

Note to reader:

I don't want to type the word "Tractatus" and "the author's manuscript" 700 times. When reading this review, be mindful of these abbreviations:

T = The Tractatus;  
MS = The author's manuscript

**1. Content: Are the arguments, analyses, and insights presented in the manuscript new and important? What are the strongest and weakest features of the work?**

Yes, the content is important. The strongest features of the MS are that it offers an alternative translation of the original text of Wittgenstein's T, as well as an annotated account of the diversity of views held by scholars who ponder each numbered provision.

One of the great strengths of the MS is the format. The T itself was notoriously composed in numbered pronouncements that are not only themselves revelatory rather than explanatory, but also organized in a way unnatural to ordinary exposition. You get the feeling as though you are reading gnomic geometry or logic by Moses. And so, because the T has this weird quality, it is helpful to see a MS in a form not unlike a "study Bible." You get the exact source material in an original and cleaned state – each numbered provision (retranslated) -- and then you get infused comments showing published accounts of the meaning of the provision(s) along with other cross references.

The weakest feature of the MS, however, seems to be the logic of what gets included or excluded. I do not believe this work is intended to be a comprehensive (encyclopedic) account of every view under the sun. The purpose is to provide the "goal posts," as it were.<sup>1</sup> Nonetheless, even with that objective, I notice conspicuous absences. The biggest is the lack of Ray Monk in certain places, which strikes me as in dire need of remedy. For the benefit of the author, I have included such recompense inside the body of this review, tracking down what needs to be considered for infusion.

In addition, although not required, I would offer two other suggestions. First, it would be very interesting to see an epilogue in this work that excerpts various things that Wittgenstein himself said about the T throughout his life (after it was published). This would be quite consistent with the MS's "handbook" goal. I am thinking specifically about the letter Wittgenstein wrote to von Ficker when trying to get the book published and also the various remarks he made about the T throughout his life.

Secondly, I offer a suggestion to the style house of Rowman. You should consider allowing a font and typeface change from the inserted comments of the author versus the translated source text. In other words, why not do it like a "study Bible." A student could read the source material, then, in a lowered font or italics (or something), the commentary exists. It is almost like having provision-notes rather than page or endnotes. The point is, the house style needs broken here.

**2. Scholarship: Have the appropriate sources been consulted and cited? Does the author make any claims that could be considered libelous or defamatory (if so, please specify)?**

I could find absolutely no libel in the MS. The extra things that I think should be included, I have referenced below.

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1. The goal is to provide an improved translation and to provide students with secondary sources. (p1). Not intended as a stand-alone or complete guide. It is meant as a handbook.

**3. Structure: Are chapters structured in a way that allows for the clear expression and development of ideas?**

As I said in (1), what is unique about the MS is its “study Bible” method of organization. I find this to be unique and helpful, given that so many essay-compositions already exist on this topic.

**4. Revisions: What specific revisions would you recommend to improve the quality of the arguments, the strength of the ideas, or the clarity of the writing? What changes in the organization of the work, if any, would you make? Is the work too long or too short for its intended purpose?**

I have put all of this stuff below.

**5. Recommendation: Would you recommend the publication of this manuscript either in its current form or in revised form? Would you purchase this book or recommend it to others? Why or why not?**

Given what already exists, the author’s work is publishable right now, in its current form. However, I *strongly* recommend that the author infuse into the MS more specific content from Ray Monk with regards to salient points. This strikes me as the only glaring weakness. I also recommend that the author consider including a few other suggestions, which I have made below, if the author likewise finds them to be worthy.

**6. Additional Comments: Do you have any further suggestions, ideas, or reactions about the work that are not covered by the above questions? If so, please share any additional thoughts you may have.**

Below are my specific suggestions for improvement, presented in five broad subject areas: (I) The Conclusion; (II) Nonsense; (III) Silence; (IV) Relevance; and (V) Tidbits. I leave it to the author to be the ultimate judge, but I strongly recommend that Monk get infused more in the body of the work.

## **PART-I. THE CONCLUSION**

One of the glaring omissions in the MS is the failure to read the I’s conclusion in light of Wittgenstein’s spiritual infatuation. There are times when the author appears to suggest that Schopenhauer is the actual inheritance.<sup>2</sup> It strikes me that students would be greatly misled by a handbook that did not mention the more proximate capture:

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<sup>2</sup> I want to comment briefly about the MS’s use of Schopenhauer. I fear he is overplayed a bit. Wittgenstein’s brother Paul (the pianist) is a better choice for the Schopenhauer devotee. Both Paul and Schopenhauer were atheists, as was Russell. And Wittgenstein always saw cramps in the way atheists connected those sorts of dots, which, to him, reflected poorly on their dot-connecting impulses. And the whole starting point for this disposition was the religious conversion during the war, which is well chronicled not only by Monk, but also Alexander Waugh in *The House of Wittgenstein*, 97-102. (Wittgenstein’s family was embarrassed by the conversion). Drury in 1948 asks Wittgenstein about Schopenhauer and remembers this reply: “No; I think I see quite clearly what Schopenhauer got out of his philosophy – but when I read Schopenhauer I seem to see to the bottom very easily. He is not deep in the sense that Kant and Berkeley are deep.” Drury in *Recollections*, 158 (italics supplied). Also, Malcolm believes that when Wittgenstein listed the people who influenced his thought (in CV, 16), that he listed the influences chronologically. You will note that Schopenhauer would have been only an early influence, but not the defining one by the time the religious conversion comes around. That’s my point. Was Schopenhauer really more important than, e.g., Otto Weininger’s views on solipsism? All that I am arguing for is balance here. Schopenhauer does not own the ending in the I.

- (a) Ray Monk's most recent summary of this in *Standpoint*:

"As it happened, Wittgenstein did undergo a "variety of religious experience" during the war. In Galicia, he entered a bookshop, where he could find only one book: Leo Tolstoy's *Gospel in Brief*. He bought it and read it over and over again. To his comrades he became known as "the man with the gospels". It provided him with the inspiration he needed to adopt the attitude of the character in *Die Kreuzelschreiber* that had so impressed him. "Don't be dependent on the external world," he urged himself in his diary, "and then you have no fear of what happens in it." He also urged himself to be independent of people. Salvation would come through solitude.

He carried on writing philosophy during the war. For the first two years, he wrote almost entirely on logic, but then in 1916, when he was serving on the Russian Front, his technical reflections are interrupted by the questions about God. The distinction he had made between saying and showing was now extended by him to religion, aesthetics, ethics, and the meaning of life. All of these subjects, like logic, lay beyond the sayable."

<https://standpointmag.co.uk/issues/may-june-2020/wittgensteins-self-isolation/>

- (b) Russell's letter to Ottonline Morrell. It complains about how the book's conclusion came from Wittgenstein's infatuation with God and Christianity, which caused Wittgenstein to seriously flirt with mysticism. The conclusion expresses "a deeply mystical point of view," Russel noted. *Ray Monk, How To Read Wittgenstein, W. W. Norton & Co. (2005), P.23* (broader excerpt in note).<sup>3</sup>
- (c) See Ray Monk, *Duty of Genius*, p 140-142. (Wittgenstein diary entries on June 11<sup>th</sup> while at war on the eastern front. Good stuff here on the substance of his transformation).

Relatedly, The MS should emphasize that the point of the I was ethical. This can occur by infusing these sources:

- (a) A quote from Wittgenstein's letter to von Ficker, in which he said "the point of the book is ethical" (broader excerpt in note).<sup>4</sup>
- (b) "Wittgenstein's conception of the book changed considerably during the First World War. Before the war, he considered himself to be preparing a work on logic; after it, he considered himself to have written a book, central point of which was fundamentally *ethical*." *Ray Monk, How To Read Wittgenstein, W. W. Norton & Co. (2005), P.22*.
- (c) letters to Paul Englemann (I don't have this handy: but a cite to the book would help).

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<sup>3</sup> "[I] was astonished when I found he has become a complete mystic. He reads people like Kierkegaard and Angelus Silesius, and he seriously contemplates becoming a monk. It all started from William James *Varieties of Religious Experience*, and grew (not unnaturally) during the winter he spent alone in Norway before the war, when he was nearly mad. Then during the war a curious thing happened. He went on duty to the town of Tarnov in Galicia, and happened to come upon a bookshop, which, however, seemed to contain nothing but picture postcards. However, he went inside and found that it contained just one book: Tolstoy on the Gospels. He bought it merely because there was no other. He read it and re-read it, and thenceforth had it always with him, under fire and at all times. ... He has penetrated deep into mystical ways of thought and feeling" (Monk. *How to read*, p.24.)

<sup>4</sup> Here is a fuller excerpt: "... the point of the book is ethical. I once wanted to give a few words in the foreword which now are actually not in it, which, however, I'll write to you now because they might be a key for you: I wanted to write that my work consists of two parts: of the one which is here, and of everything which I have *not* written. And precisely this second part is the important one. For the Ethical is delimited from within, as it were, by my book; and I'm convinced that, strictly speaking, it can only be delimited in this way. See *Ray Monk, How To Read Wittgenstein, W. W. Norton & Co. (2005), 22-23*.

## PART-II. NONSENSE

When academics discuss the I, the issue of “nonsense” always emerges. The MS should stress that the I never set forth this concept as a binary. There is not a choice between meaning/nonsense. Instead, the I speaks of *three* categories: (a) stuff having a logical form that reduces to something conceivably true/false (propositions); (b) stuff that shows itself but can’t be said (the inexpressible); and (c) stuff that does *neither*. For clarity’s sake, let’s give each of these a name, so I can talk about this easier:

Type-1: Stuff that reduces to T/F (propositions);

Type-2: Stuff that shows itself, but can’t be said (inexpressible) [6.522].

Type-3: Stuff that does neither (patent nonsense).

Here are the rules for this trichotomous system.<sup>5</sup> We are told, explicitly, that Type-2 are the most important things. These things include ethics, aesthetics, religion, the meaning of life (“big things”):

- a. 6.42: props can’t express the “higher.”
- b. 6.421: Ethics is transcendental. (implies higher ... a graduation).
- c. 6.432: God does not reveal himself *in* the world. (So the big stuff is outside)
- d. 6.52: the problems of life (existence) are more important than anything science could ever do.
- e. Letter to von Ficker: “I wanted to write that my work consists of two parts: of the one which is here, and of everything which I have *not* written. And precisely this second part is the important one.”
- f. The intro to the I: “... how little has been done when [the problems of philosophy] have been solved.”
- g. Monk: “Among those things that ‘show themselves’ [only] are ethics, aesthetics, religion, the meaning of life ... “ *Ray Monk, How To Read Wittgenstein, W. W. Norton & Co. (2005), P.21.*<sup>6</sup>
- h. “To believe in God means to see the facts of the world are not the end of the matter.” Wittgenstein’s diary entry during WWI, as quoted in Ray Monk, *Duty of Genius*, p. 141.

For Type-3 things, Wittgenstein did apparently believe that they constituted patent nonsense.<sup>7</sup> Here is the support:

- a. 6.51 speaks of the logical form of skepticism as being “manifestly nonsensical” (note the adjective). This is because it is a philosophical system that doubts answers without doubting questions.
- b. 4.003: “Most propositions and questions, that have been written about philosophical matters, are not false, but senseless. We cannot, therefore, answer questions of this kind at all, but only state their senselessness. ... (They are of the same kind as the question whether the Good is more or less identical than the Beautiful).

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<sup>5</sup> Wittgenstein letter to von Ficker says that the work is presenting a system: “it is quite strictly speaking the presentation of a system.” Ray Monk, *Duty of Genius*, at 177 (very top of page).

<sup>6</sup> Monk’s tries to include “philosophy” as something that counts as a Type-2 statement. Quite simply, I believe that is Monk’s view, not Wittgenstein’s, and that is why I truncated it.

<sup>7</sup> This was probably because the impetus for its contemplation wasn’t spiritual.

- c. letter to von Ficker: “All of that which *many* are *babbling* today, I have defined in my book by remaining silent about it.” (emphasis in original)<sup>8</sup>

### PART-III. SILENCE

For Tractarian Wittgenstein, the sayable *is* the demonstrable.<sup>9</sup> They are one and the same. This means that Type-2 and Type-3 stuff require silence for *different* reasons. Type-3 requires silence because it amounts to a kind of “gassing” whereas Type-2 would amount only to a kind of *despoiling*. Type-2 requires silence because this stuff is *inaccessible* to us in a demonstrable format (true/false)<sup>10</sup> and because philosophy, properly understood, is only confined to saying what we know.<sup>11</sup> The only way we can properly get at Type-2 stuff, therefore, is through DEVOTION:

- a. "An honest religious thinker is like a tightrope walker. He almost looks as though he were walking on nothing but air. His support is the slenderest imaginable. And yet it really is possible to walk on it." CV, 73 (1948).
- b. “If you and I are to live religious lives, it mustn’t be that we talk a lot about religion, but that our manner of life is different.” Drury, *Recollections*, 114.
- c. Wilson, *New Critical Thinking*, 160-161.
- d. Upon encountering “a street preacher who was proclaiming in a loud, raucous voice all that Jesus Christ had done for him ... Wittgenstein shook his head sadly. If he really meant what he was shouting, he wouldn’t be speaking in that tone of voice.” Drury, *Recollections*, 111.
- e. Regarding a lecture on aesthetics, “If I understood him rightly, on that occasion he was saying that you couldn’t speak of the meaning of a work of art, say a particular piece of music, as if the meaning was something that could be separated from the work itself. ‘Part of the pleasure of hearing Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony is hearing the Ninth Symphony.’” Drury, *Recollections*, 141.

Why can’t philosophy speak about Type-2 stuff, if it is the most important? Because outer-worldliness amounts to an inherent blind spot,<sup>12</sup> the existence of which is only “felt” under the right limiting circumstance.<sup>13</sup> And speaking about this either despoils it, which means it isn’t really getting captured, or it degenerates into a different *behavior* (proselytizing, role play, projection, salesmanship). In other words, it is not only the corruption of the thing that fails us when we try to grasp it, but taxonomy (turf) as well. For we are always defined by what

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<sup>8</sup> Here is the apparent translation by McGuinness, as represented by Drury in *Recollections*, p.80: “In short, I believe that where *many* others today are just *gassing*, I have managed in my book to put everything firmly into place by being silent about it” (emphasis in original).

<sup>9</sup> This gets completely repudiated in the *Investigations*. Once meaning becomes use, *everything* becomes sayable. And this is because saying no longer means following natural process for demonstrating; it means, rather, offering up a *grammar*. And because grammar is arbitrary (lexicographic), what is said is merely what it amounts to. It is no longer a logical form that governs the matter, but conjugation.

<sup>10</sup> Type-2 stuff can’t be translated into a P for which there is definitive proof one way or another. Wittgenstein no doubt was inspired by Kierkegaard on this. (Russell said he had been reading that).

<sup>11</sup> “The difficulty in philosophy is to say no more than we know.” (Blue Book, 45). “Whereof one cannot speak, therefore one must be silent.” [prop 7 in I]

<sup>12</sup> “The book will, therefore, draw a limit to thinking, or rather – not to thinking, but to the expression of thoughts; for in order to draw a limit to thinking we should have to be able to think both sides of this limit.” Intro to I.

<sup>13</sup> See I 6.44-5. See also, this: “What is eternal and important is often hidden from a man, by an impenetrable veil. He knows: there’s something under there, but he cannot see it. The veil reflects the daylight.” CV, 80 (1949)

our behavior amounts to (grammar). And it is for this reason that philosophy, properly understood, has no choice but to be silent on Type-2 matters. For a good example, see this note.<sup>14</sup>

### CONTRADICTION?

As we all know the I ends with a startling paradox: are not many of Wittgenstein's numbered assertions relegated to silence? He clearly offers us Type-2 and Type-3 statements all throughout the book. Are these to be considered patent nonsense, wishful accolades, proselyting or mere poetry? What is the solution here?

Well, the answer is something called *aspect-reversal*.<sup>15</sup> All throughout Wittgenstein's philosophical life he confronted aspect-shift. But this won't be *philosophically* captured until later Wittgenstein arrives. For now, it comes to us in the form of a devotion and conversion. For once you see the truth of the trichotomous system he has set up, the problems of philosophy vanish, though not the problems of ethics, religion, existence (life's meaning) or science. And it strikes me that this conclusion is quite true. Only the *true* problems remain, which are not philosophical ones strictly speaking. Part of what the I is doing is silencing *philosophers* by means of a taxonomic program (ownership).<sup>16</sup>

### **PART-IV. RELEVANCE**

The MS should consider mentioning the relevance that the I has to Wittgenstein all throughout his later philosophy. Which parts were repudiated completely and which remained alive? Because the MS has a "handbook" conception, this should be done as a source and quote-collecting exercise in an epilogue. It should collect Wittgenstein's own post-Tractarian comments about all pertinent matters I. Ray Monk's *How to Read Wittgenstein* is a treasure trove on this topic.

To help in this regard, I have collected (and organized) some source material. There are six basic concepts in the I that either stay alive and/or get further revision. They are: (a) philosophy as an activity not a subject; (b) philosophy as the mere arrangement of clarity; (c) quietism; (d) aspect appreciation; (e) philosophy of

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<sup>14</sup> Let us use this analogy. In Star Wars, there is this thing called "the force." It's described as some kind of energy field that only a lucky few can access and wield -- not through the science of engineering (an appliance), mind you, but rather through acute senses of inner feeling. Along similar lines, Wittgenstein's I believes outer-worldliness is a felt experience arriving only through fortunate or keen happenstance. The difference, however, is that no *scientific* statements can occur about it, unlike in Star Wars, where you can say true or false things, such as, "The force is an energy field." To Wittgenstein, the logical form of this p is fine. It's a scientific statement. So if Wittgenstein was watching Star Wars, we would assume he would consider this p *not* to be metaphysics (gassing), but instead to be either a revelatory truth in groundbreaking physics or a foolish hilarity (as Hans Solo did) along the lines of saying that the Earth is flat. That would be the logical form of this p. The grammar here seems quite similar to those who talk of "string theory" in physics. Such things are most surely *not* "unsayable" in a Tractarian universe.

And so, we have to understand what the logical form of premises about "outer-worldliness" amount to. What we are talking about in the I are stuff like this: "God is good." "Bach made better music than Beethoven." "Jesus is Lord." "All things have non-physical essences called Forms," "The Good different from the Beauty." Each of these p's is nonsense in Tractarian terms, but only some are so "strictly speaking," while others -- the last two -- are patent nonsense. See I at 6.4312.

<sup>15</sup> See Wilson, *New Critical Thinking*, 139-141.

<sup>16</sup> Let me make this last point clearer. Who is it among the philosophers who would see critical parts of the I as being patent nonsense, wishful accolades, proselyting or mere poetry? The answer is that it is usually analytic philosophers in the Russellian tradition who outright reject certain things. They reject what they call the book's "ending" -- which is actually its POINT -- and were also prone to make the mistake of using the book to support versions of logical empiricism (positivism). Did those scholars throw away the ladder? Of course not. They never climbed it. Whereas, a scholar like myself could come to similar conclusions about the provisions in the I only by being overcome with the *truth* of book's ASPECT.

That is the key. Wittgenstein says the book is about ethics, but is it not really about a *conversion*? Russell and the others *couldn't* be converted -- they would always be stuck where they were. Wittgenstein's whole point is that he was stuck no longer -- the fly had left the bottle even before the *Investigations* had arrived. What I am trying to say is that, for us -- the Wittgensteinians -- the I speaks of a *graduation*. And this is what the paradox in the conclusion is all about. It's not unlike wisdom literature as a genre. Which is why Wittgenstein said it would only be understood by those who could be stationed to receive it in the first place.

mathematics and (f) anti-formalism. For each of these, I have included some before-and-after quotes that could be inserted.

(a) PHILOSOPHY AS ACTIVITY

In the I, Wittgenstein thought that philosophy was an activity, not a subject. This idea stayed with him forever:

before

4.112: "Philosophy is not a theory but an activity."

after

"From 1929 until his death in 1951, Wittgenstein worked out a new way of doing philosophy that has no precedent in the history of the subject. It is a way of approaching philosophy that tries to remain faithful to the insight he had in the I that philosophy *cannot* be a science, or anything like a science, It is not a body of doctrine but an activity, the activity of clearing up the confusions caused by the bewitchments cast by language." *Ray Monk, How To Read Wittgenstein, W. W. Norton & Co. (2005), P.2*

(b) PHILOSOPHY AS CLARITY

In the I, Wittgenstein says that philosophy makes no discoveries, but merely re-arranges that which we already know. This stayed with Wittgenstein throughout his life.

before

"The Darwinian theory has no more to do with philosophy than has any other hypothesis of natural science" [4.1122]. "The object of philosophy is the logical clarification of thoughts" [4.112]. "Everything that can be thought at all can be thought clearly" [4.116]. "Philosophy limits the disputable sphere of natural science" [4.113]. "The right method of philosophy would be to ... say nothing except what can be said ..." [6.53].

after

"The problems are solved, not by giving new information, but by arranging what we have always known" PI, § 109. "Philosophy only states what everyone admits." PI, § 599. "... it is, rather, of the essence of our investigation that we do not seek to learn anything new by it. We want to understand something that is already in plain view." PI, § 89. Also:

If there were theses in philosophy, they would have to be such that they do not give rise to disputes. For they would have to be put in such a way that everyone would say, Oh yes, that is of course obvious. As long as there is a possibility of having different opinions and disputing about a question, this indicates that things have not yet been expressed clearly enough. Once perfectly clear formulation – ultimate clarity – has been reached, there can be no second thoughts or reluctance any more, for these always arise from the feeling that something has now been asserted, and I do not yet know whether I should admit it or not. *Big Typescript*.

(c) QUIETISM

In the I, philosophers are confined to Type-1 things only, which means they are confined to a lot of silence. What is critical to understand is that Type-1 stuff has *endings* – they reach conclusions (finality). Even if the conclusions are only paradigmatic or get displaced with better information, the discourse is still vertical -- it still has an ending (solution). This is not true with the endless and aimless concerns of the field of philosophy,

traditionally situated. Wittgenstein *always* believed that philosophy needed to confine itself to matters for which truths get *settled*. He held this virtue all throughout his life:

before

“The book[’s] whole meaning could be summed up somewhat as follows: What can be said at all can be said clearly; and whereof one cannot speak thereof one must be silent. The book will, therefore, draw a limit ... to the expression of thoughts” Intro to I. “All of that which many are *babbling* today, I have defined in my book by remaining silent about it.” *Letter to von Ficker* (emphasis in original). “What can be shown cannot be *said*” [4.1212].

after

“Wittgenstein’s attitude to philosophy was very different from that which prevails among professional philosophers in academic institutions. He did not think of philosophy primarily as an academic subject, still less as a profession. For him, philosophy was the activity of solving philosophical problems. He used to say that, just as his father had been a businessman, so he took a businesslike attitude to philosophy. He wanted to *clear up* philosophical problems, like a businessman clears his desk.” *Ray Monk, How To Read Wittgenstein*, W. W. Norton & Co. (2005), P.14.

“Philosophy hasn't made any progress? - If somebody scratches the spot where he has an itch, do we have to see some progress? Isn't genuine scratching otherwise, or genuine itching itching? And can't this reaction to an irritation continue in the same way for a long time before a cure for the itching is discovered?” CV, xx

See Ray Monk, *Duty of Genius*, 325 (bottom of page).

(d) APSECT APPRECIATION

Wittgenstein always had an affinity for appreciating aspect. But he won’t have this *philosophically* captured until later works arrive. In the I it comes to us in the form of devotion and conversion (being overtaken).<sup>17</sup> But later on, we see aspect-shift merge with his concern with aesthetical appreciation (Lectures on Aesthetics), frameworks (the duck-rabbit part of PI) and with connoisseurship (imponderable evidence). See, Ray Monk, *How to Read Wittgenstein*, Chapter 11, 99-106; Sean Wilson, *New Critical Thinking*, chapters 13-14.

(e) CALCULATING AS BEHAVIOR

Wittgenstein’s views on mathematics (calculating as behavior) seem eerily derived from his original view that logic itself was merely the sum of its operations. Logic didn’t say anything; it could only transform something already there (logic as showing). See these sources:

before

In March 1914, the Cambridge philosopher G.E. Moore came to Skjolden to visit Wittgenstein. The latter had told him that his work on logic was “very nearly done” and was evidently keen to discuss it. Moore stayed for two weeks, during which Wittgenstein dictated a new set of notes which expressed his new ideas. At the centre of these was a distinction between saying and showing that Wittgenstein considered

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<sup>17</sup> “The solution of the problem of life is seen in the vanishing of this problem. (Is not this the reason why men to whom after long doubting the sense of life became clear, could not then say wherein this sense consisted”[6.521]?” “My propositions are elucidatory in this way: he who understands me finally recognizes them as senseless, when he has climbed out through them, on them, over them. (He must so to speak throw away the ladder, after he has climbed up on it). He must surmount these propositions; then he sees the world rightly” [6.54].



the key idea of his work, the one that finally revealed the nature of logic. Logical propositions, such as tautologies (which are necessarily true) and contradictions (which are necessarily false) do not say anything, but they show something, namely, “the logical properties of language and therefore of the Universe”. The breakthrough, then, consists of seeing that logic is “ineffable”.

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after

“A proof in mathematics does not establish the truth of a conclusion; it fixes, rather, the *meaning* of certain signs. The ‘inexorability’ of mathematics, therefore, does not consist in *certain knowledge* of mathematical truths, but in the fact that mathematical propositions are *grammatical*. To deny, for example, that two plus two equals four is not to disagree with a widely held view about a matter of fact; it is to show ignorance of the meanings of the terms involved.” Ray Monk, *Duty of Genius*, 418 (This is Ray Monk speaking, not Wittgenstein, in the double-quotes).

(f) PHILOSOPHY SHOULD BE ANTI-FORMALISTIC

Whether the I is formalistic is an interesting question. It’s like asking The Who to play classical music – what you get is a really weird amalgamation. In terms of the format of philosophy, the I appears to be a *precursor* that gets more clearly developed in later Wittgenstein.

before

See all the quotes (above) about Type-2 being more important than Type-1. And then add this: “Philosophy is not one of the natural sciences” [4.111]. “A work in philosophy consists essentially of elucidations. The result of philosophy is not a number of ‘philosophical propositions,’ but to make propositions clear.” [4.112]. “Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent” [prop 7].

Notice that he also admits he hasn’t explained his points well in the I, but that its content is nonetheless the truth (unassailable and definitive).<sup>18</sup> And he’s also okay with the idea that only those who have had similar thoughts will be able to understand the thing.<sup>19</sup> This sounds exactly like wisdom literature (e.g., Psalms).<sup>20</sup>

after

Ray Monk is very good on this point. He basically argues that Wittgenstein’s Type-2 stuff can really only be communicated with creative expression (poetry, art). “Wittgenstein believed that] If philosophical understanding is to be conveyed, then it cannot be in the same way that scientific knowledge is conveyed – i.e., stated directly in literal language – it must be through something more analogous to poetry.” *Ray Monk, How To Read Wittgenstein, W. W. Norton & Co. (2005), P.27*

“I think I summed up my attitude to philosophy when I said: philosophy ought really to be written only as *poetic composition*.” CV???

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<sup>18</sup> “This work ... will be greater the better the thoughts are expressed. The more the nail has been hit on the head. – Here I am conscious that I have fallen far short of the possible. Simply because my powers are insufficient to cope with the task. ... On the other hand the truth of the thoughts communicated here seem to me unassailable and definitive. I am, therefore, of the opinion that the problems have in essentials been finally solved.” I intro.

<sup>19</sup> “This book will perhaps only be understood by those who have themselves already thought the thoughts which are expressed in it – or similar thoughts. It is therefore not a text-book. Its object would be attained if it afforded pleasure to one who read it with understanding.” Intro to I.

<sup>20</sup> See Alexander Waugh, *The House of Wittgenstein* 99-100, which compares the style of the I to Tolstoy’s *Gospel in Brief*.

To end Part IV (Relevance), I include the stuff in the I that gets completely repudiated: (a) the picture theory of language; and (b) the conception of what is sayable. And I provide statements about the I as a whole.

(a) The Picture Theory of Language

What changes in PI is not picturing; but its connection to language. Picturing becomes an independent psychological phenomenon that affects (impacts) comprehension. Language becomes governed by the “anthropological turn,” rather than a systems-logic. The idea of *grammar* replaces logic. Language is not there to picture the world; it rather is what it does (meaning is use). Picturing is a separate, independent phenomenon that is thrust upon and messes with this.

(b) What is sayable

In the new understanding, what is sayable is whatever gets said (Que sera sera). Although we might want to call this the Doris Day approach, Wittgenstein himself chose a saying from Bishop Butler that best encapsulated the matter, but for which many Americans will think is borrowed from Bret Favre: “It is what it is.”<sup>21</sup> In the language game, one simply makes what one does. And is not, therefore, a logical form that determines what is said, but rather conjugation. One has to catch the grammar and social traits implicated in the social behavior – and, if one is be astute, to see the picture that lies behind the same, because it is likely to be either the inspiration for, or the corruption of, the whole impulse to see the thing this way in the first place. Which is why the occupancy of the philosopher becomes therapeutic, though the goal remains clarity.

TRACTATUS GENERALLY

These quotes from Wittgenstein are helpful in summarizing what the I amounted to in Wittgenstein’s post-Tractarian life:

- (a) “Incidentally, when I was in Norway during the year 1913-14, I had some thoughts of my own, or so at least it seems to me now. I mean I have the impression that at that time I brought to life new movements in thinking (but perhaps I am mistaken). Whereas now I seem just to apply old ones. CV, 20 (1931).
- (b) “My thinking, like everyone’s has sticking to it the shriveled remains of my earlier (withered) ideas. CV, 23 (1932-1934)
- (c) “My fundamental ideas came to me very early in life.” Drury in *Recollections*, 158

“At several times Wittgenstein thought he had got close to finishing *Philosophical Investigations*. He wanted to publish it side by side with *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, because so many of the remarks he wanted to include in this new book alluded to views he had published in the *Tractatus*. But, more than that, he felt that his new work could be understood only with reference to his early work. This is partly because of the great differences between his early and later work, but also because of the equally important continuities between the two. Ray Monk, *How to Read Wittgenstein*, 63-64

Wittgenstein writing to Schlick in November of 1931 about a Tractatus-updated book with Waismann: “Wittgenstein’s ideas had changed so fundamentally that he could no longer present them in a form that was essentially an updated version of the *Tractatus*. ‘There are,’ he told Schlick, ‘very, very many statements in the book with which I now disagree!’ The *Tractatus* talk about ‘elementary propositions’ and ‘objects’ had, he said, been shown to be erroneous, and there was no point in publishing a work

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<sup>21</sup> Although Favre was notorious for saying this in post-game pressers, the actual quote from Bishop Butler was: “Everything is what it is, and not another thing.” See Ray Monk, *Duty of Genius*, p. 451.

that simply repeated the old mistakes. The *Tractatus* analysis of the proposition must be replaced by a 'perspicuous representation' of grammar which would throw overboard 'all the dogmatic things that I said about "objects," "elementary propositions", etc.'" Ray Monk, *Duty of Genius*, 320.

## **PART-V. TIDBITS**

Page 7. Is this the first reference of Russell and Frege? If so, full names.

Page 16. The author summarizes three views about the body of the I: (a) that it can be read and understood, but is flawed; (b) that it is purposely nonsensical; and (c) that a middle ground exists. Each of these views depends upon how the conclusion of the book is understood. If you believe it is premised upon aspect-change, the book's main body becomes, essentially, the part that should be glossed over. It's no longer the meat.

Page 17. "For more on Wittgenstein himself I recommend Monk." — Does this suggest that Monk's works are noteworthy only for personal trivia about Wittgenstein? I would change this to read one of the following:

- (a) "For more about the I, and about the meaning of any of Wittgenstein's works, I recommend anything published by Ray Monk. " OR
- (b) "For more about the meaning of the I, I recommend:
  - a. Ray Monk, *How To Read Wittgenstein*, W. W. Norton & Co. (2005)
  - b. Ray Monk's recent piece in Standpoint, <https://standpointmag.co.uk/issues/may-june-2020/wittgensteins-self-isolation/>
  - c. Ray Monk, *The Duty of Genius*