we have seen[1], it must already have a sense, in other words it must already be a proposition. But, at 4, we are told that a proposition is simply a thought. What Wittgenstein is asserting is that the mind is nothing more than the sum total of thoughts that would normally, and misleadingly, be said to occur therein. What he is denying is that there is any principle of unity to be found at the empirical level, which would tie together this bundle of propositions, making them distinctively the products of one mind. As facts, thoughts take their place as components of the world, and so any one "can be the case or not the case, while everything else remains the same" (1.21). The "fact" that certain thoughts are my thoughts is not, on Wittgenstein's analysis, a fact at all. It is not an existent complex of objects. (The thought itself is an existent complex of objects, and so is a fact; but that it is my thought is something that cannot be said. As we shall see in the section on solipsism, all thoughts are my thoughts. This is yet another consequence of the limits which Wittgenstein places on the possibility of communication at 3.263.)

One of the most peculiar consequences of the foregoing is that to say of a certain person that he has a certain thought

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1. See above, Introduction, Section 3.

is to state a necessary truth. (Wittgenstein denied, of course, that a necessary truth could be stated, but if one is to write about the Tractatus it is necessary to proceed as if such things can be said.) The expression " 'p' says p ", as it occurs in the analysis of intensional propositions, has therefore the peculiar status of a "transcendental tautology". It is one of those statements which would be true - if only they could be asserted at all. The truth of this proposition, however, is something that cannot be said but can only be shown. As Wittgenstein remarks in the concluding paragraphs of the Tractatus:

> 6.54 My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical, when he has used them - as steps - to climb up beyond them. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it.)

The "proposition": 'p' says p is one of these elucidations. And so it does not consititute an exception to the thesis of extensionality, because it is, after all, not a well-formed sentence in the first place.[1]

The conclusion which Wittgenstein reaches, as regards the empirical ego or mind is thus the same as Hume's conclusion, but transposed from an epistemological to a logico-linguistic key. Hume said that whenever he looked into

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1. Miss Anscombe has offered a different analysis of the logical status of " 'p' says p". She claims that it is an empirical proposition, because it is a contingent matter that "p" says p. Unfortunately her account is contradicted by 2.174, 2.223, 3.332, 4.21, and others. But the most basic objection to her account is that, given her analysis, intensional propositions still prove an exception to the thesis of extensionality. If it is logically possible for " 'p' says p" to be false, then it is possible for "A believes p" to be false, in which case

himself he never found himself without a perception, and he never found anything but the perception. He concluded that the self was merely a "bundle" of these perceptions. For Wittgenstein a perception or a thought was a fact that was correlated in certain ways with a state of affairs. The mind disintegrates into the totality of these thoughts and perceptions. But a thought is a proposition, and so the mind becomes a totality of propositions, i.e. a totality of facts that picture states of affairs. But the world too is the totality of facts, and it is this symmetry between the world and the self which leads to some of Wittgenstein's most peculiar conclusions about the self. These will be our concern in the next part of this thesis.

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the truth value of "A believes p" is not determined by the truth value of its component propositions: the truth of p is irrelevant to whether or not A believes that p. (See G.E.M. Anscombe, An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus pp.87-97).

PART TWO

WHAT CANNOT BE SAID: THE TRANSCENDENTAL ASPECTS OF THE SELF

(1) INTRODUCTION

Before proceeding to an examination of the truths about the self which cannot be stated, it will be well to delineate more finely the distinction, which was earlier introduced provisionally, between what can legitimately be said, and what can only be shown. In many ways this is the most important distinction drawn in the Tractatus. As Wittgenstein himself insisted in the Preface: "The whole sense of the book might be summed up in the following words: what can be said at all can be said clearly, and what we cannot talk about we must pass over in silence." (Page 3). This point was further emphasized in a letter to Russell: [1]

> Now I'm afraid that you havn't really got hold of my main contention, to which the whole business of logical propositions is only a corollary. The main point is the theory of what can be expressed by propositions, i.e. by language, (and what comes to the same thing - what can be thought), and what cannot be expressed by propositions but only shown; which, I believe, is the cardinal problem of philosophy.

Wittgenstein's doctrine about the meaning of names can be summarized in the following six propositions:

(i) Names only occur in elementary propositions. (4.23).

(ii) Only names occur in elementary propositions. (4.22).

(iii) Names only have meaning in the context of an elementary proposition, never in isolation. (3.3).

(iv) The meaning of a name is its bearer. (3.203).

(v) The bearer must be a simple object. (3.211).

(vi) A name cannot be defined. (3.26).

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1. Quoted by G.E.M.Anscombe, An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus, p.161 London, Hutchinson, 1959.

These six propositions form the nucleus of what must be the purest example of the " 'Fido', Fido " theory of meaning on record. In later life Wittgenstein himself referred to it as "the theory that points: Here the word; There the meaning." However, as he says in the Investigations:

> Nothing has so far been done when a thing has been named. Naming is so far not a move in the language-game, any more than putting a piece in its place on the board is a move in chess. It has not even got a name, except in the language-game. This is what Frege meant when he said that a word had meaning only as a part of a sentence. (P.I. (1), 49)

And,we can add, it is what Wittgenstein meant when he said: "Only propositions have sense. Only in the nexus of a proposition does a name have meaning, (Bedeutung)," (3.3).

So names refer, but have no sense, (if they did they could be defined). Propositions on the other hand, have sense but do not refer, (if they did, then a false proposition would be meaningless; cf. Frege's difficulties on this point). An elementary proposition is an irreducible concatenation of names, and has therefore two facets: (i) its content, i.e. the names, and (ii) its form, i.e. the "concatenation" of the names, for while an elementary proposition is composed entirely of names, it is, as we have seen, not a mere aggregate or class of names, it is a fact (3.14 & 3.31) and as such it has a determinate structure. An elementary proposition is thus a "nexus", a "concatenation", its elements are "articulated" or "logically segmented". It has, in other words, "logical form", and this it is which enables it to be a picture of a

possible state of affairs:

> What any picture, of whatever form, must have in common with reality, in order to depict it - correctly or incorrectly - in any way at all, is logical form, i.e. the form of reality. (2.18)

and

> What any picture must have in common with reality, in order to be able to depict it - correctly or incorrectly - in the way that it does, is pictorial form. (2.17)

Form is the possibility of structure, and structure is "the way elements hand together", "the connexion of elements". So pictorial form is the possibility of the elements of the picture (i.e. the names) being combined as they are. It is what is left over, so to speak, when all the actual pictorial elements have been replaced by variables. Wittgenstein's thinking on this matter can be summarized schematically thus: (1) possession of logical form means that there are (unspecified) relations subsisting between (unspecified) elements. (2)Possession of pictorial form means that there are <u>these</u> relations subsisting between the elements (unspecified). (3) Pictorial structure is the obtaining of <u>these</u> relations, between <u>these</u> elements. What makes an elementary proposition a picture of reality is that the pictorial form is identical to the form of a possible state of affairs. Thus there is a one-one correlation between the pictorial elements and the objects constituting the projected state of affairs. Moreover, the relations subsisting between these objects will be identical to those subsisting between the pictorial elements, give a rule of projection. This is the essence of the picture theory,

the theory concerning, and delimiting, what can be said. Any proposition that does not conform to this pattern is malformed; what it is trying to say cannot be said, and so it will be meaningless. This is the doctrine that the positvists extracted from the Tractatus, and, taken in isolation, it is a positivistic doctrine. But when read with its corollary, the doctrine of showing; the picture theory loses all its positivistic tendencies. As D.F.Pears has argued, the picture theory, far from being intended to outlaw as meaningless or inaccesible the truths of religion, art morality and metaphysics, was meant precisely to protect these. "Such propositions" he writes, "are nonsense because they lack factual sense. But to make this point is not to condemn them as unintelligible, it is to take the first step towards understanding them".[1] Such truths are shown, but cannot be said.

What has been given in the preceeding paragraphs and in part 3 of the Introduction, is the mechanics of saying. There is no equivalent account to be given of "the mechanics of showing". There is no way of unpacking or explicating the concept of showing. Wittgenstein seems to feel that this is a shortcoming, and as a compensation offers this sequence of dogmatic assertions:

> Propositions cannot represent logical form; it is mirrored in them. What finds its reflection in language, language cannot represent. What expresses itself in language, we cannot express by means of language.
> Propositions show the logical form of reality,

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1. D. F. Pears, Wittgenstein, p.57

They display it.
What can be shown, cannot be said. (4.121 & 4.1212)

We can, however, say why what can be shown cannot be said.[1] In order for a proposition to be capable of describing reality, it must have something in common with reality, (4.12, 2.18), and this "something" is logical form. "Propositions can represent the whole of reality, but they cannot represent what they must have in common with reality in order to be able to represent it". In order to be able to represent logical form, we would have to be able to "station ourselves, with propositions somewhere outside logic, i.e. outside the world." (4.12). In other words the propositions with which we would intend to describe logical form would need to have something in common with logical form, which was not iself logical form. This, of course, is impossible, for a proposition is a fact, and all facts have, by definition, logical form; the form of reality. And so they must, for reality is composed entirely of facts, (1.2). What is shown is not, therefore, dependent upon logic in the same way that what can be said is. Indeed logic itself is precisely one of the things which gets shown: "My fundamental idea is that the 'logical constants' are not representatives; that there can be no representatives of the logic of facts." (4.0312).

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1. CF. Kant's remark in Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals, p.83 trans. L.W.Beck, New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1959. "And so we do not indeed comprehend the [categorical imperative]; yet we do comprehend its incomprehensibility, which is all that can fairly be demanded of a philosophy which in its principles strives to reach the limits of human reason."

> There are indeed things that cannot be put into words, they make themselves manifest. They are what is mystical. (6.522)

Logic, we have seen, is one of these "things", perhaps the most important. But the transcendental role of the self is another, and this will be our concern in the remainder of this study.

(2) THE METAPHYSICAL I

Unlike the soul, which, did it exist, would exist in the world, the metaphysical I is a "limit of the world," (5.631 & 5.633). What does Wittgenstein mean by "limit" or "boundry",(Grenze)? The answer that emerges from his use of the relevant terms is that "form", "essence" and "limit" are synonymous.[1] Compare, for instance:

> It is essential to things that they should be possible constituents of states of affairs. (2.011)

with

> The possibility of its occurring in states of affairs is the form of an object. (2.0141)

At 5.471 we are told that the general form of the proposition is the essence of a proposition and, with 6.001 and 4.51, this means it is also what limits language. Again, at 4.03, we learn that in order to depict a situation a proposition must be "essentially connected" with that situation. As we have already seen this connection is an identity of form, and it is this condition which limits intelligible discourse. (4.12).

But it is not from terminological usage alone that this triple identity can be inferred. It can be proved to be a necessary consequence of some of the most fundamental tenets of the Tractatus. The structure of a complex is defined as "the connexion of its elements" (2.15). "Objects hang in one another like links in a chain." (2.03). In order to specify the structure of a complex, mention must be made of both the objects involved, and the relations subsisting between them.

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1. cf. Conclusion reached below, p. 15.

Form is "the possibility of structure" (2.033). Form is the possibility that things (in general) can be thus related. Form can thus be regarded as the limits within which structure may vary, So we can rewrite: "Empirical reality is limited by the totality of objects" (5.5561), to read: the limits within which empirical reality may vary are determined by the totality of objects. But "objects constitute the substance of the world" (2.021) and "the substance of the world can only determine a form", whence it follows that form is the same as limit, for "objects contain the possibilities of all situations" (2.104), and the possibility of all situations is the limit of the world: the logico-ontological limit.

This same limit is met in language, in the general form of the proposition, and this we can call the logico-linguistic limit. The connexion between these is provided by Wittgenstein at 2.18: "What any picture must have in common with reality, in order to depict it .... is logical form, i.e. the form of reality." Language and the world are thus "essentially" the same; they have the same form and the same limits. The world has only one limit; if it could have more than one limit, it could have more than one essence. This, however would mean that there was more than one world, which contravenes the ontology outlined in the opening sections of the Tractatus. There can only be one "totality of facts".

A picture represents a possible situation in logical space (2.02). Logical space is none other than the general

form of the proposition, which is the essence of a proposition, (5.471), but this is also the essence of reality, or the limit of reality. A limit, to summarize, specifies a domain in terms of the possibility of that domain. It is the form or essence of that domain, its sine qua non.

The question now to be answered is: What sense does it make to talk about the self as a "limit of the world"? In the first place it is worth pointing out that Wittgenstein meant this assertion literally, and was not afraid to draw any of the consequences that result from it, among which are the following:

> 5.63 I am my world.
> 5.62 What the solipsist means is quite correct....
> 5.431 At death the world ... comes to an end.
> 6.43 The world of the happy is quite other than that of the unhappy.

In the Notebooks this line of thought is stated in even stronger terms:

> What has history to do with me? Mine is the first and only world. (2.9.16)
> Now is it true that my character is expressed only in the build of my body and brain - and not equally in the build of the whole of the rest of the world? This contains a salient point!(15.10.16)

Though Wittgenstein is closer to Schopenhauer in his treatment of the willing I, his treatment of the metaphysical I owes much to Kant. Kant wrote about the transcendental unity of apperception thus:[1]

> .....in the transcendental synthesis of the manifold of representations in general, and therefore in the synthetic original unity of apperception, I am

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1. I. Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, B 157

> conscious of myself, not as I appear to myself, nor as I am in myself, but only that I am.

And later:[1]

> Although my existence is not appearance, the determination of my existence can take place only in conformity with the forms of inner sense. Accordingly I have no knowledge of myself as I am, but merely as I appear to myself.

Kant maintains that there are two selves, (or two aspects of the self), the self of psychology and introspection which we can know, and the unknowable, transcendental self of philosophy. Wittgenstein follows him in this, maintaining that there is on the one hand the "worldly" self which is an object of study for the natural sciences. This self is, however, merely a bundle of facts, and consequently does not deserve to be called a "self" at all. On the other hand, there is the self of philosophy, which is unknowable, and does not exist in the world, but is a condition of the world's existence.

But Wittgenstein's world, it might be objected, is not like Kant's, a phenomenal world. The Wittgensteinian world is paradigmatically objective, almost noumenal, being the totality of facts, all that is the case, etc.. How then do we reach the apparently contrary assertion that "the world is my world"? Briefly the answer is this: by the elimination of the thinking subject. Once we have dispensed with the thinking subject, there can no longer be any dichotomy between phenomenal and noumenal spheres; between the world

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1. I. Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, B. 158

as it is in itself and the world as I know it. Thought and knowledge are facts, and hence part of the world. "All experience is world, and does not need a subject" (9.11.16) The self, at one level has been absorbed into the world, leaving behind only the metaphysical I which is a limit of the world, (see 5.64). (Here Kant and Wittgenstein come very close. Compare, for example Kant's remark: "The abiding and unchanging I (pure apperception) forms the correlate of all my representations"[1], with Wittgenstein's: "The self shrinks to a point without extension, and there remains only the reality co-ordinated with it." (5.64)).

Now it is easy, at least in outline, to see why the "I think" of Kant is a condition of the possibility of the world. Although Kant's world is thoroughly objective, its ontological status is nonetheless phenomenal, and so dependent upon the subject that perceives it. The phenomenal/noumenal distinction is not applicable to the Tractatus, and so the question still remains; How is the metaphysical I a limit of the world, a limit of the totality of facts?

The world is a totality of facts (1.1), and language is the totality of propositions (4.001 & 3.01). Because language and reality stand in a direct one-one (mirroring) relation, the limits of one are the limits of the other. This is half the thought behind 5.6: "The limits of my language means the limits of my world". This can be rephrased somewhat

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1. I. Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, A 124

more perspicuously thus: Because language and reality share the same logical form, anything which I can think, describe or imagine is possible. And anything that it is impossible logically for me to describe, cannot possibly exist. Thus language and the world have the same limits. This does not, however, explain why Wittgenstein insists with such emphasis on its being my language which limits my world:

> The world is my world: this is manifest in the fact that the limits of language (of the only language which I understand) mean the limits of my world. (5.62)

The answer to this problem lies in the nature of Wittgenstein's linguistic solipsism, out of which his metaphysical solipsism grows.

(3) SOLIPSISM

At the most fundamental level, the level of the elementary proposition, language hooks onto reality directly. In Wittgenstein's words: "it reaches right out to it" (2.1511). Each primitive sign goes proxy for a simple object, and the configuration of the signs mirrors the configuration of the objects. Let us concentrate on the meanings of the primitive signs for a moment. The meaning of a primitive sign is the object which it denotes, names or refers to. These objects "can only be named" (3.221), for they are "so to speak, colourless" (2.0232).[1] How then are we to learn the meanings of these primitive signs? Wittgenstein's answer is that "the meanings of simple signs must be explained to us if we are to understand them." (4.026) "A proposition must use old expressions to communicate a new sense" (4.03). Now this is all very well if we already understand the meanings of the simple signs; then indeed a new proposition will express a new and intelligible sense. But suppose that we do not understand some or all of the signs appearing in a proposition, how can we ascertain to what they refer? The primitive signs are indefinable, just as the objects to which they refer are "colourless", (3.26 & 2.0232), and they only have meaning in the context of a proposition, (3.3) which means, simply, that primitive signs can only be used, never mentioned. And so:

The meanings of primitive signs can be explained

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1. cf. also Philosophical Investigations, 46, 58 and 59

> by means of elucidations. Elucidations are propositions that contain the primitive signs. (3.263)

This would seem to be a straightforward amplification of 3.262, which reads: "what signs fail to express their application shows". The last sentence of 3.263, however, throws this whole interpretation into confusion. Wittgenstein writes: "So they [i.e. the elucidations] can only be understood if one already understands the meanings of those signs". In other words, if one does not understand to what a primitive sign refers, then one is going to run up against exactly the same problem of incomprehension over the attempted elucidation, as over any and every other proposition that containsthis primitive sign. These signs are not definable, and so it would seem if one does not already understand a primitive sign, then one never will. And to understand a primitive sign is to know the object to which it refers. (This must be, to use a distinction current at the time the Tractatus was being written, knowledge by aquaintance, rather than knowledge by description. The latter is impossible. The description of an object would be equivalent to a definition of the primitive sign whose meaning it was, (c.f. 3.26). Miss Anscombe's translation brings out this fact. She renders 3.263 as follows: "The references of primitive signs can be made clear by means of elucidations. Elucidations are propositions that contain the primitive signs. So they can only be understood if one is already aquainted with the referents of these signs".)[1]

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1. G. E. M. Anscombe, An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus. p. 26.

The result is an impenetrable linguistic solipsism, or "private language" as it has more recently been called. That this was Wittgenstein's position is borne out by the very first remark in the Tractatus: "Perhaps this book will be understood only by someone who has himself already had the thoughts expressed in it." (Preface, p.3).

This, then is the train of thought which lies behind such remarks as "the limits of my language mean the limits of my world," and the even stronger claim: "I am my world." Once the existence of the thinking subject as an empirical entity is denied, then all distinctions between the I and the not-I collapse: "The self of solipsism shrinks to a point without extension, and there remains only the reality coordinated with it". The only language that I understand, we have seen, is that language which depicts states of affairs, the constituents of which I am acquainted with. But the limits of my language mean the limits of my world and so reality too is a solipsistic reality: the existence of a world with which I am not "acquainted" is an impossibility. Now, since thoughts are propositions (4), and propositions are facts, and the world is the totality of facts, and since I am, as a thinking being, identical with the totality of propositions that are meaningful for me, (the conclusion reached at the end of Part One), it follows that "I am my world" and that "the world and life are one" in the most literal of senses.

Another direct consequence of this position, a consequence which the Tractatus is notorious for having drawn,

is that solipsism and realism coincide, (5.64). Because there is no thinking subject there is no distinction to be drawn between consciousness and reality; between subjective and objective; between the I and the not-I. This is how Wittgenstein summarizes his position in the Notebooks:

> This is the way I have travelled: Idealism singles men out from the world as unique, solipsism singles me out alone, and at last I see that I too belong with the rest of the world, and so on the one side nothing is left over, and on the other side, as unique, the world. (5.10.16)
>
> All experience is world, and does not need a subject. (9.11.16)

The metaphysical I, of course, is not a subject, but an "extensionless point" which, however, is a presupposition of the existence of the world, (2.8.16). This is the case because the world is my world, which follows from the fact that the only language I understand is "my language". There are however, other lines of reasoning which result in the fore-mentioned assertions of the identity of the self and the world. They concern the so-called "willing I", to which I now turn.

(4) THE WILLING I

The insistence that the only necessity is logical necessity (6.37 & 6.375), leads to the assertion that atomic facts are independent, (1.12). This entails a denial of a causal nexus (5.1361) which entails a denial of the efficacy of the will (6.373). The will is impotent because, simply, "there is no logical connexion between the will and the world." (6.374). And so the pessimistic conclusion is that "all that happens and is the case is accidental" (6.41).

Although this conclusion is the logical culmination of a number of themes running through the Tractatus, it is not a conclusion that Wittgenstein is prepared to embrace, just as it stands. It is, in fact, immediately followed by this peculiar retraction: "What makes it not accidental cannot lie within the world, since if it did, it too would be accidental. It must lie without the world." (6.41, my italics) In other words, it would appear that in some way "all that happens and is the case" is not, after all, accidental.

But to start at the beginning: it is possible that Wittgenstein was not a little disturbed by the world he had created in the Tractatus. This world has after all two dominant characteristics, neither of which accords well with what we know of Wittgenstein as a man; it is valueless and it is impersonal. It is a world in which, as an historical fact, the logical positivists could feel at home. Wittgenstein's doctrine of the willing I, it seems to me, is specifically designed to rectify these two deficiencies. It provides an

ethical (or value) theory, and a theory of personal identity, and these two theories combine to form the backbone of what Wittgenstein referred to as "das Mystische". The importance of this concept has only recently come to be acknowledged, (especially since the publication of Wittgenstein's correspondence with P. Engelman, in 1967.)

The willing I is the subject of ethical attributes, and so cannot be a part of the furniture of the world, because "the world divides into facts" (1.2). It must, therefore, be a limit of the world, for as we have seen, Wittgenstein allows only three irreducible categories in terms of which reality (in the very broadest sense) can be broken up: facts, objects and limit. The limit of a domain is the form or essence of that domain. But, as neither form nor limit nor essence is a fact, these aspects of reality are linguistically inaccessible. The concept of limit, for Wittgenstein is the same as the Kantian notion of a transcendental condition. This needs to be argued for, however, as it is by no means a universally accepted interpretation.

The Kantian notion of a "transcendental condition for the possibility of ...." stands in contrast, on the one side, to that which is immanent, and on the other to that which is transcendent. Wittgenstein replaces this tripartite ontology with the simple distinction between things that lie "within" the world and things that lie "without" it. That this is a vital distinction is apparent once it is realized that it is identical to the distinction between what can be said and

what can only be shown, which was examined earlier. For present purposes, the status of those things that lie within the world is unproblematic. They are facts, composed entirely of concatenated simple objects. But what of the things that lie outside or beyond the world? What is the status of these "things"? There would seem to be three alternatives: (1) with the positivist we could insist that "the world is the totality of facts" and that is the end of the matter. The "urge towards the mystical" is an entirely misdirected and spurious urge, because no sense can be made of the idea of either the transendent or a transcendental realm. (2) Amongst others, F.Ramsey, E.Stenius and M.Black have subscribed to a "transcendent interpretation", maintaining that there is something "out there", so to speak, beyond the world - though they acknowledge that nothing can be said about this "something". Ramsey writes thus: "The mystical feeling is the feeling that the world is not everything; that there is something outside it"[1] Max Black, commenting on 6.45 says: "To 'limit' anything is to contrast it with something else, as when, in drawing a boundary, we contrast what is inside the line with what is outside it."[2] And finally Stenius says: "I think that Wittgenstein would rather have said 'Ethics is transcendent' if he had adopted the above (Kantian) distinction between 'transcendent' and 'transcendental'."[3]

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1. F. P. Ramsey, The Foundations of Mathematics, p.286 (my italics)
2. M. Black, A Companion to Wittgenstein's Tractatus, p.375
3. E. Stenius, Wittgenstein's Tractatus, p.222

(3) There is, finally, the transcendental interpretation, for which I am concerned to argue.

That Wittgenstein was not a positivist is a thesis that hardly needs defending today, and I shall say no more about it. It has been finally discredited by the many commentators who have written on the Tractatus in the last thirty years. The second alternative, however, is more plausible, and it must be admitted that at one time Wittgenstein embraced, or at least inclined towards such a theory. This is manifest by certain remakrs in the Notebooks, for example the explicit statement that "Ethics is transcendent" (30.7.16).[1] (This was changed to "transcendental" in the Tractatus, (6.421)). And earlier in the Notebooks Wittgenstein had asked: "Is there no domain outside the facts?" (27.5.15); leaving the reader with the distinct impression that he thought there was. This view, however, is ultimately untenable; it fails to fit the Tractatus. The mystical impulse is not towards that which lies beyond or outside the world, it is rather feeling the world itself as a limited whole (cf. 6.45). This involves recognizing that the world is "all that is the case", but in a much stronger sense of "all" than a mere enumeration of atomic facts would provide. It is to "view the world sub specie aeterni" (6.45). It is important to establish the precise nature of the transcendental for Wittgenstein, as the self is one, perhaps the most important, transcendental condition for the possibility of

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1. This remark is wrongly translated in the English edition of the Notebooks; cf. pp. 79 and 79e.

the world. The best way to approach this is via an analysis of Wittgenstein's theory of generality.

(i) Generality

The ubiquity of such concepts as all, every, totality, whole, etc. has not escaped the notice of writers on the Tractatus. As Miss Anscombe so aptly puts it: "The conept all is all-pervasive"[1]. Much has been written about the 'theory of generality' which finds explicit statement in the Tractatus. But the crucial role of generality, as the link between logic and mysticism; as, indeed, the "transcendental clue" to the understanding of the world, has been ignored.

The analysis of a particular proposition, P, (e.g. "this chair is brown") results ultimately in a number of elementary propositions: e_1, e_2, e_3, e_4 .....e_n, and both the truth value and the sense of P depend upon the truth-values and senses of e_1.....e_n. In the case of a generalized proposition, G, (e.g. (x). fx), there is no possibility of breaking it down into component elementary propositions, for G has no component elementary propositions. It is merely a form, a "proto-picture", (3.24, 3.315). This follows from the fact that (1), in a gneralized proposition no names are correlated with objects, ("We can describe the world completely by means of the fully gneralized proposition: i.e. without first correlating any name with a particular object" (5.526), in conjunction with the fact that (2), only names occur in elementary propositions (4.22). But if G cannot be analysed, how can it be a truth-function; what can it be a truth-function of? Wittgenstein signals the distinction that must be made here

1. Anscombe, G.E.M., An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus p.145.

by saying: "I dissociate the concept all from truth functions." (5.521). This is misleading, however, for generalized propositions are truth functional, only not in the way that particular propositions are. Wittgenstein explained the theory in a letter to Russell, (The English is Wittgenstein's):

> I suppose you didn't understand the way how I separate in the old notation of generality, what is in it truth functional and what is purely generality. A general proposition is a truth function of all propositions of a certain form. (N. page 130).

So, in the case where G is "(x).fx", G will be a truth function of all propositions of the form: fx, (i.e. fa, fb, fc,..... and so on, where "a", "b", "c" etc. are names). In other words the truth arguments for G are specified not by analysis, as is the case with P, but by substitution for the variables that occur in G. Ramsey gives an excellent summary of this: "We can distinguish first the element of generality, which comes in specifying the truth arguments, which are not, as before, enumerated, but determined as all the values of a certain propositional function; and secondly the truth functional element which is the logical product."[1]

So far so good; "(x).fx" can convincingly be construed as a function of all the possible values of fx, i.e. fa, fb, fc,..... and so on - that is until one begins to enquire about the precise meaning of the dots, and "and so on". How, for example, are we to know when the process of substitution is complete? How are we to know when the "and so on" has come to an end? Surely we must be given the fact (?) that these and only these are the substitutions possible, given certain variables.

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1. Ramsey, F.P., The Foundations of Mathematics, p.153

This at least was Russell's reaction, and he wrote to Wittgenstein asking him about it: "Is it necessary also to be given the proposition that all elementary propositions are given?", to which Wittgenstein replied: "This is not necessary because it is even impossible. There is no such proposition. That all elementary propositions are given is shown by there being none having an elementary sense which is not given". (N. page 130). Now because the limits of language are also, and for the same reasons, the limits of thought and knowledge, it follows that we can never know when the real totality has been reached. This is in many ways an unsatisfactory doctrine. More precisely it is an unsatisfying doctrine. It makes the world somehow incomplete and open-ended.[1]

But if we can never know that the enumeration in question, whatever it may be of, is complete, we can feel that it is; our attitude can be one that would be appropriate if it were complete:

> Feeling the world as a limited whole, that is the mystical. (6.45)
>
> The urge towards the mystical comes from the non-satisfaction of our wishes by science. We feel that even if all possible scientific questions were answered, our problem is still not touched at all. (25.5.15)

Now science is the totality true of propositions, so the above quotation can be paraphrased to read: Even when all propositions have been formulated, and even when we know which are true and which are false, still we would not know whether or why they are

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1. cf. "it would not be satisfying...." (6.53) and also "The urge towards the mystical comes from the non-satisfaction of our wishes by science." (25.5.15).

all the propositions. The world considered as, say, "the logical product of all the facts" (cf. 1.1), is an intrinsically unsatisfying world; it leaves too many questions unanswered, or rather, it leaves one with a feeling that there is more to be said. Of course there are no questions to be asked here, for "When the answer cannot be put into words, neither can the question be put into words. The riddle does not exist. If a question can be framed at all, then it is also possible to answer it," (6.5). So this unsatisfying world, the "world of the logical product" must be completed in some way. We must acknowledge that the world is the totality of facts, in a much stronger sense than is given by the theory of generality. This "stronger sense" will be something akin to the concept of a unity or whole as it occurs in aesthetics. In Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics, Wittgenstein himself implicity draws this distinction between two types of generality:

> .....it is as if there is something attached to to word "all" ... something with which a different use could not be combined, namely the meaning: "all surely means ALL!" (R.F.M.10)

I will, following this hint, distinguish between the mundane "all" of enumeration and logical product, and the mystical "ALL" which implies unity and completion. The first thing to notice is that both "all" and "ALL" have the same extension, they both include the same things, no more no less. What then is the difference between them, and what has all this to do with Wittgenstein's theory of the self? The difference is a difference of attitude on the part of the willing I. It is the willing I,

the subject of ethical attributes, which effects this change from all to ALL. And to effect this change is, precisely, to "see the world aright".

To see the world as merely all that is the case, is either to distort reality in the manner of a positivist, by denying what is "higher", or like the transcendent philosopher, to search for something <u>beyond</u> the world, a search that is destined to end in frustration and failure, because there is nothing beyond the world; it is, after all, defined as <u>all</u> that is the case! The differences between these two senses of the universal quantifier can best be expressed in tabular form. In the left hand column occur the key concepts involved in the Tractarian theory of generality, and on the right are <u>those same concepts</u> transformed by the willing I through its having adopted the <u>right</u> attitude towards them. (There can be no doubt about Wittgenstein's normative intentions here). The columns to the right contain references to central passages in <u>Notebooks</u> and <u>Tractatus</u> respectively.

<u>all</u>	<u>ALL</u>	<u>Notebooks</u>	<u>Tractatus</u>
The world	Life	24.7.16	5.621
Reality Science and the empirical.	The mystical Ethics & the transcental	27.5.15 8.7.16 25.5.15	6.45 6.44 6.521 6.522
Knowledge	Feeling	21.7.16	6.45
What can be said	What can only be shown		6.522 4.1211
The world as "all that is the case"	The world as "a limited whole; seen "sub specie aeterni".	7.10.16	6.45
The Unhappy world	The Happy world	29.7.16	6.43
The "all" of enumeration and logical product.	The "whole" of aesthetics	24.7.16	6.421 6.45

(ii) Ethics

The following quotations, gleaned from throughout Wittgenstein's early writings contain the essence of his theory of the willing subject. I will simply present them, and then try to show how they cohere into an astoundingly homogenous and original theory.

> The will is an attitude of the subject to the world. the subject is the willing subject. (4.11.16)
>
> It is true that the knowing subject is not in the world, that there is no knowing subject, (20.10.16 cf. 5.631)
>
> Things aquire "significance" only through their relation to my will (15.10.16).
>
> The work of art is the object seen sub specie aeternitatis, and the good life is the world seen sub specie aeternitatis; this is the connexion between art and ethics. (7.10.16).
>
> Ethics and aesthetics are one and the same. Ethics is transcendental. (6.421).
>
> Good and evil enter through the subject. (2.8.16).
>
> The world of the happy is a happy world (29.7.16, cf. 6.43).
>
> The world and life are one (5.621).

The will as phenomenon, i.e. as a fact, "is of interest only to psychology", and as the subject of ethical attributes it is impossible to say anything about it (6.423). The will, as a fact, must be ultimately independent of all other facts, and so it follows that the will can alter nothing in the world: "The world is independent of my will" (6.373). The will can, however, alter the limits of the world, (6.43), and in so doing, of course, makes it into a totally different world, for, as we saw earlier, "limit" means the same as "essence". "In short the effect must be that it becomes an altogether different world", (6.43).

The denial of any necessity other than logical necessity presents certain problems for any prospective philosophy of the will, especially for any account of the relation of the will to what would normally be regarded as the ensuing action. Wittgenstein considered various alternatives:

> Then is the situation that I merely accompany my actions with my will? But in that case how can I predict - as in some sense I surely can - that I shall raise my arm in five minutes time? (4.11.16)

He eventually reaches the conclusion that the will is not the cause of the action, nor something which preceeds or accompanies the action; it <u>is</u> the action, (4.11.16). To be more precise: it is <u>what the action inescapably expresses</u>. And so, like Spinoza, Wittgenstein is lead to distinguishing between willing and wishing.

> Even if all that we wish for were to happen, still this would be nothing more than a favour granted by fate, so to speak; for there is no logical connexion between the will and the world. (6.374)
>
> Wishing is not acting. But willing is acting. (4.11.16).

Because of this, Wittgenstein develops what E. Zemach has called"a tautological system of ethics"[1] There is no connexion between the will (as traditionally conceived) and action, or between action and its effects, and so Wittgenstein concludes that "ethics can have nothing to do with punishment and reward in the usual sense of the terms", (6.422). An action must be its own reward if it is good, and its own punishment if it is evil. "It is clear that the reward must be something pleasant and the punishment something unpleasant" (6.422). So the startlingly

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1. Zemach, E., "Wittgenstein's Philosophy of the Mystical", <u>Review of Metaphysics</u>, 18 (1964), p.42

simple conclusion is that to be happy is to be good, and to be unhappy is to be evil. "Happiness" and "misery", (their synonyms "good" and "evil") do not refer to facts or objects in the world. What they try to express however, is shown by there being a difference between the world of the happy and that of the unhappy, (6.43). How does this come about? In the first place, to say of someone that they are good or evil, happy or unhappy, is to make a value judgement about them, or in Wittgenstein's terminology it would be to frame an ethical proposition. But "it is impossible for there to be propositions of ethics", (6.42). The will which is identified with action, is an attitude of the subject to the world as a whole, so happiness and misery are things which attach, via the willing subject, to the world as a whole. The happy world is the world seen as ALL that is the case, while the unhappy world is the world that is seen as merely all that is the case. This is the sense that lies behind the obscure and eliptical remarks at 6.43:

> If the good or bad exercise of the will does alter the world, it can only alter the limits of the world, not the facts, not what can be expressed in by means of language.
> In short the effect must be that it becomes an altogether different world. It must, so to speak, wax and wane as a whole.
>
> The world of the happy man is a different one from that of the unhappy man.

Perhpas we can expand this enigmatic statement, in a moderately free paraphrase: The will is not some shadowy entity which preceeds or accompanies an action, it is the action itself, or rather an aspect of that action; its meaning. Whenever we perform an action, no matter how trivial, we implicitly take up an attitude towards the world. It might be an attitude of defiance, fear,

suspicion or acceptance. This attitude is shown by an action quite independently of our conscious wishes or intentions, for the will, in a more traditional sense, is impotent. Which attitude ought we to adopt? According to the tautological theory of ethics, it ought to be the one that produces the happy world. The attitude will therefore be one of acceptance, aquiescence and passivity, for the independence of the world from the will (as phenomenon) means that any attempt to reach a goal, or realize an intention will have only an even chance of success, (cf. 5.152). And so either one fails, (which is statistically as likely as succeeding,) or one succeeds; but even victory is hollow, being nothing more than a "favour granted by fate" (6.374). "The only life that is happy" Wittgenstein concludes, "is the life that can renounce the amenities of the world" (13.8.16). This renunciation has two stages; the first is to accept "the life of knowledge", (13.8.16), and the second is to "see the world aright" (6.54).

The life of knowledge involves becoming aquainted with as many facts as possible; in coming to know the world. But the knower, in as far as it is possible to speak of one, and as we saw in the first part of this paper, is nothing more than a totality of propositions. As the world is explicitly identified with God in the Notebooks, I do not think that it is taking things too far to suggest that Wittgenstein here comes close to the Judaic-Christian doctrine of atonement, or at-one-ment. If the self is, at one level, nothing more than a totality of facts, i.e. a totality of propositions, and the world is the sum total of all facts, then the "life of knowledge" would

lead to a being <u>at one</u> with the world in a quite literal sense.

But even if one were to become aquainted with all the facts, there is still the possibility that the world they constitute might be an unhappy world, for one might feel that "even though all the questions of science had been answered, [which I take to be the goal of "the life of knowledge"], yet still the problem of life remains untouched", (6.52). It is at this point that the <u>Tractatus</u> is designed to intervene and lead the reader to "see the world aright", and this involves seeing it as ALL that is the case; as "a whole, a limited whole". And this involves the admission that there are no doubts or perplexities that cannot be answered by "the life of knowledge".

> The solution of the problem of life is seen in the vanishing of the problem. (6.521)

for

> Of course there are no questions left, and this itself is the answer. (6.52)

The answer is to sacrifice a mundane vision of the world, which sees it as all that is the case, in favour of a mystical vision, which feels the world to be ALL that is the case. The willing I is the agent which can accomplish this change in attitude - indeed it <u>is</u> this attitude, for as the subject of ethical attributes (6.423) it is the willing I which is good or evil. But for "good" and "evil" we can read "happy" and "unhappy" (6.422). The subject and the world are one and the same (5.621 & 5.63), and this produces a happy or unhappy <u>world</u> as the case may be.

(iii) <u>Personal Identity</u>

One of the hardest problems confronting any theory of the self that aims at completeness - and this was Wittgenstein's

aim in all fields of philosophical enquiry, cf. Preface pp.3-4 , - is the problem of personal identity; the furnishing of an adequate principle of individuation for persons. This is especially difficult for Wittgenstein, given the doctrines propounded in the Tractatus which we have examined thus far, because none of the traditional criteria for personal identity, (memory, spatio-temporal continuity, etc.) are possible for him. Such things cannot be criteria for Wittgenstein because they are facts, and as such "can be the case or not the case while everything else remains the same" (1.21). No solution to the problem of personal identity is open to Wittgenstein in the world of facts. The only alternative, therefore, is in the limits of the world.

The ethical world; the world that is happy or unhappy, is an idiosyncratic and unique world, for acts of will can transform it so that it becomes "an altogether different world" (6.43) and it is here that a principle of individuation is to be found. As ethical beings, i.e. as beings for whom the world has significance or value, we inhabit our own different worlds. There is a substratum which is common to all possible worlds, anmely the totality of objects, (2.0124), but the facts with which we are aquainted, and more importantly the significance with which we endow these facts, vary from person to person. This provides an interesting new angle on the impossibility of communication outside the world of facts. Linguistic and logical reasons have been given for the necessary nonsensicality of all would-be propositions of aesthetics, religion, ethics and

and metaphysics - but here, I think, we can catch a glimpse of the limit from the other side, so to speak. As ethical beings our worlds have nothing "in common" that would make communication possible at this "higher" level, (cf.2.161). But that our worlds are, in this "higher" sense different, will show itself, if only in our failure to communicate at this level.

> Is this not the reason why those who have found after a long period of doubt that the sense of life became clear to them have been unable to say what constituted that sense? (6.521).

It is because I am my world that the world, (my world), can be the principle of individuation that furnishes Wittgenstein with the nucleus of a theory of personal identity.

This theory is, however, entirely absent from (though consistent with) the Tractatus, and indeed makes only inchoate and epigramatic appearances in the Notebooks, most notably in the following remarks:

> Only from the consciousness of the uniqueness of my life arises religion - science - art. And this consciousness is life itself. (1.8.16)
>
> Remember that "the world and life are one" (5.621)
>
> Now is it true ... that my character is expressed only in the build of my body or brain, and not equally in the build of the whole of the rest of the world? This contains a salient point!

and finally, and most explicitly:

> What kind of reason is there for the assumption of a willing subject? Is not my world adequate for individuation? (19.11.16)

What makes me unique is not anything specifically about me as a person, but about the world I inhabit. This theory might be more aptly called "a theory of personal individuality", rather

than of personal identity, for Wittgenstein denied that the concept identity had any meaning. Identity statements are merely "expedients in presentation" (4.242) and are "pseudo-propositions" (5.535) which would disappear completely in a perspicuous notation. That two things are really identical will show itself, but will be unsayable. And this accords nicely with the above theory of personal identity, or individuality. We have specified the origin and nature of the uniqueness of the individual; and his identity over a period of time (or under a number of different descriptions) will "manifest itself". Thus Wittgenstein's theory of personal identity, like his whole theory of the self, is a part of "das Mystyche":

> There are indeed things that cannot be put into words, they make themselves manifest. They are what is mystical.
>
> Feeling the world as a limited whole, it is this that is mystical. (6.522 & 6.45)

As I have attempted to show, Wittgenstein's doctrine of the self coincides with and compliments all points his linguistic, logical and ontological doctrines; it is indeed the culmination of these, for it is in his treatment of the self and its attitude to the world, that the "solution to the problem of life" is to be found. Acceptance of this theory of the self is the last step to self knowledge, and happiness. And this, I take it, is what the Tractatus is all about.

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