THE PICTURE THEORY OF THE PROPOSITION IN WITTGENSTEIN'S
TRACTATUS LOGICO-PHILOSOPHICUS

by

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THE PICTURE THEORY OF THE PROPOSITION IN WITTGENSTEIN'S TRACTATUS LOGICO-PHILOSOPHICUS.

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ABSTRACT

The putative aim of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* is to give an account of how it is that language is able to represent the world. Given this aim, it is surprising to come across a discussion of pictures early on in the book. That this is intended to be heuristic is obvious; what isn't so clear is the exact point of these remarks. As for the discussion itself, it seeks to establish that there are two aspects to picturing: there is the referring aspect of the objects in the pictures, and there is the element of form which relates the objects in a determinate way.

The thrust of Wittgenstein's talk of pictures becomes clearer when he makes the comparison between propositions and pictures. Propositions are also pictures: they picture reality, and the two elements of the pictorial relationship are necessary in order that the propositions might represent a possible state of affairs. In fully analyzed propositions, we are to find two kinds of things: names and form.

According to the standard interpretation of the *Tractatus*, the names in propositions stand for (in some manner to be examined) objects in the states of affairs pictured by the proposition. The element of form, common to both propositions and the facts that they picture, is thereby some additional 'thing' which allows the combinatorial possibilities of the objects (which, according to the standard interpretation, constitute states of affairs) to be shown in the linguistic items (propositions) which picture, independently of truth or falsity, those states of affairs.

My thesis explores the possibility that the standard interpretation misses Wittgenstein's intent in important respects. In the first chapter, I address the topic of logical form. By isolating the functional requirements (internal to the *Tratatus*) of logical form and showing how the standard view of logical form fails to meet those requirements, I then go on to offer an account of logical form which identifies it with the predicative element in propositions. The second chapter defends a reading of Wittgenstein's terminology of *Sinn* and *Bedeutung* employed in both the first and third chapters. The final chapter concerns the issue of the tractarian objects. I will give an alternative interpretation of objects in the context of a discussion of the semantics of names in the *Tractatus*.

Through challenging the received view, I explore the possibility of - and extent to which - the discussion of the two aspects of picturing (and therefore the Picture Theory of the proposition itself) is in fact carried over to Wittgenstein's theory of meaning. To be sure, Wittgenstein's discussion of pictures is (forgive the pun) sketchy and its import unclear. Nevertheless, I think a case can be made for respecting the difference - sometimes but not always respected by Wittgenstein himself - between the semantics of names and predicate and relational expressions. If we do this, we can then appreciate the fundamental point that Wittgenstein seeks to establish through his comparison of propositions with pictures. Just as a picture is able to represent a scene in virtue of the aspects discussed above, so it is with propositions. Propositions can represent possible or actual states of affairs because of their semantic 'heterogeneity', that is, in virtue of the fact that their constituents represent (or capture) what they do in different ways.

Acknowledgments

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I want to thank Sam Black for the many spirited discussions. For many things I am grateful to Tim Kinney, Lou Bruno, Shari Clough, Berni Comeau, and Dawn Pollon.

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And of course to my mother and father, to whom this project is dedicated.

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Introduction

The title of this thesis is something of a misnomer. It isn't clear the precise sense in which what I and other commentators refer to as "Wittgenstein's Picture Theory of the Proposition" is actually a theory *at all*. Fortunately, that is not the question which I set myself to examining in this thesis. My more modest aim is to examine the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (hereafter *TLP*), focusing on two main interpretive issues, that of logical form and the nature of objects. I think Wittgenstein's (somewhat) obscure discussion of pictures in *TLP* 2.1 to 3.01 - if taken with a modicum of interpretive charity - can help one understand his theory of meaning. Wittgenstein's discussion of pictures is a heuristic device intended to help us understand how it is that language performs what he takes to be its main function: to represent facts. This discussion yields some observations which are subsequently applied to propositions, as he takes propositions to be pictures of reality (*TLP* 4.021). This cluster of observations about pictures, representing, and propositions is what I am getting at when I write of the Picture Theory of the Proposition: I think it contains many interesting ideas about language and how it is able to represent possible or actual states of affairs. I bid the reader to indulge my calling it a theory.

Wittgenstein distinguishes two aspects of picturing. There is the referring aspect whereby one type of 'objects' (those in the picture) *stand for* objects in the state of affairs pictured. In addition to this, there is the element of *form* which relates the objects in a determinate way. The thrust of Wittgenstein's talk of pictures becomes clearer when he makes the comparison between propositions and pictures. Propositions are also pictures: they picture reality, and the two elements of the pictorial relationship are necessary in

order that the propositions might represent a possible state of affairs. At the deep structure

of language, we are to find two kinds of things - names and form.

According to the standard interpretation.[1] of the *TLP*, the names in propositions

stand for (in some manner to be examined) objects in the states of affairs pictured by the

proposition. The element of form, common to both propositions and the facts they picture,

is thereby some additional 'thing' which allows the combinatorial possibilities of the

objects - which, according to the standard interpretation constitute states of affairs - to be

shown in the in the linguistic items (propositions) which picture them. Whatever this

element of form is, it must operate independently of the existence or non-existence of

these objects in states of affairs; for it is the existence or non-existence of these states of

affairs which is reality (C.f. 2.06). Since whether a proposition is true depends on whether

the state of affairs it pictures obtains or not, logical form must also function independent

of truth or falsity.

In what follows, I explore the possibility that the standard interpretation misses

Wittgenstein's intent in important respects. In the first chapter, I address the issue of

logical form. By first isolating the functional requirements of logical form (internal to the

TLP itself) and showing how the standard view of logical form fails to meet those

requirements, I then go on to offer an account of logical form which identifies it with the

predicative element of propositions. The second chapter defends my reading of

Wittgenstein's terminology of *Sinn* and *Bedeutung* employed in both the first and third

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[1] A point of clarification. There is actually not one particular interpretation that I am referring to when I speak of the standard interpretation. In the same way that there is no such thing as the 'average family', there is no one standard reading of the *TLP*. The membership to the family of views that I am taking issue with (whether explicitly or implicitly) is defined by commitment to the three tenets that I outline below.

chapters. The final chapter concerns the issue of Tractarian objects. I will give an

alternative, non-realist interpretation of these objects in the context of a discussion of

names in the *TLP*.

Through challenging some of the received views, I explore the possibility of - and

extent to which - the results from the two aspects of picturing (and thus the Picture

Theory itself) is in fact carried over to Wittgenstein's theory of meaning. I view my

project as work in progress toward the vindication of Hidé Ishiguro's insight that, in the

context of *TLP*, representing is not a simple word-world relation and that there is a

difference between standing for (as names do for objects) and representing. To this end, I

have assembled arguments designed to undermine what I take to be the three tenets of the

standard interpretation. These three tenets can be captured in the form of three theses,

they are: (1) the *thesis of semantic homogeneity*: by this I mean the view that the *TLP* sets

forth a semantics that takes as its one prototype that of a name to its bearer; (2) the

single-tier thesis: (correlative to (1)) which holds that Wittgenstein has something

analogous to Fregean *Sinn* in the semantics of the *TLP*; and (3) the *realist thesis*

according to which the Tractarian objects are to understood as metaphysically real in the

ordinary sense in which tables and chairs are said to be real.[2]

To be sure, the TLP's discussion of pictures is (forgive the pun) sketchy and its

import unclear. Nevertheless, I think a case can be made for respecting the difference -

sometimes not observed by Wittgenstein himself - between the semantics of names and the

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[2] Here it is important to forestall a possible misunderstanding. In trying to undermine the realist thesis, I
am *not* attempting to show that the early Wittgenstein was an anti-realist. I take it as a truism that the
early Wittgenstein is a realist in the garden-variety sense that statements about the world are true or false
independent of our beliefs and that it is the way the world is that makes our statements true or false.

semantics of predicates and relational expressions. If we do this, we can then appreciate the fundamental point that Wittgenstein seeks to establish through his comparison of propositions of pictures. Just as a picture is able to represent a scene in virtue of the aspects discussed above, so it is the case with propositions. Propositions can represent possible or actual states of affairs because of their 'semantic heterogeneity', that is to say, in virtue of the fact that their constituents represent (or capture) what they do in different ways.

In the ensuing pages one is bound to be struck by the scarcity of references to the Picture Theory itself. This is deliberate, for while the Picture Theory is the leading idea for the thesis, it is nevertheless just that - a leading idea. In the following chapters, I endeavor to work through the issues in what I hope is the depth and detail required to give content and precision to many of the metaphors that Wittgenstein employed in the *TLP*. In my interpretation of Wittgenstein, I try to employ what I take to be a paramount virtue in philosophy (as in other things) - generosity. Perhaps at times my principle of interpretive charity has been too heavy-handed; nevertheless, I have (as far as possible) tried to avoid the kind of overly reverential approach taken by some Wittgenstein interpreters. My thesis certainly makes no claim to completeness and immunity from counter example, as it certainly does not possess either of these virtues. Nevertheless, I think the Picture Theory contains much that is interesting concerning language and that curious property it has of 'about-ness'. If my arguments are cogent and philosophically interesting, and if I have retained fidelity to the spirit (if not the letter) of the *TLP*, then I will consider my effort a success.

Chapter One: Logical Form and Wittgenstein's Picture Theory of the Proposition.

This is the difficulty: How can there be such a thing as the form of p *if there is no situation of this form? And in that case, what does this form really consist in?*
Notebooks, 29.10.14

I.

Logical Form: The Problem and its Background in Wittgenstein:

Wittgenstein's entry in his notebooks of October 29, 1914 records a decisive break from Russell. With this entry Wittgenstein's development of the picture theory of the proposition, an idea which would come to fruition in the *TLP*, has begun: implicit in it is Wittgenstein's dissatisfaction with Russell's platonic account of logical form; and in the next several days, the essential features of the mature picture theory are sketched. The following day, he writes: "There are different ways of giving a representation, even by means of a picture, and what represents is not merely the sign or picture, but also the method of representation. *What is common to all representation is that they can be right or wrong, true or false.* Then - picture *and way of representing* are completely outside what is represented! The two together are true or false, namely *the picture, in a particular way.* (Of course this holds for elementary propositions too!)" Wittgenstein is here envisioning an answer to the above difficulty that involved the method of representation of a possible state of affairs, where this involved a method of representation that was "completely outside what is represented." This representational capacity of propositions was to form a crucial part of what was to become the mature picture theory of the proposition in the *TLP*. After linking logical form with the picture theory, perhaps for the

first time, two days after Wittgenstein took himself to have isolated the difficulty. On November 1, he writes:

> We readily confuse the representing relation which the proposition has to its reference, and the truth relation. The former is different for different propositions, the latter is one and the same for all propositions.[...]
> The logical form of the proposition must already be given by the forms of its component parts. (And these have only to do with the *sense* [*Sinn*, italics Wittgenstein] of the propositions, not with their truth or falsehood.) [...]
> The method of portrayal must be completely determinate before we can compare reality with the proposition at all in order to see whether it is true or false. The method of comparison must be given [to] me before I can make the comparison. Whether a proposition is true or false is something that has to appear. We must however know in advance *how* it will appear.

This entry suggests a relation between logical form, which (according to this passage) is concerned with the sense *Sinn* of a proposition, not with its truth or falsity, and the possibility of our comparing a proposition to reality.[1] To be sure, in the effort to understand the cluster of issues surrounding the picture theory as it is found in the *TLP*, the *Notebooks* are only a source of historical evidence for the *development* of the views he actually went on the record as holding in the *TLP*.

What sort of thing, then, is logical form? In the Tractarian picture theory of the proposition, Wittgenstein's conception of logical form has the function of explaining how it is possible for one type of thing - a picture, or more to the point, a proposition - to represent another, distinct state of affairs in the world. Likening a proposition to a picture in the 2's and 3's allows Wittgenstein to draw the following conclusions. A proposition

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[1] It might be thought that this shows Wittgenstein to be adopting a single-tier semantics (as Russell does) but with the proviso that *Sinn* (logical form) is to distinguished from truth-value. What is important to note in this early *Notebooks* entry, however, is his talk of the 'method of comparison' and 'method of portrayal' as this contains the seeds of his notion of the *mode of presentation*. As we will see in the remainder of this thesis, it is this latter notion which is involved with Wittgenstein's notion of a *symbol*, and its affinities with Frege's notion of a mode of presentation (which accounts for an expression's cognitive value) that makes Wittgenstein's semantics two-tiered.

can represent a state of affairs in virtue of a shared structure: that is, in virtue of the fact

that the determinate, articulated elements in the proposition stand in a similar relationship

(here the similarity is couched in spatial metaphors) to the combination of objects which

comprised the state of affairs that it pictures.[2] This relationship is often said to be one of

'structural isomorphism'[3] between the proposition and the fact that it pictures. It is

Wittgenstein's notion of logical form which is supposed to account for this structural

similarity. This is the point of 2.18 in the *TLP*: "What any picture, of whatever form, must

have in common with reality, in order to be able to depict it - correctly or incorrectly - in

any way at all, is logical form, i.e., the form of reality." Logical form is to explain this

structural isomorphism or homology that makes possible a proposition's representing a

fact.

In this chapter, I will examine Wittgenstein's conception of logical form in the light

of Ishiguro's and Carruthers' insight that for Wittgenstein (following Frege), the semantic

properties of names differ in kind from the semantic properties of predicate and relational

expressions. The proposal on offer is roughly this: If we interpret names (of which

elementary propositions are a concatenation) narrowly to include only proper names that

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[2] The most plausible understanding of Wittgenstein's claim that a proposition is a fact, is, I think, that a proposition is like a fact (is a fact) in virtue of its being a structured set of elements.

[3] The unhappy phrase 'structural isomorphism' has become a fixture in the literature despite its being misleading; the isomorphism is of a very peculiar sort, as it is supposed to be present in both linguistic and non-linguistic items. While it lacks the cachet of 'structural isomorphism', *homology* better captures the sense in which we are dealing with a correspondence between two types of things with certain analogous features. This point is more than a terminological quibble, for it is premised on taking the definition of isomorphism strictly, and hence to involve a kind of numerical *identity* of form. (Thus in *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, the second definition reads "2. *Math. & Philos.* Identity of form and operations between two or more groups or other sets; an exact correspondence as regards the number of constituent elements and the relations between them; *spec.* a one-to-one homomorphism." This is important, as I want to go on to show that Wittgenstein's talk of a shared structure does not amount to a kind of strict identity of form; that is, I seek to weaken the strictness of this identity of form. I am indebted to Ray Jennings for this point.

have as their referent simple objects in the corresponding state of affairs, and thus exclude

predicate and relational expressions from being countenanced as names, then there is a

philosophically interesting and compelling explanation of Wittgensteinian logical form.[4] It

is the predicative element in a sentence (or proposition[5]) that provides the logical form, in

a sense to be specified, of that proposition. As will be seen, predicates are unlike names in

analyzed propositions.[6] Section II of this chapter will briefly examine Wittgenstein's

notions of *Sinn* and *Bedeutung* and will suggest what may seem an unorthodox

interpretation of this terminology[7]. Section III will consider three functional requirements

that must be met by an adequate interpretation of logical form. As we will see these

requirements are internal to the *TLP* itself in the sense that Wittgenstein requires the

notion of logical form to sustain these functions. Thus, it is important to keep in mind in

the following discussion that I am not making any claims about the notion of logical form

simpliciter or as it appears in the context of formal logic. In Section IV, I will argue that

Wittgenstein's simple names should be construed narrowly to exclude predicate and

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[4] My account owes a debt to Hidé Ishiguro's articles "Subjects, Predicates, Isomorphic Representation, and Language Games" in E. Saarinen, R. Hilpinen, I. Niiniluoto and M. Provence Hintikka (eds.), Essays in Honour of Jaakko Hintikka, pp. 351-364 and Peter Carruthers' two books Tractarian Semantics (Cambridge, New York, 1990) for pointing out the extent to which one needs to consider Wittgenstein in the light of Frege, as well his formulation of the doctrine of logical objectivism. While my project differs form his to a great degree, anyone familiar with these books will know the extent of their influence.

[5] Though it lies outside the scope of this chapter, it is important to note that Wittgenstein is especially non-committal with respect to what precisely he means by the notion of a proposition, and how propositions are related to sentences and thoughts, how they are individuated, etc. This ambiguity infects the notion of elementary propositions, which are found at the penultimate level of analysis - the ultimate constituents being (semantically) simple (irreducible) names which correspond to simple objects. I will examine this issue of propositions in the *TLP* in Chapter Two.

[6] To anticipate the following discussion, predicate and relational terms 'drop out, as it were, at the ultimate level of analysis (the level of names and simple objects). The predicative component of the elementary proposition are the logical forms. As we will see in section III, there is an ambiguity in Wittgenstein's discussion between *Satz* as ordinary-language sentence and *Satz* as the analyzed form of the sentence. The very fact that there is this ambiguity seems to lend prima facie evidence for taking the traditional translation of *Satz* as proposition (being that which is expressed by a sentence) as misleading.

[7] A sustained defense of this interpretation is undertaken in Chapter Two.

relational expressions (contra Hintikka); The upshot being that we should not take Wittgenstein to be committed (as Russell was) to the existence of predicate and relation universals which would be the reference of the predicate and relational expressions in analyzed expressions. Section V will take the conclusions from the previous sections to sketch an interpretation of logical form.

As against Russell and Frege, Wittgenstein believes that predicate and relational expressions don't refer to any *thing* - Platonic or otherwise. Roughly put, I will try to show that for Wittgenstein names and predicate/relational expressions perform their semantic role in different ways. Take for example the expression *Fido bites*: the subject and predicate expressions mean what they do in different ways; while the name 'Fido' stands for the dog whose name is Fido, the predicate expression '...bites' will be shown not to stand for anything. In examining Wittgenstein's conception of logical form, we do well to take seriously his remark in the Preface to the *TLP* where he acknowledges his debt to "Frege's great works".[8] Specifically, I think it will be helpful to remember that Wittgenstein shares Frege's commitment to the three "fundamental principles" articulated in the <u>Foundations of Arithmetic</u>: always to separate sharply the psychological from the logical, the subjective from the objective; never to ask for the meaning of a word in isolation, but only in the context of a proposition. Finally, (if my arguments are compelling): never to lose sight of the distinction between concept and object.

The second principle - the context principle - is taken up, almost verbatim at *TLP* 3.3: "Only propositions can have sense (*Sinn*); only in the nexus of a proposition does a name have meaning (*Bedeutung*)." This principle, taken with *TLP* 3.142 where he asserts

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[8] *TLP* author's preface, pg. 3.

that only propositions are able to express sense show Wittgenstein to be endorsing (with reservations) two Fregean doctrines, namely: 1) that the sentence is the fundamental unit of meaning, and 2) that it is through the *Sinn* of an expression that we are able to secure reference for the expression (but with the strong qualification that only propositions have *Sinn*).[9] Given that there is no bare reference of a name to object[10] - that it is only through a proposition that we are able to establish the referents of the component expressions in a proposition, and thereby the truth-conditions of the entire proposition - then it is possible to distinguish two aspects of asserting a proposition. There is the referring aspect of names to simple objects and the predicative aspect of the proposition which requires a grasp of the rules of classification and projection for predicate and relational expressions. These rules are contained in the semantic content (*Bedeutung*) of the predicate expressions and are the rules for the proper classification of objects which serve as possible arguments to predicate and relational expressions. Such rules would govern the predication of a property or relation to an object or set of objects. The predicative elements in a sub-sentential expression would allow a competent speaker (one who grasps the "method of projection", see *TLP* 3.11 - 3.13) to determine whether the items in the

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[9] One way of showing the similarities as well as points of contrast is as follows. For Frege, recall, there are two laws of compositionality: (1) The *Sinn* of a sentence is a a function of the *Sinne* of its parts; and (2) The *Bedeutung* of a sentence is a function of the *Bedeutungen* of its parts. Wittgenstein would hold onto (2) with the qualification that *Bedeutung* is to be understood as semantic content (see below, Chapter Two) and would also hold (1) with the two significant qualifications that only propositions have *Sinn* (understood as truth-conditions) and that the constituent names *qua* symbols has a functional equivalent to the aspect of Fregean *Sinn* as mode of presentation. To anticipate, in the same way as the Fregean notion of *Sinn* is both compositional and functions as a mode of presentation of *Bedeutung* which accounts for the cognitive content of expressions (apart from their reference), so too does Wittgenstein's notion of *symbol* have the property of compositionality and the function of accounting for both the cognitive content of expressions and as a mode of presentation of the *Bedeutung* of the expression.
[10] This is admittedly a controversial claim, I will go on to argue for this more fully in Chapters Two and Three. For the time being, I would mention Wittgenstein's re-iteration of Frege's context principle (*TLP* 3.3) and his emphasis on the *use* of a sign in the 3.3's as giving plausibility to my claim.

world stand in the relationship that the elements of the proposition specify. It is my contention that on Wittgenstein's conception, logical form is coextensive with the denumerably many members of the class of objective rules that govern the proper use of both predicate expressions and proper names in elementary propositions. And as the truth or falsity of a proposition is a function of the elementary propositions of which it is composed, so too is the logical form of a proposition a function of the logical form of those elementary propositions of which it is composed.

II.

A brief consideration of Sinn/Bedeutung terminology in the TLP:

I shall follow Carruthers and not interpret Wittgenstein's Sinn and Bedeutung as 'sense' and 'meaning'[11], respectively. Rather, I shall understand the *Sinn* of a proposition to be its truth-conditions. Hence, at 3.13 Wittgenstein speaks of a proposition *expressing*, but not *containing* its *Sinn*; the proposition "contains the form, but not the content" of its *Sinn. Sinn* concerns the reference of the entire proposition which is its truth-conditions.[12] At the level of elementary propositions it is the correlative extra-linguistic units - the possible existence or non-existence of states of affairs - that combine to form the truth-condition of the whole. For Wittgenstein, as for Frege, the notion of *Sinn* is used to explain, independently of considerations of truth or falsity, what it is to understand a sentence. While their views are similar in that they hold the realm of *Sinn* to be wholly

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[11] Bedeutung is often translated as 'meaning', where this is taken in the Russellian sense of being equated with 'reference'. As I shall try to show in this project, the accepted equation of Bedeutung, meaning, and reference begs the interesting semantic questions about what sort of semantic theory Wittgenstein is advancing in the *TLP*.

[12] See Tractarian Semantics, pp. 24-26. That *Sinn* means something like truth-condition for Wittgenstein is further supported by *TLP* 4.022: "A proposition *shows* its sense (*Sinn*). A proposition *shows* how things stand if it is true. And it *says that* they do so stand."

separate from that of psychology, they differ markedly, though, in what they consider *Sinn* to be. For Frege, the realm of *Sinn* is neither that of language nor of the world: it occupies a third, objectively real though not spatio-temporally ordered universe; conversely, for Wittgenstein, *Sinn* concerns just that part of the world that is of relevance to the truth or falsity of the proposition in question: it concerns the truth-conditions of the sentences.

Despite the anachronistic ring, *Bedeutung* is to be understood generally as the semantic content of an expression or proposition. As with *Sinn*, *Bedeutung* also involves the reference of the significant units of the language to the corresponding bits of extra-linguistic reality; but whereas *Sinn* concerns (but is not to be equated with) the reference of an entire proposition - its truth-conditions. *Bedeutung*, on the other hand, concerns the determinate way in which the units of language map onto, or 'catch hold of', the particular bits of the world to which they correspond or 'picture'. There is no restriction in the application of the concept of *Bedeutung* to whole propositions: proper names, predicate and relational expressions, elementary propositions (which are an amalgamation of names and predicates), and logical connectives all possess *Bedeutungen*. On this interpretation, *Sinn* is, in the case of propositions, a kind of *Bedeutung* - it is the semantic content of that sentence. This interpretation will be defended at length in Chapter Two.

The semantic content of an expression contains, roughly speaking, two aspects. First, the semantic content of an expression is non-committal with respect to the reference of the expression, by which I mean that it is not necessary that the semantic content of a proper name be exhausted by its bearer. For example, the semantic content of a predicate or relational expression need not be an item in the real (or platonic world); and in fact, I

will argue that Wittgenstein holds just this sort of view. The semantic content of a proper name will specify what sort of thing the name refers to; it will specify the semantic role of the expression in larger, molecular expressions of which it is a part. Put metaphorically, the semantic content of an expression is a kind of truth-functional blueprint: it specifies what its contribution is to the whole. To take an example, when the expression (a name) refers to a simple object that does not exist, it contributes a .value of false to the semantic content of the expression which contains it. Secondly - and this point is related to the first - this notion of semantic content which specifies the semantic properties of these types of expression operates independently of truth or falsity. Thus, for any expression (including whole propositions), the semantic content of the component expressions are both wholly determinate, mind-independent in the sense of being independent of this or that person's linguistic beliefs, and independent of contingent matters of truth and falsity. Thus, while it may be that Wittgenstein is committed to a view of the semantics of proper names whereby the semantic content of a name is exhausted by its bearer on a straightforward name-bearer picture, the concept of semantic content on offer here leaves the possibility open that the semantic properties of predicate and relational expression differs in kind from that of proper name expressions.[13] I will presently argue that this possibility is actually realized in Wittgenstein's view of predicate semantics.

To summarize the discussion so far, as well as to anticipate: expressions containing proper names and predicate/relational expressions, whole propositions, and even logical connectives possess *Bedeutung*. In the case of propositions, the semantic content of the proposition is equivalent to its *Sinn* - its truth-conditions. In the case of proper name

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[13] I shall argue in Chapter Three that Wittgenstein is not, in fact, committed to such a view.

expressions, the semantic content will involve (but needn't be exhausted by) the simple

object to which is its referent; in predicate and relational expressions the semantic content

is equivalent with the rules for the correct classification of types of objects, rules of

ascribing and attributing.

Before proceeding, it is helpful to differentiate further Wittgenstein's conception of

Sinn from a particular aspect of Frege's notion of *Sinn*, namely his idea of *Sinn* as the

"mode of presentation" of the referent of an expression. While this will be elaborated in

Chapter Two, in the interest of forestalling possible misunderstandings it is important to

note the following. On the interpretation I am offering, the Fregean aspect of *Sinn* as-

mode-of- presentation of the referent of an expression is entirely absent from

Wittgenstein's notion of *Sinn*; that is to say that contra Frege, Wittgenstein's notion of

Sinn does not account for the ***cognitive content*** of expressions. Nevertheless,

Wittgenstein does make room for a very similar notion in the guise of his discussion of

modes of presentation and projection. I shall argue for this later. Suffice it to note for now

that Wittgenstein's conception of cognitive content is distinct from his notion of the *Sinn*

of sentences, residing, as it were, in his notion of the mode of projection and presentation

of propositions *qua* symbols.

The notion of logical form will be shown to be equivalent to the semantic content

of the predicate and relational expressions. However, given that the *cognitive* content of

expressions (involving the method of projection/signification, and in general the

"conventions enabling us to map any given arrangement of picture elements onto a

determinate arrangement of their referents."[14]) will involve expressions which at the same time also have semantic content, it is to be expected that the two types of content - semantic and cognitive - will be intimately connected. As a result, logical form will occur in both types of content, even if only derivatively in the case of cognitive content. Now I shall turn to the functional requirements for the notion of logical form, these being criteria of adequacy of any candidate for the explanation of logical form.

III.

Functional Requirements of Logical Form in Wittgenstein's Picture Theory:

There are four functional requirements to be met by any interpretation of Wittgenstein's conception of logical form, and it is reasonable to expect that any satisfactory explanation of how those requirements are to be met.

1.) *The requirement of the false proposition:* This is just the need for any account of logical form to explain how it is possible for a proposition to be both false and significant. This just is the difficulty of how there can be a form of the proposition p when there is no state of affairs of this form. And in so far as the form of a fact pictured by a proposition p must be independent of the form of p, this requirement holds also for true propositions. I term it *the requirement of the false proposition* for the reason that the explanatory need for a common structural feature is felt more acutely, perhaps, in the absence of the state of affairs (or better, when the state of affairs pictured by p does not exist.)

2.) *The 'propositional glue' requirement:* Wittgenstein takes pains to let us know that a proposition (like the facts that they picture) are articulated. This requirement asks after the phenomenon of unity in a proposition: what is it that joins a set of words into a proposition? Put another way, what distinguishes a mere list of words from a significant linguistic unit which can *both* picture a state of affairs and be the bearer of truth-values. This requirement (while manifested in surface features as in the sentential significance requirement, below) concerns the deep structure of language and was one of the features that Frege sought to explain in his distinction between concept and object with the metaphors of 'saturatedness' and 'unsaturatedness.' To better distinguish this requirement

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[14] The analogue of Frege's mode of presentation (the method of projection/mode of signification) that Wittgenstein speaks of - that is, cognitive content - is said to belong to expressions insofar as they are *symbols*. Wittgenstein is clear on this point, saying that all types of expressions are symbols, and thus have cognitive content. This will be discussed in Chapter Two.

from (3), below, we need to keep before us that this requirement seeks an answer to the *constitutive* question: What is it that makes a string of words into a significant proposition? This amounts to saying that in order for an interpretation of logical form to be adequate, it must explain how it is that a set of words comes to be a significant linguistic unit capable of representing a state of affairs.

3.) *The sentential significance requirement:* For an interpretation of Wittgensteinian logical form to be satisfactory, it must explain, or at least speak to the issue of (again independently of truth or falsity) how it is on a surface-grammatical level that some combinations of words are significant while others are not. This requirement belongs at the level of *cognitive content,* and concerns how actual language users are able to determine whether a proposition is well formed and hence significant.[15] To further bring out the contrast with (2): if (2) asks the *constitutive* question about linguistic significance, then (3) asks after the question, "what is it to understand whether a combination of words is well-formed and thus significant?"

4.) *The new proposition requirement(the creativity constraint):* An interpretation of logical form should explain how it is that we are able to understand new propositions, that is, new combinations of words. As many people have remarked, we need a kind of compositionality here that would permit someone who knew a finite vocabulary to construct denumerably many new combinations *that are significant.* This last clause is important, for what we want in this requirement is to have the very fact of *significance* explained.

First is the difficulty with which we began our discussion: how can there be a form

of a proposition *p* when there is no state of affairs of this form? This is *the requirement of*

the false proposition that Wittgenstein took his notion of the picture theory to have

solved. In particular it is the notion of the logical form - which is in some sense common

to a state of affairs and the proposition which pictures it - that explains how it is possible

for a proposition to be both false and significant. This first requirement poses the question:

how is it that, if propositions are pictures of states of affairs and true or false in virtue of

the existence or non-existence of states of affairs, we can understand and evaluate a

proposition if the state of affairs that it purportedly pictures does not exist? This criterion

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[15] This will concerns expressions qua symbols; nevertheless, the <u>cognitive content</u> must (despite idiolectic variations) be able to accurately reflect/mirror the <u>semantic content</u> of the predicate and relation expression involved.)

is at work in 4.031, "In a proposition a situation is, as it were, constructed by way of an experiment. Instead of, 'This proposition has such and such a sense (*Sinn*),' we can simply say, 'This proposition represents such and such a situation.'" Further evidence is seen at *TLP* 4.024, 'To understand a proposition means to know what is the case if it is true. (One can understand it, therefore, without knowing whether it is true.)[16] Secondly, there is **the sentential significance requirement**: Wittgenstein's conception of logical form must explain (again, independent of its truth or falsity) how it is that some combinations of words are significant, and others are not, that is, they are simply strings of words. This requirement actually overlaps with the first in that some account of propositional significance would be needed to explain the fact that one can determine whether a proposition is well-formed, in the minimal sense of being grammatically correct; and if a proposition is well-formed, it *shows* its *Sinn*: "A proposition *shows* its sense (*Sinn*.) A proposition *shows* how things stand *if* it is true. And it *says that* they do so stand"(4.022.) The requirements of propositional significance seem to overlap with **the new proposition requirement** which requires an explanation of how we are able to understand new propositions - that is, new combinations of words. To this end, Wittgenstein writes at 4.027 and 4.03: "It belongs to the essence of a proposition that it can communicate a *new* sense (*Sinn*) to us." and "A proposition must use old expressions to communicate a new *Sinn*."

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[16] This is also shown by 4.061: "It must not be overlooked that a proposition has a sense that is independent of the facts: otherwise one can easily suppose that true and false are relations of equal status between signs and what they signify. In that case, one could say, for example, that '*p*' signified in the true way what '*-p*' signified in the false way, etc."

The fourth requirement is a response to Russell's 1913 theory of judgment and concerns what might be termed the *'propositional glue' requirement.* Whereas the previous two requirements concerned surface features of language that were in need of explanation given the practices of language users, the need for 'glue' concerns a deeper (or at least more fundamental) matter. At a deep level of language there is the issue of what it is that joins a set of words into a proposition; and whatever this 'something' is, it serves to distinguish a mere list of words from a significant linguistic item which can function to represent a possible state of affairs. Given this requirement, it is unsurprising that at 3.14, we see: "A proposition is not a medley of words.-(Just as a theme in music is not a medley of notes.) A proposition is articulated." To put this point in the language of Wittgenstein's discussion of pictures, the problem of 'propositional glue' centers around the issue of what constitutes a picture as a representation of something else, that is, of what is it that makes a picture itself (or a significant proposition) *representational.*[17]

These four functional requirements can be illustrated by considering a simple example of an expression containing a two-place relation. Leaving aside questions of simplicity and complexity, let 'a' and 'b' stand for individuals, and let 'R' stand for the two-place relation '...stands to the left of...' The sentential significance requirement stipulates that that any interpretation account for why it is that <Tom, Mary>, <the car, the house> are significant arguments, while <seven, Hawaii> are not. The restrictions of permissible substitution need to be explained without appealing to the fact that the expression is said to express, as we can distinguish well-formed, grammatical sentences

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[17] For an interesting discussion of this issue, see Peter Hylton's 'The Nature of the Proposition and the Revolt Against Idealism' in <u>Philosophy in History</u> eds. R. Rorty, J. Schneewind, and Q. Skinner (Cambridge, CUP, 1984) pp. 375-397.

before determining their truth-value. The requirement of the false proposition is just the problem of giving an account of the significance of the proposition that allows for falsity. The 'propositional glue' requirement would call an interpretation of Wittgensteinian logical form to account for the deeper semantic issue that there is something that distinguishes, in this example, certain ordered pairs as being valid arguments, while others are not; what is important about this fact (with respect to this requirement) is that certain combinations of functions and arguments have a kind of unity which is, in a sense, constitutive of their being a significant proposition. The unity of a proposition would seem to be at least partly constitutive of those expressions being able to effect an assertion.

The requirement, indeed the difficulty, of the false proposition is perhaps seen more acutely when we consider the relational expression (to take Moore's example) '....differs from...' In the case of a proposition containing this relational expression, if the proposition were to be false in virtue of the relation not obtaining - to take an uncontroversial example, a case where the relata, the objects denoted by *'c'*, and *'d'* related by the expression, are actually identical. In this case, the proposition asserting of c and d that they differ would be false. There are two problems, the first is the straightforward difficulty of the relation not obtaining between the individuals, (and hence there being no form of a situation in which c differs from b. The second difficulty concerns the apparent fact that there is no item in the world referred to by the relational expression, even if were somehow antecedently specified *in which respect(s)* c differs from d.[18] Without going into a detailed discussion of the possibility of disambiguating the

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[18] As I will presently argue, this difficulty plays out in two ways, and corresponding to these types of difficulties are two reasons that Wittgenstein avoids both a referential semantic for names and a commitment to predicate and relation types and tokens.

proposition, the point is simply to note that it is difficult to see what could possibly be isomorphic between a proposition and the state of affairs which doesn't obtain, but the proposition nevertheless is said to picture. Having discussed the functional requirements of logical form, I will turn to a discussion of predicate semantics.

IV.

Tractarian Names and Predicate Semantics, a provisional sketch:

In trying to isolate more thoroughly Wittgenstein's notion of logical form, we must sketch a provisional picture of the semantics of the *TLP*. I stress provisional because, as I will go on to show in the remainder of this Chapter, the semantics of names is heterogeneous with that of predicates. This provisional sketch will be heavily amended in two ways. In the first instance, we will see in what way the semantics of Tractarian names differs from that of predicate and relational expressions. Given that on my interpretation the logical form of an expression is to be identified with the predicative element of that expression, it is unsurprising that in explicating logical form, a discussion of Wittgenstein's take on predicate semantics will follow in train. Over and above this, the sketch is provisional in a second way: it will rest content to toe the standard Russellian line on the semantics of names (albeit names construed narrowly). This is temporary, for to anticipate, I will examine in detail this Russellianism with respect to the semantics of proper names in Chapter Three.

Digression: A Caveat Concerning the Relation Between Ordinary Language and a Logically Perspicuous Language in the TLP:

Wittgenstein was unclear about the relation between ordinary language and

the language to which the views he was setting forth in the *TLP* applies.[19]   And while

most commentators have taken Wittgenstein to be occupied principally with a logically

perspicuous notation and to a lesser extent with ordinary language, his ambiguity on this

score was so thoroughgoing that Russell, in his Introduction, claimed that Wittgenstein "is

concerned [in the *TLP*] with the conditions which would have to be fulfilled by a logically

perfect language." Before commencing a discussion of names, predicate semantics, and

logical form, it is important to come to some understanding of Wittgenstein's view on the

matter. For if Russell is right in his estimation (and there is good evidence from

Wittgenstein himself that Russell misunderstood the nature of his project, that is to say

that Russell was wrong about the aims of the *TLP*) then the Picture Theory of the

Meaning of Propositions has very little to do with ordinary language.

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[19] Whether this is due to an unclarity in Wittgenstein's own thoughts or an unclarity in the expression of the thoughts that were, by and large, already clear is an interesting question, and one which space does not permit a responsible attempt at an answer. Nevertheless, I will hazard a few observations. First, there are times, for example in his notion of *Satz* when he seems to be hopelessly sloppy in his exposition; at other times, while he helps himself to shifting uses of key terms like object, but freely admits that he is doing so. (c.f. 4.123.) Second, from reading Monk (1990), there is a clear sense in which he thought that working out the details should be left for duller, less original minds [irony not lost.] Some of the issues on which he is most illusive (and frustrating) such as name, object, and elementary proposition form a kind of family with the core notion of analysis. The fact that this notion of analysis was rather metaphoric and vague (for example, Russell seemed to think of it by analogy with chemical analyses of compounds into their component elements) in the early analytic tradition would point to Wittgenstein's own unclarity. To bring this point about analysis around, Wittgenstein claims that it is through analysis that we will reach the level of names, elementary propositions, and the objects that correspond to the objects; it is unsurprising, then, that the other foundational concepts that form the problematic cluster (along with analysis) are themselves problematic. For an interesting and subtle unpacking of the problematic early history of the concept of analysis, see Peter Hylton's contribution to the 1994 *Proceedings of the International Wittgenstein Symposium* (eds. Hintikka and Puhl. Holder-Pichler-Tempsky, Vienna. 1995)

   The last observation concerns the very form which the *TLP* takes. Wittgenstein's literary strategy *hints* at something very interesting. In a converstation with Peter Hylton, he suggested that the *TLP* was, among other things, intended as a piece of art. While this might seem far fetched, at first glance, I think he is very much right. While he didn't elaborate, please indulge me a bit of speculation. That Wittgenstein was concerned with the limits of language and delimiting the sphere of the sayable in order to protect the ethical/aesthetic realm has been persuasively established (C.f. Janik and Toulmin's *Wittgenstein's Vienna*.) I think that the sparse, crystalline prose of the *TLP* itself has ethical-aesthetic import: despite the submerged problems with the semantic/philosophical import of the book, it is itself an ethical-aesthetic exercise in trying to establish the limits of language. Gary Overvold has suggested that one could write an interesting piece on logical form as an ethical problem; for my part, I agree with him.

Reading the *TLP*, it becomes apparent that Wittgenstein was pulled in two opposing directions on this issue. On the one hand, some of Wittgenstein's remarks about logically perspicuous notion appear to place the *TLP* squarely in the lineage of both Frege's *Begriffschrift* and the *Principia Mathematica*; on the other hand, there seems to be ample evidence that Wittgenstein was concerned with how it was that sentences in ordinary language (not simply propositions in a logically perfect notation) were able to represent states of affairs in the world. To this end 5.5563 states emphatically that natural language is in perfect logical order as it stands, and would appear to commit Wittgenstein's Picture Theory to being a view about ordinary language, and not in a kind of derivative or degraded way; it would be natural to read him as saying that natural language is fine as it is, and is not therefore a degraded medium with which to represent facts. This fundamental ambiguity, nay inconsistency, is shown in the following passages: Showing Wittgenstein to be interested in ordinary language, we see "Man possesses the ability to construct languages capable of expressing every sense, without having any idea how each word has meaning or what its meaning is...Everyday language is a part of the human organism, and no less complicated than it."; and then there is his discussion of ordinary language at 4.011, and perhaps most emphatically, at 5.5563, "In fact, all the propositions of our everyday language, just as they stand, are in perfect logical order. - that utterly simple thing, which we have to formulate here, is not an image of the truth, but is the truth itself in its entirety." On the other hand, Wittgenstein claims that not only does everyday language "disguise thought" (4.002), but moreover, everyday language, with its ambiguity, gives rise to fundamental confusions "of which the whole of philosophy is

full"(3.324.) What's more, some of what Wittgenstein says (echoing Frege of the *Begriffschrift*) seem to commit him to scrapping ordinary language in favor of a logically perspicuous notation: "In order to avoid such errors [of which the whole of philosophy is full] we must make use of a sign-language that excludes them..[by using] a sign-language that is governed by *logical* grammar - by logical syntax. (The conceptual notation of Frege and Russell is such a language, though, it is true, it fails to exclude all mistakes.)(3.325.) Wittgenstein's apparent inconsistency is troubling.

Some commentators, most notably Irving Copi, have taken Wittgenstein to be concerned with a logically perfect language, to the detriment (or at least neglect) of ordinary language: "The tendency [in the *TLP*] to reject ordinary language seems to me to predominate. Wittgenstein was concerned with the construction of an adequate notation."[20] From this, he takes Wittgenstein's Picture Theory to apply only to elementary propositions (not propositions of ordinary language), and thus, for Copi, it *is at the level of fully analyzed elementary propositions* that we have an adequate notation. While I think Copi has some powerful arguments to marshal in support of a narrow reading of names (which I will consider shortly), I nevertheless disagree with Copi on the issue of ordinary language in the *TLP*. But rather than discuss why (In short think his argument is flawed, and hence unpersuasive), an examination of the position is itself instructive, showing, as it does, one way in which the vexed relation between ordinary language and a logically perspicuous language plays out in the *TLP*.

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[20] Copi, Irving "Objects, Properties and Relations in the Tractatus" in Copi and Beard *Essays on Wittgenstein's* Tractatus, New York, Macmillan. 1966. pg .168. My discussion of Copi's position will focus on this essay unless otherwise noted.

Leaving aside much textual evidence (i.e. from 4.01 to 4.06) where Wittgenstein explicitly likens whole (non-elementary) propositions to pictures, Copi nevertheless concludes, that his "picture theory of meaning is even further restricted...it applies not to *all* propositions, but to elementary propositions alone" (pg. 170.) Conjoining this fact with Copi's claim that the elementary propositions, for Wittgenstein, are just such parts of the logically perspicuous language of which he spoke in 3.325, the *TLP* would then be offering a picture theory for logically perspicuous propositions in an ideal language. There are several reasons why this is implausible. The first was already mentioned, namely, that Wittgenstein makes the very link with pictures and (non-elementary) propositions in the 2's, 3's, and 4's.[21] Secondly, if Copi's restriction on the picture theory is correct, its interest becomes significantly less: Wittgenstein's claims about the limits of language, etc., in the later passages of the *TLP* (where various issues not connected with a perspicuous notation are discussed) become simply irrelevant to Wittgenstein's interesting claims in the last third of the work. The third reason is that, if the picture theory were to only apply to elementary propositions and not to non-elementary propositions, then Wittgenstein's inability to give a single example of an elementary proposition leaves us with the question: Is the Picture Theory, arguably the philosophical core of the *TLP*, a theory of *nothing*? Given Wittgenstein's professed familiarity with the *Begriffschrift* and the *Principia,* both of which contain two examples of such logically perspicuous notations, it seems that

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[21] Copi's argument - "Granted that propositions which are pictures assert atomic facts, and that propositions which assert atomic facts are elementary propositions, it follows that propositions which are pictures are elementary propositions" - while valid, is a non-starter for the simple reason that Wittgenstein does not hold (in fact denies) the first premise. The first premise is false for the simple reason that Wittgenstein holds no such restriction on pictures; in fact, Wittgenstein seems quite liberal as to what would count as a picture, to the point of including musical scores and gramophone recordings.

Wittgenstein would have had at least some examples of such a notation were that to be his aim in the *TLP*.

While there doesn't seem to much to recommend either Copi's restriction of the Picture Theory to elementary propositions or his contention that Wittgenstein's main goal was to give a logically perspicuous notation, nevertheless, his contention forces us to face a troubling inconsistency. Not only is Wittgenstein ambiguous with respect to the relation between natural and artificial languages in the *TLP*, but this difficulty is compounded by a further twofold problem. Distinct from, but related to, this problem are the difficulties accruing from: 1.) not clearly separating sentences in ordinary language from disambiguated propositions (as Frege and Russell took pains to do) and furthermore; 2.) not spelling out (in sufficient detail) how non-elementary propositions are in turn related to elementary propositions. With respect to (1), Wittgenstein does not distinguish between sentences and propositions, and says only that the surface grammatical structure need not be its logical form. Concerning (2), there is only the requirement that a proposition is a truth-function of the expressions contained in it (3.318), and that "All propositions are results of truth-operations on elementary propositions"(5.3.) While (1) creates many difficulties (some of which will be discussed in Chapter Two where the problematic notion of the proposition in the *TLP* is discussed); the difficulties with (2) are, I think, more profound, and more profoundly troubling for an interpretation of the Picture Theory.

The problematic relation between elementary and non-elementary propositions in (2) forces us to consider the fact that Wittgenstein posits a deep structure to language, and does so without an explanation of how the surface grammatical structure of natural

language is related to this deeper level. While he is clear that elementary propositions, that is, names in a concatenation, represent the terminus of analysis and hence the deep structure of language, he gives examples of neither names nor elementary propositions. Most examples of elementary propositions and names used in the literature (and that I use) seem to be logically complex in a way that would rule them out as candidates. To illustrate this, consider Wittgenstein's example - not of an elementary proposition, but nevertheless of the kind used in the literature to illustrate putatively elementary propositions - "Green is green", which most people would consider an instance of the predications of a property to an individual (person.) "Green is green" seems both to be a (non-elementary) proposition and one which has a surface grammatical structure (one which Wittgenstein thinks is an instance of an ambiguity in a sign) which though apparently simple, nevertheless contains a predicate which, as Wittgenstein allows (contra Russell), may have significant logical complexity. To put the matter crudely, all of the examples of the possible elements of the deep structural level of language (that Wittgenstein thinks must exist) don't appear to be particular or indigenous to a kind of mysterious 'deep' level of language; on the contrary, they seem to be the subjects and predicates of ordinary sentences. Claiming that names and elementary propositions are just what we end up with at the end of analysis doesn't advance our cause much: once we recall that Wittgenstein was forthcoming on the issue of analysis, we see that introducing that concept to explain the others isn't helpful. This doesn't clarify the issue so much as introduce another problematic notion into the discussion. However we ultimately interpret these constituents of the deep structure of language, it should be agreed that Wittgenstein's names (and, for that matter, the objects

the names correspond to) are difficult concepts that are component parts to a problematic

turn to a linguistic 'deep structure.'

The provisional picture:

The broad sketch of Wittgenstein's semantics can be had by considering the relation

between elementary propositions and the (atomic) states of affairs they stand in an

isomorphic, picturing relationship to. Leaving aside both the complexities and potential

pitfalls of the spatial metaphors Wittgenstein employs to make his point, as well as the

wrinkle added by predicate semantics, the semantics is relatively simple. Any complex

molecular proposition is a truth-function of the elementary propositions out of which it is

composed, and an analysis of the proposition will terminate at the level of elementary

propositions which are a concatenation of names (4.22.) Corresponding to this molecular

(non-elementary) proposition is a fact, which is the existence or non-existence of states of

affairs (TLP 2), and these states of affairs are, at bottom, a concatenation of simple objects

(2.01.) At the level of elementary propositions and atomic states of affairs, there is said to

be a one-to-one mapping relation of correspondence between names and objects. In

addition to this one-to-one relationship, ostensibly tailor-made for a name-bearer semantic

relation, there is said to be a second element - namely structure or form - which is said to

relate the objects and names in a determinate, structurally isomorphic way. So according

to the accepted, provisional sketch of the picture theory of propositions (and their

meaning): at the ultimate level of analysis, there are names, the objects that the names

correspond to, and some 'element' of form.[22]

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[22] Perhaps it is worth stating the obvious point that Wittgenstein is dealing with a very simple model of fact-stating language in these discussions. For example, despite his use of modal language of possibility and necessity at various points in the *TLP*, the picture theory set forth seems incapable (without significant

As intimated above, the issue becomes more complex when we consider what an elementary proposition might look like. Unfortunately Wittgenstein was here, as elsewhere, sparing with examples. Most of the candidates for the title are modeled on a simple predicate-object picture such as we saw in section III. Granting such types of example are bona fide elementary propositions, then one such as *Fb* is composed of an individual and a predicative or relational element in such a way that the elementary proposition is true (or contributes a value of true to the molecular proposition of which it is a part) just in case that the individual picked out by 'b' has property picked out by 'F'. On this picture, elementary propositions are expressions which take objects to truth-values, and the molecular propositions are truth-functions of these expressions. It is the existence or non-existence of the simple objects in states of affairs that combine to provide the *Sinn* (truth-conditions) of the propositions; and it is the requirement of both determinate Sinn and Bedeutung that drives Wittgenstein to postulate simple signs (names) and their putative bearers (objects) (Cf. 3.23.)[23]

Names: A Narrow or Wide Reading?

The question is now: how should we understand names? Should we interpret names broadly to include predicate and relational expressions in addition to the names which pick out individuals, or should we construe names narrowly to include only proper names that have, according to the preliminary picture, an individual as its bearer? The

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modification) to account for such aspects of natural language which don't behave truth-functionally, such as talk of counterfactuals and other modal language.

[23] For a nice discussion of this requirement, its historical context, and its rise and fall in fortunes, see Mark Sacks 'Through a Glass Darkly: Vagueness in the Metaphysics of the Analytic Tradition' in The Analytic Tradition, eds. David Bell and Neil Cooper (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990) pp. 173-195.

cases of the name-bearer relation *appear* relatively straightforward,[24] and many interpreters have taken this to be the only semantic relation at work in the Picture Theory. But if we take the Russellian name-bearer view (in the terminology of semantic content, the view that the semantic content of a name is exhausted by its bearer) together with a broad reading of names, we have to face the consequences of a commitment to the existence of predicate and relation universals.

There are several reasons in favor of adopting a narrow view of names, which is to say that there are several reasons to take names in elementary propositions to be akin to proper names, the class of which doesn't include predicate and relational expressions among their number. There is, as Copi points out, symbolic evidence, as in 4.1211, Wittgenstein writes "Thus a proposition *'fa'* that in its sense the object *a* occurs, two propositions *'fa'* and *'ga'* that they are both of the same object.", where he seems to be following the convention of using the lower case letters from the beginning of the alphabet which typically stand for proper names of objects.[25] There is also the fact, as Copi and Anscombe point out, that if elementary propositions (which are concatenations of names) include predicate expressions, then there is an obvious problem with color incompatibility and Wittgenstein's demand that elementary proposition be logically independent of one another: "It is a sign of an elementary proposition that no elementary proposition can

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[24] I stress *appear* as there is a large issue looming as to whether Wittgenstein is committed to a kind of Russellian meaning relation, one which, at bottom, equates meaning with reference; or rather takes it to be the case that 'reference' (actually Bedeutung) is intensional. I shall argue at length in Chapter Three that the latter is in fact the case.

[25] Again, there is the difficulty we discussed earlier that Wittgenstein is sloppy with respect to his distinction between elementary and non-elementary propositions. This example from 4.1211 manifests this sloppiness, leaving it unclear which sort of proposition the example concerns.

contradict it." (4.211).[26] Thus, if two elementary propositions are asserted, and for example, one asserts that a particular point in a given visual field is red and the other states that the same point in a visual field is green, then we have a case where the propositions cannot without logical contradiction both be true. Thus if we take names to include properties, we have a straightforward case which runs afoul of Wittgenstein's demand for elementary propositions, expressed at 6.3751: "For example, the simultaneous presence of two colours at the same place in the visual field is impossible, in fact, logically impossible, since it is ruled out by the logical structure of colour...(It is clear that the logical product[27] of two elementary proposition 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."

Now this is far from knock-down evidence, and this for two reasons. First, since, by his own (later) admission, the doctrine of the logical independence of elementary propositions founders on just such difficulties as color incompatibility. Secondly, the support to be gleaned in this context for the narrow reading of names is not decisive for the additional reason that it isn't entirely clear that the difficulty lies solely with the

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[26] *TLP* 4.211 harbors an enormous difficulty. From 4.211 it follows that no elementary proposition can be false; and so the set of elementary propositions contains only those true elementary propositions which picture atomic states of affairs:And so for every existing atomic state of affairs, there is a true elementary proposition which pictures it. 4.211 says as much as there are only true elementary propositions, yet on 4.25 he writes: "If an elementary proposition is true, the state of affairs exists: if an elementary proposition is false, the state of affairs does not exist." and the last part of 4.26: "..the world is completely described by giving all elementary propositions, and adding which of them are true and which are false." The conjunction of 4.211, 4.25, and 4.26 is a contradiction. If there cannot be a false elementary proposition, every elementary proposition must be true (trivially) and thus every atomic state of affairs must exist. Moreover, conjoining 4.211 with 5 ("Propositions are truth-functions of elementary propositions"), we have the result that there cannot be any false propositions! Wittgenstein clearly wants truth and falsity to be properties of propositions, but if he sticks firmly to 4.211, he cannot have it.
[27] That is, in this context, the conjunction of elementary propositions.

inclusion of predicates and relational expressions in the class of names. The force of this argument is premised on a charitable reading of Wittgenstein, one which downplays the standard objection to his claim about the logical independence of elementary propositions vis-à-vis the color predicates. Irrespective of how much interpretive charity we are willing to give Wittgenstein, this difficulty does create the presumption against the wide reading of names.

A third reason to adopt a narrow reading of names has to do with the spatial metaphors in which the Picture Theory is couched. An elementary proposition is said to picture a corresponding (atomic) state of affairs, where the latter is a "combination of objects"(2.01); "The configurations produces states of affairs."(2.0272); and, as Carruthers puts the matter, "we are told that the essence of a proposition can be seen clearly if we think of one which is expressed by a spatial arrangement of tables and chairs (3.1431); and we are told that the arrangement of names in a sentence presents a state of affairs in the manner of a *tableau vivant* (4.0311.)"[28] If we conjoin this picture with a wide construal of names which includes predicates and relational expressions, then we would appear to be committed to the correlative wide reading of objects; and thus objects would include properties and relations. If this were so, Wittgenstein would be intending his spatial metaphors very literally, and would risk conflating formal relations with spatial relations.[29][30] This conflation would amount to assimilating the formal relation of an object 'falling under' or 'satisfying' a predicate (and having a property) or relation to a relation

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[28] Carruthers, Tractarian Semantics, pg. 111.
[29] I owe this point to Carruthers, ibid., pg.110, who in turn owes it (I believe) to Peter Long's "Formal Relations" in *Philosophical Quarterly* Vol. 32 (1982) pp.151-161
[30] I explore the connection with Russell's 1913 theory of judgment and its travails in my unassumingly titled paper "Logical Form, Structural Isomorphism, and Predicate Semantics", Section IV.

proper (a spatial relation); and while Wittgenstein is certainly not above holding an

inconsistent position, we may want to avoid, if Charity bids us, ascribing to Wittgenstein a

view which goes afoul of such a fundamental distinction. Another related difficulty with

such a view is this. It would then be difficult to see in what sense properties and relations

could be taken to be an object. So in the case of the proposition, *FIDO bites,*[31] it would

be puzzling to say that in this expression, we have a pictured state of affairs comprised of

Fido, and the object bites; and similarly strange to say that my black shoe is actually the

'configuration' of my shoe and blackness.[32] Or in the case of an elementary proposition

which contains the relational expression, "...is larger than...", it would seem

counterintuitive to hold that there is some third thing that is the reference of a predicate

expression in the atomic state of affairs that the elementary proposition is supposed to

picture. Wittgenstein's passage (2.03) about atomic states of affairs clearly does not

commit him to the wide view of names and the concomitant inclusion of properties and

relations into the class of objects: "In the atomic fact objects hang one in another, like the

links of a chain."[33] In fact, including properties (those picked out by predicates) and

relations into the class of objects would invite the regress difficulty faced by Bradley that

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[31] This example is Martin Hahn's.

[32] Two remarks. First, the standard Russellian move to counter this kind of objection would be to say that while the statement *my shoe is black* (leaving aside the matter of the indexical) has the appearance of a subject-predicate form, that this is in fact misleading. The counter would thus conclude by saying that the atomic property of blackness is not actually the object of reference. As Ishiguro points out, there is some evidence (from the *Philosophical Remarks*, Section 93, published after the *TLP*) that Wittgenstein would not adopt this strategy: "concept and object, but that is subject and predicate."
Such a platonist view (actually an odd hybrid of platonism of logical forms and attributes mated to thoroughgoing empiricism about objects) is taken by Russell in his 1913 theory of judgment, and was thoroughly rejected by Wittgenstein.

[33] This passage is the Ogden rendering, the Pears and McGuinness translation is, "In a state of affairs objects fit into one another like the links of a chain." While the Ogden translation brings this out more clearly, I think, neither translation commits Wittgenstein (as some commentators have held) to the inclusion of predicates and relations into the class of objects.

Russell diagnosed, namely, that if we take enlarge the class of objects to include properties (picked out by predicate expressions) and relations, then the fact that the objects are to be related in a distinct way is left mysterious: we would be left asking how it is that *those* objects are related. Copi puts the solution to the apparent impasse nicely:

> In a chain successive links are not "united by a link", nor are they well-described as being united "by a special relation", as Russell would have it. The linkage is not *between* links, but *of* them; it is not a relation between them, but the way they are related. As DeWitt H. Parker wrote in *Experience and Substance*: "Relations are modes of unification of elements, not further elements requiring unification"(pg. 215).Every use of substantive terms to refer to relations is misleading. Russell was right to insist on this fact. But we should remember that it was earlier insisted on by Wittgenstein.[34]

A wide reading of names would seem to commit Wittgenstein to just that misconception of which he disabused Russell, that is of thinking that there is some other thing that unites the links in the chain. To view the chain metaphor in a way that is *suggestive* of the narrow view that I am advancing, consider a particular type of chain - a bicycle chain. As in other chains, there are links which hang in another, but there are actually two types of links, one narrow; the wider links hanging together with the narrower links. Thus understood, the analogy with a chain need cause worry for narrow reading.[35]   Note that 2.0231 can be seen as supporting this narrow view: "The substance of this world [objects] *can* only determine a form, and not any material properties. For it is only by means of propositions that material properties are represented - and only by the configuration of objects that they are produced." This last clause is particularly important for if we (take the wide view of names and thus) include properties and relations into the class of objects,

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[34] Copi, pg. 181. Copi is alluding to the change of mind Russell underwent between his 1913 theory of judgement (in his aborted MS Theory of Knowledge) and his 1927 *An Outline of Philosophy*.
[35] In fact, this reading of the metaphor suggests that elementary propositions actually contain two elements, that is, names and form (the form issuing from the predicative element in the expression.)

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Wittgenstein's intent becomes unclear; why, if material properties (along with other things picked out by predicate and relational expressions) are objects, specify that material properties can only be represented by means of propositions? This interpretation would make Wittgenstein's claim to the effect that objects can only be *named* (3.221) curiously inappropriate for that subset of objects which are properties (and one would think) and relations. On the other hand, if we take names in the narrow sense, this passage isn't surprising: it says that the objects - the 'substance' and 'unalterable form' of the world - does not include material properties, and that the predicate and relational expressions (and probably relations) we use in describing things are *not* found, at the ultimate level of analysis, among the names which have objects as their Bedeutung.

Whence and whither, then, these predicate and relational expressions? What becomes of them in a fully analyzed expressions if they do not enjoy the status of names? Keeping a safe distance from clarity, Wittgenstein nevertheless gives us two hints. The first is at 4.22, where he writes "An elementary proposition consists of names. It is a nexus, a combination, of names." The second clue - and after our discussion of the problematic relationship between ordinary language and Wittgenstein's elementary propositions, certainly not lacking in irony - is 4.22, "It is *obvious* that the analysis of propositions must bring us to elementary propositions which consist of names in immediate combination.[my italics]" There seems to be something in addition to the names which distinguishes a set of names from an elementary proposition; for if this weren't the case, there would be nothing to be gained by insisting on the distinction between the two. And in fact, that there *is* something important about elementary propositions over and

above the fact that they are fortuitous groupings of names is made clear at 4.23 when,

shades of Frege's context principle, he writes: "It is only in the nexus of an elementary

proposition that a name occurs in a proposition."[36] As a claim about the deep structure of

a fully analyzed language, this version of context-principle is an interesting and substantive

claim; nevertheless, I am interested in it for the light it may throw on the discussion of

predicate and relational semantics. My thesis is that in addition to names, elementary

propositions also contain another element, namely a second type of 'thing': the predicative

and relational element. It is this element, over and above the names and their relation to

simple objects, that constitutes the fact that the names actually 'hang together' as links in a

chain, to use Wittgenstein's metaphor. That this is so is given support by 4.24: "I write

elementary propositions as functions of names, so that they have the form *'fx' 'φ(x,y)'*,

etc." So at the level of elementary propositions, we don't lose our predicates and

relational expressions for the full analysis of an expression into a concatenation of names.

There are still predicate and relational expressions, but just not as names; they "drop out",

but don't disappear from the scene of elementary propositions altogether. In fact, if we

take 4.24 seriously (as I think we should) we see that the predicate and relational

expressions are not a variety or class of names, rather, they are functions of names which

take the objects (corresponding to names) to truth values.

As I shall argue in Section V, these predicate and relational expressions constitute

the logical form of expressions of which they are a part; or to be more precise, it is the

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[36] This inclusion of a kind of context-principle at the level of *elementary* propositions is particularly
interesting. While I won't consider it in this project, this claim seems to count against ascribing to
Wittgenstein the view that the context principle simply functions as a constraint on a story about how
actual language-users determine the reference of names.

semantic content of these expressions which is equivalent to the logical form of the expressions. Hence, it is with predicate and relational expressions and their role in determining the logical form of the expression that the Picture Theory really gets its purchase. One point that Wittgenstein is laboring to make with the entire comparison between pictures and propositions is that there are, as Carruthers puts it, two aspects to pictures and the state of affairs that they picture:

> There are the individual elements (the names) of the picture, corresponding
> to the objects in the states of affairs. And then there is form, realized in the
> determinate structure of the picture, which is common to both picture and
> state of affairs...So when in *TLP* Wittgenstein distinguishes between the ele-
> ments and the pictorial form of a picture, he may have had in mind the distinct-
> ion between the proper names and predicative expression in a sentence.[37]

To consolidate the relation between the Picture Theory, the narrow reading of names, and logical form, we need to appreciate the distinction Wittgenstein makes in his discussion of pictures between the straightforward referring aspect of pictures on the one hand, and the elements of form on the other. The former aspects of the pictures (or propositions), the names, have as their semantic content the objects in the state of affairs pictured. The latter aspect of pictures - the formal aspect of the picture, its 'pictorial form' - is what allows a picture to show the determinate way in which the elements stand in the state of affairs that it pictures. This latter aspect of form is contained in the semantic content of predicate and relational expression, and will, among other things, picture how the determinate elements (the objects) in the state of affairs are related to one another. This formal aspect isn't restricted to relational expressions, as in the case of predicate expressions, it will 'present'

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[37] This view is not new to Carruthers. Hide Ishiguro (in 1979) wrote of the difference between standing for (the relation which names stand to the objects) and representing (which predicate and relational expressions - as well as propositions- can function) Ishiguro (1979) in *Essays in Honour of Jaakko Hintikka,* eds. E. Saarinen, R.Hilpinen, I Niiniluoto and M. Provence, 351-364.

a state of affairs which contains an object possessing a property. Exactly how this pictorial form 'springs forth' - enabling the proposition to be like a *tableau vivant* - from the predicate and relational expressions to picture a possible state of affairs will be taken up in Section V.

In order to carry over and preserve the distinction between the two aspects of picturing that Wittgenstein draws in his general discussion of pictures into the discussion of propositions, the narrow reading of names is required. Failing to do this has two consequences: first, the Picture Theory is thereby flawed in the obvious way[38] discussed above; and secondly, without such a distinction, we would appear to be saddled with a Picture Theory that amounted to a kind of simple numerical correspondence between the number of constituents at the deep level of an analyzed language and the corresponding state of affairs that it, in some truncated sense 'pictured.' A further result of this second consequence, (according to the provisional view, at least) we would be required to assimilate the semantics of predicate and relational expressions to those of simple referring expression, that is, of names. While such a view would be sustained by the text, I think it would both be uncharitable and would render the Picture Theory philosophically lame and uninteresting.[39]

Some Textual Evidence To Reconcile:

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[38] It is would be flawed to precisely the extent that Russell's 1913 Theory of Judgement was flawed in taking the logical forms to be abstract objects. It would also face the infinite regress difficulty entailed by answering the question: "What, then, relates the predicate and relational objects together with the individual-like objects? Is it some third kind of thing?"

[39] To read the metaphors this way and *not* take a narrow view of names would, I think, leave any possible account of logical form without the resources to meet the functional requirements set out in III above.

As I have tried to argue, the narrow reading of names has a great deal to recommend it: It affords us the beginnings of an interesting interpretation of logical form and more generally of the Picture Theory, and doesn't (I think) commit Wittgenstein to holding any position which is patently inconsistent. Nevertheless, I don't think there is an uncontroversial - let alone unassailable - case to be made on this point; and so before moving on to a sketch of Tractarian predicate semantics and logical form in V, I need to address some evidence in the *TLP* which would seem show that Wittgenstein, at least in some moods, considers the class of objects to include properties and relations. If true, this would entail that he is committed to a wide reading of names.

The first problematic passage is 4.123, while talking of internal and external properties and relations, Wittgenstein says, "This shade of blue and that one stand, *eo ipso*, in the internal relation of lighter to darker. It is unthinkable that *these* two objects should not stand in this relation." But as several commentators have noted[40], though this *appears* to commit Wittgenstein to holding that properties (shades of blue) are objects, that this in fact is not the case, for immediately after, he writes, "(Here the shifting use of the word 'object' corresponds to the shifting use of the words 'property' and 'relation'.)"[41] The last clause, then, would be understood as a caveat about his use of 'object' while he is trying to make a point about internal and external relations; this is just

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[40] Copi (1958) and Carruthers (1992) to name two.

[41] It is unclear how seriously we should take Wittgenstein's comment about the 'shifting use' of the words 'object', 'property' and 'relation'. If a great deal of 'shift' is permitted, one might begin to suspect that Wittgenstein's noncommittal stance on these issues masks the possibility that he didn't think through these issues with sufficient care.

to say that Wittgenstein, as if to forestall confusion, is alerting us to the fact that he is understanding 'object' in a non-standard way.[42]

As pointed out in the Hintikkas' (1986), 5.02 appears to give straightforward evidence in favor of the wide reading: "The arguments of functions are readily confused with the indices of names...For example, when Russell writes '+α' the 'α' is an index which indicates that the sign as a whole is the addition sign for cardinal numbers. But the use of this sign is the result of arbitrary conventions and it would be quite possible to choose a *simple sign* instead of '+α'....(An index is always part of a description of the *object* to whose *name* we affix it...) [Emphasis and translation by the Hintikkas.] From this the Hintikkas conclude that "Wittgenstein implies in two different ways the symbol for addition is a name and hence stands for an object. First, it can have an index [also translated as 'affix'] which is a characteristic of names. Second, it is equivalent with a simple sign, e.g., a name. (Cf. 3.202: 'The simple signs employed in a proposition are called names.'"[43] Briefly put, this "virtually conclusive evidence" is somewhat overstated. Even if it were shown that Wittgenstein somehow included mathematical operations among the class of objects (and hence, the sign for addition was a genuine name), 5.02 would still fall well shy of being unequivocal evidence for the wide reading of names. Recall Wittgenstein's fundamental idea that logical constants do not represent (that there are no logical objects); given the apparent dissimilarity between mathematical operations

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[42] In a nice turn, Carruthers points out that this passage may in fact prove troublesome to the wide reading of names: "Given the wide reading, on the other hand, it is not at all obvious how Wittgenstein's qualifying statement should be understood. For when we shift from speaking of two 'objects' (e.g., an individual and a universal) standing in some external relation to one another, to speaking of two 'objects' (e.g. two universals) standing in an internal relation, it is far from clear why there should be a corresponding shift in the sense of 'object'. (pg. 116.)

[43] Hintikka and Hintikka (1986) pg.32.

and most proper names (and the comparative *similarity* between mathematical operations and logical constants), it would seem that the burden of proof should fall to those who are trying to generalize Wittgenstein's claim from mathematical 'objects' to properties and relations. Thus, the evidence of 5.02 for the wide reading of names is less than conclusive.

In the absence of any overwhelming textual evidence against the narrow reading of names - and with several good reasons in its favor - I will take it as established. Thus Wittgenstein appears to observe Frege's distinction, drawn in the *Foundations of Arithmetic* between concept and object, at least insofar as the latter can be named while the former cannot. In Section V, I will argue that Wittgenstein holds predicate and relational semantics to be of a semantic kind fundamentally different from that of proper names. Recall that on the provisional view, Wittgenstein allows that the semantic content (Bedeutung) of a proper name may be exhausted by its bearer. To begin my positive case here, I will argue that Wittgenstein is actually offering a non-referential account of predicate semantics. Given the above arguments for the narrow view of names, that predicate/relational expressions and referring expressions (names) belong to different semantic categories is (hopefully) unsurprising. What may be surprising is that Wittgenstein's notion of logical form is identical with the semantic content of predicate and relational expressions in propositions.

V.

Semantic Categories in the TLP, Referential and Non-Referential:

We have seen that in Wittgenstein's discussion of pictures in the 2's, he distinguishes two aspects of pictures: there are the referential elements of the picture,

(2.131: "In a picture objects have the elements of the picture corresponding to them.");

and there are is *form*, "Pictorial form is the possibility that things are related to one

another in the same way as the elements of the picture."(2.151.) It is this latter aspect of

form which makes the two types of elements into a picture (2.1513.) The form (at this

point, pictorial form) is the '...pictorial relationship [which] consists of the correlation of

the pictures elements..' and these 'correlations are, as it were, the feelers of the pictures

elements, with which the picture touches reality.'(2.1515.) Moving from the discussion of

pictures in the 2's to the discussion of propositions in the 3's of the *TLP*, it not surprising

to find Wittgenstein observing the same distinction with respect to *linguistic* pictures -

that is to say, with propositions. He distinguishes form from the referring aspects of the

pictures, where the latter (in the case of propositions, the names) 'go proxy' as it were for

objects in the state of affairs pictured. We have already discussed how, according to the

provisional picture, the names have objects as their reference (Bedeutung);[44] what remains

to be explained is the matter of predicate semantics. As we shall see presently, it is the

non-referential semantics of predicate and relational expressions which accounts for the

second aspect to pictures that Wittgenstein insisted on. The non-referential semantics of

this category of linguistic expression accounts for the element of form - to be precise,

logical form - that Wittgenstein took to be an essential ingredient in the Picture Theory of

the meaning of propositions.

The narrow reading of names in section IV was required to show that

Wittgenstein, like Frege, took the semantics of predicates and relational expressions

(concepts) to differ from the semantics of names (which refer to objects). The provisional

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[44] This provisional sketch of the semantics of names will be challenged in Chapter Three.

referential name-bearer semantics of the referring expressions (names) was shown to be unsatisfactory as an explanation of the semantics of predicate and relational expressions. What does the non-referential semantics look like for the category of predicate and relational expressions? Assuming the identification of *Bedeutung* with semantic content - an identification that is argued for at length in Chapter Two - this question is equivalent, for Wittgenstein, to the following question. What characterizes the Bedeutung (semantic content) of predicate and relational expressions, making them different from the semantic content of referring expressions over and above the negative point that the former are essentially non-referential? Perhaps the best way to answer this question is to survey the options open for a *referential* semantics of predicate and relational expressions, and to show why they are problematic. This strategy will serve two purposes, 1.) it will serve as a backdrop against which to set forth a provisional sketch of a non-referential semantics for predicates; and 2.) examining the difficulties with a referential semantics for predicates will serve, in essence, as evidence, albeit indirect evidence - over and above the textual reasons given above - for ascribing a narrow reading of names to the *TLP*.

A wide reading of Tractarian names would commit Wittgenstein to a referential account of predicate and relational expressions. Given such a view, there are, I think, three semantic options open; predicate and relational words can refer to one of the following: a.) property/relation universals (either immanent or transcendent); or b.) particular property/relation *tokens*; or c.) sets, that is, the extension of the predicate or relational expression where this is understood as the class of all those objects which possess the property or is a part of the relation. I shall address each of these in turn.

1.) Property Universals: This was Russell's approach, wherein predicate and relational expressions refer to property and relation universals, respectively. So according to Russell's transcendent treatment of universals, an object b having a property F involves the object b *participating*, in some sense, in the universal Fness. There are several difficulties with this[45] To begin, there is the problem of explaining how it is that the spatially and temporally existing objects situated in the causal nexus come to participate in such transcendent universals. There is also the problem of understanding the false proposition. If we take an atomic proposition predicating a property, F, of an object, b, where the proposition is false in virtue of b not possessing F. A related point is this. In cases of a false proposition, we want an explanation of how it is false *in a determinate way*, and not nonsensical. With respect to the issue of understanding, some kind of platonic cognitive apparatus would appear to be needed to account for our finding the predication of the universal F significant in the case where b does not 'participate' in universal Fness. On the other hand, if the property/relation *types* at issue are taken to be immanent universals, we no longer face the 'two-world-relation' problems, but we still face the problem of false proposition. This variety of the problem of falsity is nicely put by Carruthers[46]:

> Troubles with such a view, however, arise over those predicates - such as
> 'is a unicorn' and 'is a round square' - which fail to be instantiated. For in
> these cases there can be no immanent universal to serve as their reference.
> Yet they certainly seem capable of figuring in sentences which are determin-
> ately true. For example, 'Susan is not a unicorn' is true [...] but how could
> this be? For if an expression is supposed to have reference, then the truth-
> value of sentences containing it ought surely to be sensitive to facts about

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[45] I discuss this at some length in "Logical Form, Structural Isomorphism, and Predicate Semantics", section IV.

[46] I am indebted to Carruthers for this point.

the referent. In particular, no atomic sentence can be true unless that expression does have a referent. (179)

Immanent universals, as a posit of a semantic theory, seems to be a non-starter.[47] The other solution which might be urged, given 4.211, is to bite the bullet and say that there are no false elementary propositions. This would be a costly move (and thus rejected), as it is flat-out inconsistent with the following two specifications of elementary propositions:

4.25: If an elementary proposition is true, the state of affairs exists: if an elementary proposition is false, the state of affairs does not exist.

4.26: If all true elementary propositions are given, the result is a complete description of the world. The world is completely described be giving all elementary propositions, and adding which of them are true and which *false*. [italics mine]

The second option is that the reference of predicate and relational expressions (PRE's)[48], as a semantic category, are property and relation *tokens*.

Property and Relation Tokens:

Taking the reference of PRE's to be property and relational tokens seems to have an air of robust commonsense to it we needn't posit any platonic or immanent universals to serve as a subsequent explanatory liability. Furthermore, the problem of the false but significant proposition would appear not to arise, given that we have a notion of cognitive content of PRE's (*qua* symbols, see Chapter Two) which would explain how one could understand a false proposition. Alas, there is a problem, and a serious one at that. At a

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[47] Of course, to say that immanent universals are a non-starter as a semantic ingredient (as the reference of predicate and relation expressions) is _not_ to say that they do not exist. To say that immanent universals are not the reference of this class of expressions is not to make an ontological claim about immanent universals.

[48] I will hereafter abbreviate predicate and relational expressions by using PRE. Predicate and relational expressions are those expressions which Frege called concepts.

deep semantic level, there would, in fact be a problem of false atomic propositions for the simple reason that Wittgenstein requires truth-conditional *determinacy* even in cases of false proposition. If the proposition pictured an atomic state of affairs which did not hold (in virtue of the non-existence of the property/relation token) then the PRE - on this wide reading, a name - would not refer to anything and thus the statement would lack truth-conditions. That Wittgenstein requires such truth-conditional determinacy is made clear at 4.023: "A proposition must restrict reality to two alternatives: yes or no...One can *draw inferences* from a false proposition. (italics Wittgenstein)." With the combination of a referential semantics for PRE's coupled with a commitment to property/relation token, the kind of determinacy Wittgenstein requires becomes illusive (or mysterious).

Extensional Reference (sets):

The third option (roughly sketched) for a referential semantics for PRE's is to say that the reference of these expressions are *sets* of individuals, specifically, the set of all individuals which fall under the extension of the predicate or relation. The difficulty with this suggestion is lurking close to the surface in the formulation just given: How the extension of the predicate determines a set *at all* becomes puzzling were it not for the fact that such predicate ascriptions are *true* of that set of objects. Defining a predicate in terms of the objects which satisfy it may be sufficient in a formal system; as a semantic move, it appears weak: to specify the reference of a predicate expression in terms of those objects of which predicate ascriptions are true appears to simply relocate the difficulty, not solve it.

A non-referential semantics for PRE's: A possible way out?

The diagnosis of the problem seems clear: we need to give up a referential semantics for predicate and relational expressions and thus, as I have argued, take Wittgenstein's insistence on the dual-aspects of picturing seriously. So we significantly amend the provisional picture of Tractarian semantics and opt for a non-referential semantics of PRE's. The question is, what do we put in its stead? The answer begins with our translation of Bedeutung as semantic content sketched in section II (which will be argued for at length in Chapter Two.) Recall that the notion of semantic content has the useful and agreeable property of remaining agnostic with respect to reference: while some have insisted that the semantic content (Bedeutung) of an name is *exhausted* by its bearer[49] - the object being the name's Bedeutung - there is nothing intrinsic to the notion of semantic content that requires a name-bearer semantic relation. The semantic content of PRE's could be, in essential respects, different. Thus, as Carruthers writes:

> "If this account of the distinction between names and predicative expressions were correct, then a two-tier (referential) semantics would be unnecessary for the latter. The semantic content would not be an item in the real world (a referent) which would determine, in conjunction with the referents of any names involved, the truth-value of the sentence. Rather, it would consist in a rule...for determining, with respect to any atomic sentence in which the expression occurs whether or not it is a truth about the referents of the name involved. And the sense of a predicative expression would be similar: not a mode of determining an item in reality as a referent, but rather a rule for mapping objects onto truth-

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[49] Despite my indebtedness and agreement with Carruthers on many points, I disagree with his interpretation on this point. He seems to want to hold inconsistent positions, saying, on the one hand that the semantic content of a name is exhausted by its bearer (a straightforward Russellian view with respect to referring expressions); he also recognizes, at times, that this will not suffice (for reasons to discussed in Chapter Three where I spell argue for my interpretation of names and objects), and writes "The claim that the semantic content of a name is exhausted by its referent ought more accurately to be expressed by saying that names for different things belonging to the same sortal category differ from one another in semantic content only insofar as they differ in reference."(pg.121.) This looks like an admission that there is more to the semantic content of a name than its bearer, and hence the semantic content of names is not, in fact, exhausted by its bearer. As this passage points out, the semantic content of proper names (taken narrowly) may turn out to have additional (perhaps descriptive) content. If so, one could see how this view would mark a decisive advance over Russell's semantics of referring expressions.

values. (164)

The semantic content of predicate and relation expressions contains, or better, just *is* those rules necessary for determining 1.) which combinations of properties can be significantly asserted (in an elementary proposition) of which set of objects; and 2.) how it is that the PRE will 'take objects to truth-values'; that is, the rules will also capture the truth-functional behavior of the predicate and relational expressions; and (3) what the expression contributes to the semantic content of the proposition (the *Sinn*) of which it is a part. The rules which constitute the semantic content include sortal or classificatory rules for those objects which, in the case of predicates, could possess that property; or, in the case of relations, the semantic content of the relational expression will stipulate possible well-formed substitutions. The semantic content would specify the truth-functional contribution of the PRE to the expression which contains it. To use the well-worn phrase, the predicative element in an expression will take objects to truth values,[50] but it needs to do more, for the semantic content must, as it were, be discriminating in which objects could possibly possess the property concerned or complete the 'incomplete' aspects of the relation, to use a Fregean turn of phrase. The 'pickiness' or discrimination of semantic content of PRE's dispenses with Frege's problem of allowing the PRE to range over the domain of all objects; to put this in the language of combinatorial possibilities, the notion of semantic content for PRE's contains the rules for significant combinations of those expressions with names. These combinations are, in fact, the elementary propositions which picture possible states of affairs; and to keep with the comparison of pictures, the

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[50] So in an elementary proposition (atomic sentence) containing a one-place predicate and a name picking out an object, the atomic proposition will be true if the object has the property 'picked out' by the predicate.

semantic content of the PRE's is what allows the other elements of the picture - those elements (names) which stand for objects in the state of affairs - actually to portray a possible state of affairs. The semantic content of these expressions constitute the *form* without which the picture could not represent a possible state of affairs: the semantic content of PRE expressions corresponds to Wittgenstein's notion of pictorial form in his discussion of pictures: "Pictorial form is the possibility that the things are related to one another in the same way as the elements of the picture."(2.151.)

The semantic content of PRE, that is to say, of functional expressions, excludes the possibility of poorly-formed combinations with names. Whereas the semantic content of referring expressions (names) would specify the thing in the world that the name picks out, the semantic content of the PRE would, to speak metaphorically, *picture* or represent an object's possessing this property or set of properties (or, in the case of a relation, it would depict a state of affairs in which the objects named stood in such and such a relation). But it is crucial to the notion of semantic content that it is restricted in degrees of combinatorial freedom - or closer to the spirit of the Picture Theory, the *representational* freedom of the predicate and relational expression. And this form is not something depicted, it is *displayed*: "A picture cannot, however, depict its pictorial form: it displays it. (2.172)" Most, if not all, of the features of Wittgenstein's comparison between propositions and pictures is illuminating and interesting (if not ultimately satisfying) if we take a non-referential semantics for predicates wherein we identify form, more precisely, logical form, with the semantic content of predicate and relational expressions. If, on the

other hand, we do not distinguish names from PRE's, and adopt a referential semantics for both, many aspects of the comparison becomes puzzling[51].

Recall from the survey of the options for a referential semantics Wittgenstein's requirement of determinate truth-conditions. Such determinacy is necessary if we are to be able to draw inferences from false propositions; the question though, is how we are to get such determinate truth-conditions from the semantic content of a PRE. In fact, this is where a non-referential semantics comes into its own, for the rules embodied in the semantic content specifies the conditions under which, for any set of objects, the property or relation specified holds of the objects referred to be the names. And there is not an obvious worry about a charge of anti-realism, for on this view, the elementary propositions which, for example, asserts of an object b that it has a property F is true just in case the object b possesses a token of the property F. In this way, the truth of the elementary proposition (or a non-elementary proposition) is both mind and verification (or evidence) transcendent.[52] A non-referential semantics for PRE's does not compromise Wittgenstein's commitment to the truth or falsity of a proposition consisting in the existence or non-existence of the state of affairs that it pictures: the integrity of 2.222 stands "The agreement or disagreement [of a proposition's *Sinn*] with reality constitutes its truth or falsity." Taking the semantic content of a PRE to be, in essence, the objective

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[51] While time, which is to say, space, does not permit a discussion of this point, suffice it to note that on the latter view, the notion of logical form, particularly as a semantic phenomena (as distinct from, for example, the logical form of objects, etc.) becomes a kind of mysterious property which seems to render much of the Picture Theory superfluous.

[52] What realism exactly amounts to is a vexed question that I will not take up. I take it to at least involve the idea that to be a realist about a region of discourse is to hold, minimally, that the statements in that region of discourse are subject to the principle of bivalence, and that the truth of statements is independent of mere opinion. Whether Wittgenstein's variety of realism is also a verification-transcendent one is a further interesting, and open, question. Some passages in the *TLP* seem amenable to a kind of internal realism advanced by Putnam.

rules for the determination of the truth-conditions of propositions[53] will yield the needed

determinacy, thus meeting the inferential requirement that Wittgenstein lays down at

4.023. In the case of the apparently elementary proposition *the coffee cup is white*, the

predicate *is white* contains a structural element (the rules of classification of the property

to an object) that specifies, independent of truth or falsity, the truth-conditions of the

elementary proposition. In the case that the contingent elementary proposition is false -

that the cup is not white - it is possible to draw inferences, such as it is possible that the

cup is blue, or red, etc.

Logical Form and Predicate Semantics:

I. Making the identification:

In the preceding discussion of predicate semantics, I have intimated that the semantic

content of PRE's is identical with the notion of logical form. With such an identification of

the semantic content with logical form, we have a powerful means of cashing out

Wittgenstein's talk of form in his discussion of pictures; such an identification allows us to

make intelligible, with respect to propositions, the two aspects of picturing (roughly, the

elements of referring and form, the latter being necessary for ascribing) that he sought to

illustrate. This identification explicates the rather enigmatic 2.033: "Form is the possibility

of structure." Here Wittgenstein is saying that the form, to speak in the (loosely) formal

mode, of an elementary proposition is the possibility that the state of affairs pictured

actually is structured in the way the proposition pictures. It allows us to explain 2.0251

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[53] When Carruther's talks of the semantic content of PRE's as "rules for the determining the truth-values
of sentences" (180), I disagree with him on two counts. First, Carruthers often speaks of sentences (as
distinct from propositions) where Wittgenstein actually makes no such distinction. Second, and more
importantly, explicating semantic in terms of "rules for the determining of truth-values" seems to lend a
verificationist tone to Wittgenstein's semantics where it does not, in fact, belong.

("Space, time, and colour (*being coloured*) [italics mine] are forms of object.") to mean

that objects might very well have the property of *being in space, being in time, and being*

colored.[54] What's more, 2.026's being couched in the material mode of speech need not

trouble us, for Wittgenstein's insistence that "There must be objects, if the world is to

have an unalterable form." just means that without the instantiation of the PRE's, the

truth-functional structure of the predicates and relational expression would not actually

exist: there would be no way for the objects to be taken to truth-values.[55] The insistence

that the world has unalterable form (and that objects are just what constitutes this

unalterable form (2.023)) is rendered intelligible by the identification of logical form with

the semantic content of PRE's when we consider the possibility of defining objects as

nothing more than the instantiation of a set of properties. That 2.023 is not exclusive of

the predicative structure of PRE's is seen immediately after at 2.0231: "The substance of

the world *can* only determine a form, and not any material properties. For it is only by

means of propositions that material properties are represented - only by the configuration

of objects that they are produced." Here the metaphor of configuration is actually

shorthand for the combination of a set of predicates and relations and its

instantiation.[56] While this sketch is impressionistic, it makes perfect sense if form is

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[54] Wittgenstein singling out these predicates in a discussion of the form of objects may mean that these properties are in the following sense, basic: The semantic content of other predicates or relations will include spatio-temporal structure, which is clearly the case in the relation '...stands to the left of...' The semantic of this relation - or better - the logical form of the elementary proposition containing the expression will have intrinsic to it that the relation is a *spatial* relation.

[55] Recall that from 1.1 that "World is the totality of facts, not of things", and this jibes well with my claim, for without the instantiation of properties and relations ('pictured' by the semantic content of PRE's) there would be no states of affairs, and as Wittgenstein writes at 2: "What is the case - a fact - is the existence of states of affairs."

[56] Space does not permit an adequate treatment of this, nevertheless it is possible to gesture at the direction this will go: for any state of affairs, one can represent its obtaining or (not obtaining) as an instantiation of a determinate configuration of predicates and relations which it instantiates. As strange as

understood as I am suggesting, for the semantic content of PRE's does not (singly) *determine* any material properties, for it is only when the objects actually possess the material properties that the object in the *actual* world comes to have the material property (or stand in the relation with other objects) that it does. Equally clear is why Wittgenstein would write, in the next sentence, that it is "only by means of propositions that they are represented", for this is as much to claim that it is only by means of being pictured by (at the least) an elementary proposition that an object's having material properties is able to be asserted. This should put to rest, to use Strawson's turn of phrase, the myth of the bare object insofar as such a thing could occur in a state of affairs.[57]

Furthermore, such a construal of logical form allows us a plausible story of how it is that logical form is common to both language and the world. When we equate logical form with the semantic content of PRE's, how the form of the world comes to be reflected in the truth-functional structure of language. This is where Pears (1977) is led to puzzling talk of absorption, that is, of precisely how and why it is that "Logic is not a body of doctrine, but a mirror-image of the world"(6.13). On the other hand, if we take logical form to be the semantic content, as I am advocating, it becomes unsurprising that the structure of the world bears its imprint on the structures of language,[58] for the logical

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this may sound (and in a subsequent project I, that is to say, we, will attempt to make this view compelling) the 'logical scaffolding of the world' - its structure, is captured in the semantic content of the PRE's with which we can more or less accurately represent it.

[57] Wittgenstein's talk of configuration is easily assimilable to this picture if we do not literalize it more than the spirit of the passage would warrant. The talk of configuration, for example, would be particularly appropos in the case of relational states of affairs (that is, states of affairs pictured by an elementary proposition consisting of a relational expression relating the names in concatenation.

[58] This is exceeding difficult if one takes the standard view - the wide view of names and a referential semantics for predicates - as the notion of logical form becomes mysterious (as I mentioned earlier.) For an illustration of this, see David Pears' (1977), for here he is forced by such a view to talk in terms of "absorption" of the logical form of the world by language. The language-as-sponge metaphor would be

form of elementary propositions are just the rules of classification that determines the truth-conditions for the non-elementary propositions which contain them. And for any elementary proposition, its logical form will necessarily stand in an isomorphic (or homologous) relationship with the state of affairs it pictures.

II. Conclusion: The functional requirements revisited:

It only remains to discuss see how such an interpretation of logical form meets the four functional requirements set forth in section III of this chapter. Recall that the requirements critical for an adequate interpretation were: 1.) the requirement of the false proposition; 2.) the 'propositional glue' requirement; 3.) the sentential significance requirement; and 4.) the new proposition requirement.

We have already seen how the identification of the logical form of an expression (either an elementary or non-elementary proposition) with the semantic content of the predicative element of that expression can aptly handle the requirement of the false proposition. It is a virtue of a non-referential semantics for PRE's that in the case where a predicate or relation does not hold of an object or objects, then the semantic content contributes, in the case of an elementary proposition, a truth-value of false to the non-elementary proposition of which it is a part.[59] The difficulty with which we began the chapter, namely, how there can be a form of the proposition **p** when there is no state of

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difficult to cash out on the standard view, as would his claim that "the picture theory is a theory of the absorption of form."

[59] In Chapters Two and Three I will discuss the semantic properties of names. Suffice it for now to note that an expression which contains a name which lacks a bearer will not be insignificant (Sinnlos), but rather false. With respect to the identity conditions of semantic content, I agree with Carruthers' view (with a caveat about his shying away from Wittgenstein's use of *Satz)* that "The identity-condition for semantic content, at least within factual discourse is sameness of truth-condition (or of contibution of truth-conditions). Hence all analytically equivalent sentences, and all atomic sentences making equivalent predications of the very same individuals, possess the same semantic content (say the very same thing)." (180)

affairs of this form is solved by the conception of logical form on offer here: to revert to the picture metaphor, the form of **p** is that aspect of the picturing relation over and above the referring relation of the names which depicts how things stand if **p** is true.

The 'propositional glue' requirement seeks an answer to the question: what joins or unifies a set of words; that is, what distinguishes a string of words from a significant proposition? Wittgenstein's answer to this question, like Frege's, was given in terms of the distinction between concept and object. In the discussion of Tractarian names, we saw that the narrow reading of names amounted a careful distinction between referring expressions (names) and PRE's, and this is consonant with the spirit (but not the letter) of Frege's distinction from the *Foundations*. If my interpretation is accepted, then we can see precisely how Wittgenstein's semantic distinction between concept and object took a different tact from Frege. Whereas Wittgenstein honored the distinction by means of delimiting the class of referring expressions to include only names for objects, and holding that the semantics of concept-words (PRE's) to be non-referential; Frege drew his distinction from within a referential semantics for both types of expression, holding that the distinction between concept and object concerned, above all, the nature of the entities referred to. While this still remains rather metaphoric and in need of fleshing out, that the requirement of propositional glue is met by the interpretation of logical form is seen in the predicative, "unsaturated" nature of PRE's: the semantic content of these expressions - the very content being the rules of classification and application of predicates and relations to objects - takes the object(s) which are named in the expression to truth-values. In fact, the interpretation of logical form given here, if you would pardon the pun, gives some

(semantic) content to Frege's metaphors of 'saturatedness' and 'unsaturatedness' within the context of Wittgenstein's heterogeneous semantics.

From the discussion above we saw that the PRE's were not just, in virtue of their semantic content, 'unsaturated', this class of expressions had the distinction of being 'discriminating' or 'picky' with respect to the objects (and *a fortiori* the names for those objects) that they would take to truth values. In the parlance of the functional requirements, this is the sentential significance requirement. This amounts to the demand that logical form, at least derivatively, account for the cognitive content of expressions to *show* that some combinations of words are significant (well-formed).[60] The proposition "Seven is heavier than Nietzsche" *shows* that it is ill-formed, despite the apparent grammatical structure of two names flanking a relational expression, and it does so (for Wittgenstein) on account of the logical form of the relational expression contained within it. Hence it is unsurprising to see Wittgenstein write, at 4.121, "Propositions cannot represent logical form: it is mirrored in them. What finds reflection in language, language cannot represent. What expresses *itself* in language, *we* cannot express by means of

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[60] *Indirectly* for two reasons. The first is that the grammatical requirement concerns the surface level of language, and as Wittgenstein notes at 4.0031, "It was Russell who performed the service of showing that the apparent logical form of a proposition need not be its real one." And so it is entirely likely that the surface grammatical structure may differ from the deep structure of fully analyzed (elementary propositions). Secondly, leaving aside the problematic role of ordinary language in the TLP, the requirement of sentential significance concerns, formost, the *cognitive content* of expressions, and so the requirement concerns expressions *qua* symbols. This will be taken up in the following chapters. For now, suffice it to point out that the cognitive content will be, for all of the idiolectic variation allowed by Carruther's interpretation, ultimately underpinned by *semantic content*, for it is the latter which underpins the former - recall that the 'propositional glue' requirement gets after the constitutive question of what makes a string of words a significant linguistic unit, capable of representing a fact; to say that the grammatical question is underpinned by the concept of logical form is just to insist that what it is in virtue of which the constitutive question is answered also account for (and constrain) the 'phenomenology' of grammatical forms.

language. Propositions *show* the logical form of reality. They display it."[61] The logical

form of the relational expression determines the degrees of combinatorial (better,

substitutional) freedom with respect to the types of objects, the names of which serve as

possible arguments in well-formed, significant expressions. But from the above account of

logical form, it does not follow that we cannot *say*, for example, *the cup is white,* but only

show it. At the risk of clouding the matter, one could say that the logical form of language

is, for Wittgenstein, that without which language could not represent the world.

According to the interpretation of logical form on offer here, it is the semantic content of

the PRE's which provides for the logical structure of the language we use to represent the

fact that the cup is white. Logical form is *shown* in the fact that the expression is

significant - independently of whether the cup is, in fact white. Given the discussion of

logical form that we have seen, it is logical form that allows one to *say* that the cup is

white.

The final requirement is that of the new proposition, which stipulates that an

interpretation of logical form should explain how we are able to understand new

propositions, that is, new combinations of words that we haven't previously encountered.

The kind of compositionality needed for the Picture Theory is not exhausted by an account

of how the meaning of propositions is a function of the constituents of which they are

composed; Wittgenstein requires that the compositionality "show" itself in new

propositions, composed of expressions which we may have seen in entirely different

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[61] He continues "Thus the proposition '*fa*' shows that the objects a occurs in its sense [*Sinn*], two
propositions 'fa' and 'ga' show that the same object is mentioned in both of them. If two propositions
contradict one another, then their structure shows it; the same is true if one of them follows from one
another. And so on." (4.1211)

contexts: "It belongs to the essence of a proposition that it can communicate a new sense (*Sinn*) to us. A proposition must use old expressions to communicate a new sense (*Sinn*).(4.027-4.023)." If logical form is coextensive with the semantic content of PRE's, then this compositionality which allows us to understand new propositions is wholly unsurprising, as the expressions which comprise these new propositions carries, as it were, it semantic content with it, and does so independently of the truth or falsity of the propositions. Semantic content, as an objective feature of the expressions of a language, determines the truth-functional behavior of the well-formed units in a language. Situating logical form within the realm of predicate and relational semantics allows the Picture Theory of the meaning of propositions to meet the functional requirements that Wittgenstein stipulates for logical form; it also affords, as I have been trying to show, a natural reading of the *TLP* and makes the Picture Theory substantive and philosophically interesting.

In the next chapter, I shall defend, at length, the interpretation of *Sinn* and *Bedeutung* terminology that I largely took for granted in the discussion of logical form in this chapter. It is to this that I will now turn.

Chapter Two: The Sense/Reference Distinction in Wittgenstein's Tractatus.

I do not wish to judge how far my efforts coincide with those of other philosophers. Indeed, what I have written here makes no claim to novelty in detail, and the reason why I give no sources is that it is a matter of indifference to me whether the thoughts that I have had have been antici-pated by someone else.
I will only mention that I am indebted to Frege's great works and to the writings of my friend Mr. Bertrand Russell for much of the stimulation of my thoughts.   -from the Author's Preface to the *Tractatus*.

I. *Background*

As I noted in Chapter One, and as others have noted in the literature, Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* stands under the immense twin influences of Frege and Russell. Indeed, this truism is one of the few uncontroversial results to be found in the volumes of Wittgenstein scholarship. Nevertheless, a large bone of contention exists over the precise nature and extent to which Wittgenstein's early work was influenced by each of these philosophers: What is clear is that he developed his ideas in response to - and in critical dialogue with - those of Frege and Russell. What is less clear is how their thought influenced the doctrines on the *TLP*. To complicate matters, Wittgenstein was notoriously sparing with expository detail and argument in setting out these doctrines; adopting the form of aphoristic assertions, there is disappointingly little to aid the reader in understanding his meaning. For these reasons, elaborating the historical antecedents to the doctrines of the *TLP* is not a separate exercise in intellectual history, rather, it is required for understanding the *TLP* at all[1]. To this end, this chapter will examine Wittgenstein's

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[1] While setting out the historical antecedents of the doctrines of the TLP is often times necessary for understanding the work, it isn't sufficient. Witness Frege's letter to Wittgenstein of June 28, 1919, in which Frege writes of his manuscript copy of the TLP "You see, from the very beginning I find myself entangled in doubt as to what you want to say, and so make no proper headway." Monk (1990), pg. 162

use of Sinn and Bedeutung terminology, terminology that he inherited from Frege, and which I shall argue, bears Frege's imprint.

In this Chapter, I shall argue for Wittgenstein's inclusion and modification of Frege's Sinn/Bedeutung distinction; specifically, it will be shown that Wittgenstein employs a Sinn/Bedeutung distinction in the TLP, and that this distinction, taken in concert with his remarks about the notion of signs and symbols in 3.0's and 4.0's, shows to incorporate many aspects of Frege's distinction between the Sinn and Bedeutung of propositions, singular-, and complex-referring expressions. In section II of this chapter, I will briefly discuss and contrast, to borrow Sluga's terms, Russell-style (RS) and Frege-style (FS) semantic theories[2]. I will suggest that Wittgenstein adopts a variation of a Frege-style semantic theory. In section III, I endeavor to give textual evidence in support of my contention; I will attempt to make good on my assertion that the *TLP* contains a variation on a FS semantic theory. This attempt will be in two parts: first, it will be demonstrated that there is a Sinn/Bedeutung distinction to be found in the pages of the *TLP;* the second part will yield a preliminary characterization of the Sinn/Bedeutung distinction. Having given support for my contention in III; lastly, Section IV will develop the Sinn/Bedeutung distinction in the light of Wittgenstein's discussion of signs and symbols in the 3.O's. It will become clear that his treatment of propositions and expressions *qua* symbols constitutes an important contribution to seeing the significant extent to which Wittgenstein's doctrines of Sinn and Bedeutung (and hence his picture theory of the proposition) were influenced by Frege. Finally, I will link the discussion of

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[2] In Hans Sluga, "Semantic Content and Cognitive Sense" in *Frege Synthesized*, ed. L. Haaparanta and J. Hintikka. D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1986.

Wittgenstein's Sinn/Bedeutung distinction with the non-referential construal of predicate semantics from the discussion of logical form in Chapter One.

II.

The semantics of the TLP: a one-tiered or two-tiered semantics?

The debate as to whether Wittgenstein holds a semantic theory in the Russellian tradition or, rather, is committed to a kind of Fregean theory can perhaps be focused in the form of a question: With respect to the relationship between an expression, its meaning, and its reference, what does Wittgenstein's so-called picture theory of meaning amount to? To answer this we need to determine Wittgenstein's view about what constitutes the relation between the meaning and reference of an expression. This fundamental question is often times blurred in translations of the *TLP* when the word Bedeutung is translated as "meaning" or "reference"; rendered thus, the issue of the semantic relationship seems predetermined, as 3.203, according to the standard translation, says that a name "means" (bedeutet) and object, the object being the name's meaning. Understood this way, there seems to be little doubt that Wittgenstein adopted Russell's name-bearer view of the meaning of names whereby the meaning of a name *is* the object that it signifies. Roughly put[3], if one takes relation between words and things, as Russell did, to be a simple matter of reference, the meaning of an expression is that item(s) in the world to which the expression refer. It is this ascription of the Russellian view to Wittgenstein that I seek to challenge.

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[3] This caveat - "very roughly" - is intended seriously and with awareness of the complexity (and proclivity to changes of mind)of Russell's views.

While Russell is prone to changes of mind - especially during the 20 years of his intense philosophical exploration from 1900 to 1920 - for the Russell just prior to and during his involvement with Wittgenstein, a satisfactory (ideal) language will contain one word for every simple object. Fully analyzed expressions will exhibit this features of a satisfactory language: for every word in these expression, there will be a simple object which is its meaning. For an expression to have meaning, the words which constitute the expression must signify or refer to existing things.[4] This relation of word to object is direct and unmediated, on the model of a label to a jar to which it is stuck. Other expressions which are not analyzed to this point, must in principle, be analyzable to this point, otherwise they are, strictly speaking, meaningless. Thus the meaning, or semantic content, of an expression is exhausted by its bearer; the meaning is the reference. Perils of slogan use notwithstanding, for Russell, the meaning of a proposition expressed by a (disambiguated) sentence is its reference, which is the fact that it signifies.

For Frege, on the other hand, an adequate semantic theory would include, in addition to some sort of reference relation - a third 'thing'- namely Sinn, through which the reference of an expression is secured. Frege (in his middle-period writings) distinguishes between the Sinn (sense) and the Bedeutung (reference) of expressions (including proper names, concept-terms, and sentences). The reference of an expression is that item in the world - in the case of a name, it is an object; in the case of a predicate or relational expression, it is a concept - in virtue of which our statements (which contain

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[4] There is more to the view than this. Russell (circa 1913) also though one had to be, in a kind of platonic way, in direct communion with the logical form, an abstract entity, which was a fully general form of the proposition in question. For brevity, I will not discuss what Russell thinks about logical words - words for the logical connectives, generality, etc.

those expressions) are true or false. The truth or falsity (more precisely, the truth-value) of a proposition expressed by a sentence is its reference, but the reference of each linguistic item within the sentence is mediated by its Sinn, that is to say, its sense. The notion of Sinn allows Frege to explain, among other things, how a statement of identity, for example

the morning star = the evening star

can be informative even though the names are coreferential For Frege, the Sinn of a proposition is its truth-conditions, the Sinn of names are the referring-conditions, and the Sinn of predicates and relational expressions are the predicating-conditions. Fregean Sinn is a kind of recipe for getting to something in the world.[5] Whereas Russell held the referential relation to be direct and unmediated; for Frege, the word-world relation is mediated by Sinn, and addition to explaining how identity statements can be informative, Frege's distinction between Sinn and Bedeutung also makes possible an elegant account of what it is to understand a sentence. Very roughly, in the case of a sentence, understanding the Sinn means understanding the truth-condition of the sentence; in the case of a sub-sentential expressions - such as singular terms, predicate and relational expressions - understanding the Sinn amounts to understanding the referring conditions of names and predicating-conditions, respectively, of these expressions. Thus, on Frege's account, there is an elegant explanation for what it is to understand the sense of an expression - understanding the sense of these sub-sentential expressions amounts to understanding how it is that these terms "pick out" their referent[6] or the conditions for correct ascriptions of predicate and relational expressions. This could explain how language users understand

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[5] I am indebted to Martin Hahn for this formulation.

[6] Here, as in the case of the brief exposition of Russell's views, I claim only to be giving the roughest of sketches.

the expressions in a language. Frege's theory gives an account of the cognitive value of expressions in a natural language in a way that, contra Russell, does not require us to be immediately acquainted with the components of the sentences; on Frege's picture, it is clear how a sentence could be both significant and false, for the notion of Sinn, among other things, accounts for the cognitive significance of expressions in advance of the determination of their truth-value.

The differences between the FS and RS semantic theories is nicely summed up by Sluga as follows:[7]

> We can characterize the disagreement between adherents of Russell-style theories of meaning and those of Frege-style theories as follows: RS theorists assume that a satisfactory theory of meaning can be built with the binary relation - e refers to r whereas FS theorists maintain that a three-place relation - e through having the sense s refers to r is required. (Sluga, 1986. pg. 47)

The RS theory is constructed out of a binary relation on the model of a name to its bearer (its bearer being identical with its semantic content); for Frege, on the contrary, the semantic relation is a tripartite relation composed of a name, its Sinn (which is identical to its semantic content), and its reference[8]. In Sections III and IV, I will attempt to establish that the *TLP* contains a variation of a FS semantic theory by showing Wittgenstein to be endorsing a form of Sinn/Bedeutung distinction; subsequently, I shall offer a characterization of his version of that distinction, and then draw some conclusions on the basis of that distinction.

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[7] The Frege-style and Russell-style (FS and RS, respectively) distinction in semantic theories is, of course, a rough characterization helpful for my purposes, not intended as an exhaustive categorization of semantic theories.

[8] That Frege's conception of reference need not be interpreted as being of the name-bearer model, (with a concomitant ontological view of reference) C.f. Wolfgang Carl's Frege's Theory of Sense and Reference: Its Origins and Scope. New York, Cambridge University Press, 1994. Chapter 7, esp. pp. 167-175.

III.

Adding content to the notions; and a defense

In the discussion of pictures (observations from which are subsequently applied to linguistic expressions *qua* pictures) Wittgenstein tells us at *TLP* 2.221 and 2.222 That "What a picture represents is its Sinn", and that "The agreement or disagreement of its Sinn with reality constitutes its truth or falsity". He proceeds to make the link between pictures representing their Sinn and linguistic items - in this case propositions - expressing their Sinn explicit at 3.13, when he writes "A proposition... does not actually contain its Sinn, but does contain the possibility of expressing it. ('The content of a proposition' means the content of a proposition that has Sinn.) A proposition contains the form, but not the content, of its Sinn." To further drive the point home is Wittgenstein's nod to Frege's context principle of the *Grundgesetz* at *TLP* 3.3: "Only propositions have Sinn; only in the nexus of a proposition does a name have Bedeutung (translated as "meaning"). On the other hand, Wittgenstein at 3.203 states that "A name means (Bedeutet) an object. The object is its Bedeutung", and that the Bedeutung of primitive signs (names) can be explained by means of elucidations (3.263). Again at 3.314, Wittgenstein claims that "An expression has meaning (Bedeutung) only in a proposition". It is clear that Wittgenstein adopts the terminology of Sinn and Bedeutung.

A digression on Wittgenstein's use of Satz:

Wittgenstein's use of *Satz* is problematic. While translated as *proposition*, it is far from clear what the content is (no pun intended) of the concept *Satz* . There seems to be a fundamental equivocation in Wittgenstein's use of *Satz* (hereafter, proposition) between

two construals: the (A) construal, where propositions are taken to be a kind of sentence-type; and the (B) construal, where *proposition* is to be understood more along the lines of the *content* of a particular sentence-token.[9] While an open and shut-case is not to be had in favor of either, I will argue for a version of (A), with an important rider.

The case for (B): *Satz* as the content of a sentence-token:

The plausibility of taking proposition, along the lines of Frege, as the content of a sentence-token, that is, of what a sentence-type (more or less ambiguously) expresses trades on Wittgenstein's distinction between *Satz* and *Satzzeichen* - that is, his distinction between proposition and propositional sign. On first blush, this appears tailor-made: the propositional sign corresponding to the sentence-type, with its physical and syntactical features, on the one hand, and on the other there would be the proposition, understood as the (roughly Fregean) content expressed by the propositional sign. While this reading would align Wittgenstein with a tradition that has a fine pedigree, there doesn't seem to be much evidence in the *TLP* to support it. Notice that while the pairing of 3.14-3.142 emphasizes the distinction between the proposition and the propositional sign, there seems to be scant evidence for taking the former in a Fregean way, someone might cite the following:

> 3.14: What constitutes a propositional sign is that in it, its elements (the words) stand in a determinate relation to one another. A propositional sign is a fact.
> 3.141: A proposition is not a medley of words.-(Just as a theme in music is not a medley of notes.) A proposition is articulated.
> 3.142: Only facts can express a sense (Sinn), a set of names cannot.

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[9] While I argue for a different reading of the tractarian notion of Satz from that of Ray Bradley (1992), I am indebted to his careful treatment of the matter, one which is often overlooked (or too hastily treated) in most commentaries.

3.142 would only support the (B) construal if Wittgenstein had, instead of *Sinn*, written "proposition" or perhaps less consistently, "thought." But given our understanding of sense (Sinn), all 3.142 says, albeit in a cryptic manner, is that only facts can express truth-conditions. Rather than support (B), the passages adduced in its support serve mainly to emphasize Wittgenstein's distinction between *Satz* and *Satzzeichen*, which falls short of being persuasive as support for (B). What's more, recalling the discussion in Chapter One about the *TLP*'s ambiguity concerning the natural and analyzed language, a (B) reading of *Satz* as proposition (the content of a sentence type) would sit uneasily with Wittgenstein's claim that it is *elementary* propositions that are at the terminus of analysis.

In favor of (A): *Satz* as sentence-type:

Perhaps the most emphatic statement in favor of (A) is 3.1: "In a proposition a thought finds an expression that is perceivable by the senses." Not only does this support (A), but it seems to actually impugn (B), as Wittgenstein's use of *thought*, which he distinguishes from a proposition, has a *prima facie* resemblance to Frege's notion of *Gedanken*, which is closer to (B), the *content* (Fregean proposition) expressed by a sentence-type. Further evidence is gleaned from 3.11: "We use the perceptible sign of a proposition (spoken or written, etc.) as a projection of a possible situation. While it seems clear that part of Wittgenstein's notion of *Satz* involves the notion of a sentence-type or token (with its attendant physical and syntactic characteristics), Wittgenstein's distinction between propositional signs and propositions *simpliciter* points to the (A) construal's incompleteness. We need to complete the picture.

On the modified (A) version of propositions I am advancing [(A1), to distinguish it from the standard version] Wittgenstein's distinction between propositional signs and propositions simpliciter is not meant to indicate two different types of linguistic entities: there aren't propositional signs *and* propositions as there are (to use Strawson's phrase) ships *and* shoes *and* sealing wax; rather, in Wittgenstein's notion of *Satz* includes both the propositional sign, and an additional element - its *projective relation to the world.* That Wittgenstein holds (A1) is shown clearly at 3.12: "I call the sign with which we express a thought a propositional sign.- *And a proposition is a propositional sign in its projective relation to the world* [italics mine.] With respect to the vexed question of Wittgenstein's use of "proposition", I shall understand the notion in accordance with the (A1).

While this conclusion is bound to be contentious, I nevertheless think it has decent textual backing and faces no contrary evidence from the *TLP* that is insuperable. That propositions, for Wittgenstein, contain both the propositional sign (the sentence-type) *and* its method of projection *cum* projective relation to the world is important, as we shall see later when we consider his talk of sign and symbol. To anticipate, this second aspect of propositions - the projective aspect - lies behind Wittgenstein's rather obscure talk of signs and symbols; On 3.31 he identifies propositions with expressions and symbols, and propositions *qua* symbols will be shown to incorporate one aspect of Frege's conception of sense - that of the mode of presentation.

Digression complete, a return to the problem

Let us grant, then, that Wittgenstein adopts the terminology of Sinn and Bedeutung; it remains, nevertheless, to give a characterization of what Wittgenstein takes

the content of these two notions to be. To put a finer point on it, it remains to be shown

the precise way in which the *TLP*'s use of Sinn/Bedeutung departs both from the common

German usage of the words as "sense" and "meaning" mirrors and Frege's use of the

terminology. I seek to establish, following Peter Carruthers in his work <u>Tractarian</u>

<u>Semantics</u>, that the translation[10] of Tractarian Sinn and Bedeutung as "sense", and

"meaning" is apt to be misleading. To use a Wittgensteinian turn of phrase, it is Carruthers

who performed the service of showing (*me*) that the apparent rendering of Sinn and

Bedeutung need not be its real one. That the translation is prone to mislead is intimated by

substituting it into some of the passages quoted above. In 2.221, Sinn is supposed to be

what a picture represents, and at 3.13 Wittgenstein tells us that a proposition does not

contain its Sinn, but contains the possibility of expressing it, and that a proposition

contains the form, but not the content of its sense. Translating Sinn simply as "sense" does

not render the smoothest reading[11]. So too, translating Bedeutung as "reference" despite

the naturalness of 3.203 - a name (bedeutet) an object, where the object is the name's

Bedeutung - faces difficulties. As Carruthers points out:

> ...such a reading of 'Bedeutung' (as reference) cannot be maintained
> throughout the whole of *TLP*. For there are many passages where Wittgen-
> stein speaks of the Bedeutung of expressions where he is either explicit
> that they do not refer, or where a good interpretive case can be made for
> saying that he thinks they do not. To take some of the most obvious
> examples: At 5.02 we are told that both the argument 'P' in '- P' and
> the affix 'c' in '+ ', enable us to recognize the Bedeutungen of '-P' and
> '+ ' respectively. Yet it is extremely doubtful...whether Wittgenstein would
> regard either a sentence or a plus-sign as having reference.
> (Carruthers (1989) pg. 26)

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[10] This translation of Sinn and Bedeutung, incidentally, is found in both the C.K. Ogden and
Pears/McGuinness translations.
[11] These examples are Carruthers'.

Rendering Bedeutung as "reference" faces a bigger difficulty. Again, as Carruthers points out, taking Bedeutung to mean reference would make his considerations on 5.541 about the bedeutung of '-' in the context of the expressions '-P' and '-(P v Q)' run afoul of his insistence at 5.4 that logical connectives and logical constants do not refer - as there aren't any logical objects to which they refer.(C.f. also 5.441.) Provided that the logical connectives are preserved in analysis - and are thereby primitive signs in the sense of being names - rendering Bedeutung simply as reference appears to threaten the coherence of Wittgenstein's semantics of names.

As the fortunes of Wittgenstein's picture theory rise or fall proportionately with the prospects of his semantics of names (which makes sense, given that the former rests on the latter) charity nudges us to attempt a reading of *Bedeutung* which would make the Tractarian semantics of names consistent. If a consistent reading could be given that would retain textual fidelity *and* be philosophically interesting, then we might have, as the saying goes, a winner. So too with Sinn. Guided by considerations of textual fidelity and charity[12], I shall side, with reservations to be noted[13], with an interpretation of Sinn and Bedeutung that have a prima facie unorthodox and perhaps even anachronistic ring.

A case for Sinn:

As was mentioned in the first chapter, I agree with Carruthers' rendering of the Sinn (of a sentence) as "truth-conditions" and the Bedeutung of an expression to be identical with its semantic content. Understanding Wittgenstein's talk of the Sinn

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[12] Understood in this context as seeking an interpretation which, given constraints of fidelity, yields the most substantive, and least implausible, set of doctrines.

[13] To anticipate, my reservations concern the particular conclusions drawn by Carruthers on the basis of the following understanding of Wittgenstein's Sinn/Bedeutung terminology.

(translated as sense) a proposition to be its truth-conditions allows a natural and illuminating reading of the following passages[14]:

2.202   A picture represents a possible situation in logical space.
2.203   A picture contains the possibility of the situation it represents.
2.2   What a picture represents is its Sinn.
3.13   A proposition, therefore, does not actually contain its Sinn, but does contain the possibility of expressing it...A proposition contains the form but not the content of its Sinn.
4.01   A proposition is a picture of reality.
4.021   A proposition is a picture of reality: for if I understand a proposition, I know the situation that it represents. And I understand the proposition without having its sense explained to me.
4. 022   A proposition *shows* how things stand *if* it is true. And it *says that* they do so stand.

Now 2.203 and 2.2 are fairly straightforward when one keeps in mind that Wittgenstein in the 2.0's of the *TLP* is concerned to bring out various aspects of picturing, aspects which he subsequently applies to linguistic items - propositions - *qua* pictures. 2.2 tells us then that *what* a picture represents is its Sinn. Conjoining this fact with another fact about proposition, a fact sufficient to individuate them from other types of pictures, is that what a proposition represents is its truth-conditions. Note that construing Sinn in this way (as opposed to "meaning") affords us the natural reading whereby propositions are said to *represent* their *truth-conditions*. Wittgenstein's strange locution about logical space in 2.203 can now be seen as articulating a fact about a truth-condition: to wit, the truth-condition of a proposition is counterfactual situation in which the proposition is true; being neither here nor there, ontologically speaking, we can make sense of logical space as that sort of 'realm' posited by truth-conditions. Perhaps even stronger textual support is

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[14] As Martin Hahn has pointed pointed out to me, another good reason to avoid the translation of *Sinn* as sense (as well as that of *Satz* as proposition) is that 2.2 would be strictly speaking, redundant: from Frege on, we typically say that propositions *are* senses (they are the senses, i.e. thoughts, expressed by sentences) not that propositions *have* senses.

obtained by conjoining 2.203 and 3.13 (above) with 4.431, which states: "The expression of agreement and disagreement with the truth-possibilities of elementary proposition (of which, according to Wittgenstein, propositions are composed) expresses the truth-conditions of the proposition. *A proposition is the expression of its truth-conditions.* (italics mine)".

Finally, in 4.021, aside from offering explicit textual·support for the rendering of Sinn as "truth-conditions", includes in the sentence "I understand the proposition without having had its Sinn explained to me" a very important point (albeit, alas, undeveloped): here Wittgenstein seems to indicate that understanding the Sinn of a proposition, *without further explanation* is a sufficient condition for understanding the proposition itself. This points to two things: one trivial, one more profound. First, his remark appears to be making the plausible, if not truistic, point that what it is to understand a proposition (a sentence in its projective relation to the world, to paraphrase 3.12) is to understand the circumstances under which it would be true. The second, and more interesting point is just to note that Wittgenstein, in making this comment, is explicitly evincing concern about what is necessary for a speaker of a language to understand a sentence in a language. Against those who hold Wittgenstein to be uninterested in matters of how language users actually use come to understand the language they have, *TLP* 4.021 (as well as the rest of the passages I marshaled in support of my interpretation of Sinn) appears to address, in his use of Sinn, a Fregean concern about linguistic competence[15] . Here I will rest my case for

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[15] This sentence may benefit from a point of clarification. In saying "a Fregean concern" I do not mean to imply that Frege's main concern was matters of linguistic competence. Even those commentators, most notably Dummett, who label Frege primarily as a philosopher of language, would probably strongly disagree with the claim that Frege was particularly exercised with questions of linguistic competence.

Sinn, hopefully having given compelling reasons for adopting this interpretation of Wittgensteinian Sinn.

A case for Bedeutung:

In our preliminary discussion of Bedeutung, it was intimated that the translation of Bedeutung as "reference", taken on its own, threatens the Tractarian semantics of names with inconsistency. The reason being, recall, that in taking Bedeutung to be reference would cause Wittgenstein's comments of 5.451 and 6.232 to run afoul of *TLP* 4.0312, where he insists "My fundamental idea is that the 'logical constants' are not representatives; that there can be no representatives of the *logic* of facts." Among other things, 4.0312 seems to entail that the logical connectives (and presumably logical constants) cannot refer. This is the aporia that Carruthers sets out for the interpretation of Bedeutung as "reference" and I think it a good reason to examine more closely the role of Bedeutung in the *TLP*. Nevertheless, I think there is a more fundamental problem with the received view of Wittgenstein as taking the name-bearer picture of reference to be the prototypical semantic relation at work in the *TLP*. This problem arises out of the conjunction of the received view of bedeutung-as-reference and his positing of necessarily existing simples - objects - which form the extra-linguistic correlates to names in fully analyzed proposition. This problem takes the form of a dilemma (or near-dilemma), and if it has the force that it seems to, it may dictate a reinterpretation and reevaluation of some of the core issues of the *TLP*.

Is there a semantic problem at the foundations of the TLP?

Implicit in my claim is the less controversial and less interesting claim that Frege's theory of Sinn and Bedeutung gives an elegant account (if minimal) of what it is to know a language.

There may be a fundamental difficulty in the TLP centering around understanding Bedeutung to simply mean reference: in particular, if we take bedeutung to be reference on the name-bearer prototype (that is, on the model of Russell, where meaning is equated with reference), Wittgenstein's picture theory of semantic may be beset by a fundamental inconsistency. To illustrate this, lets assume the standard translation of Bedeutung as meaning, where meaning is, at bottom, equated with reference; then as 3.203 tells us, "A name (bedeutet) an object. The object is its Bedeutung."

To begin:

1.) At the deep structure of language - the level of elementary propositions, (a concatenation)of names, and their extra-linguistic correlates (objects, which are necessarily existing simples) - a name refers to an object, an object being the name's referent (Bedeutung). Here, the semantic relation is taken to be of the prototypical name-bearer type.

2.) There are a class of extra-linguistic objects (Simples) which constitute the reference (bedeutung) of the names, such that a well-formed elementary proposition (itself a concatenation of names, and the truth-functional components of propositions) will correspond to the Simple objects in an atomic state of affairs.

3.) An expression which mentions a complex (of objects) which does not exist, is not therefore senseless, just false. In other words, it is possible for a significant expression, e.g. a proposition to be significant (to have Sinn) and be false. (That this is so, see 3.24, 4.022 - 4.0311)

4.) From 2.022-2.0272 Simples (objects) necessarily exist. They contain the possibility of all situations, simples are the building blocks of states of affairs, and the existence or non-existence of states of affairs is reality (2.06.) The objects are, by definition, Simple.

So far so good. This much is pretty much uncontroversial (the precise sense in which to take the apparently material mode of speech vis-à-vis objects will concern us in Chapter Three).

5.) Consider, now the possibility of a false proposition. To err is human...

6.) From the fact that simples exist, and exist *necessarily* (this is just definitional, from 2.022 - 2.0272). then (7)

7.) (6) Amounts to saying that, take any well-formed elementary proposition (e.g. as part of a significant proposition), the names from which the elementary proposition is composed *could not fail to secure reference to an object, that is, they could not fail to signify an object.*

8.) <u>The Left Twig of the Nettled Branch:</u> From (2),(6), and (7) any well-formed elementary proposition must secure reference, and hence *be true.* And since (from *TLP* 5) a proposition is a truth-function of elementary propositions, every proposition would therefore be true. As we saw in Chapter One, Wittgenstein clearly wants to allow true and false propositions (both elementary an non-elementary), thus this Horn is ruled out.

or...

9.) <u>The Right Twig of the Nettled Branch:</u> The relation of meaning *cum* reference would fail to hold, thus the "connection of meaning" (Pears' phrase) would fail to hold in the case of false propositions; thus all false propositions would not be false, but would be meaningless. Or put another way: given that objects necessarily exist and are at the terminus of a notion of analysis (which is regrettably impressionistic), names are pretty much an immovable deep feature of language (this, too, is largely stipulative); then in cases of false propositions, then it can only be that the name-bearer relationship somehow failed to obtain.[16] This would cause many problems, perhaps most obviously for the bivalence of empirical statements.

What is so bad about the Right Horn? Just this: explaining falsity in terms of a failure to obtain of the name-bearer relation, itself, to exist has two undesirable consequences. The first is textual inconsistency: truth and falsity would no longer be a tidy matter of the existence or non-existence of states of affairs, as Wittgenstein defined it. Secondly, such an intermittent reference relation view (of truth and falsity) would leave Wittgenstein's requirement of determinate Sinn (which he identifies with the requirement that there be Simples) compromised. Given Wittgenstein minimalist characterization of names, the bare

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[16] Note that while Russell leaves open the option that in cases where a names failed to secure reference, the name itself might actually (upon further analysis) prove to be a definite description, Wittgenstein does not seem to endorse such an option. (Though he does say that "it is possible to describe the world completely by means of fully generalized propositions, i.e. without first correlating name with a particular object." (5.526))

possibility (let alone the requirement) of determinate Sinn would be entirely mysterious if the semantic relationship of name and bearer failed to obtain.[17]

Provided the reconstruction is sound, there seems to be two possibilities.

A.) We could accept the Left Horn and try to argue (against insurmountable textual evidence to the contrary, see (3) and (5) above) that Wittgensteinian propositions are necessarily true, and hence he had something close to Frege's timelessly true, eternal Thoughts in mind. We have seen good evidence to preclude this option above, recall that in 3.1 he claims that "In a proposition a thought finds expression that can be perceived by the senses".

B.) We can accept Right Horn, and try to make a case for truth and falsity in terms of a kind of intermittent (**extremely** non-rigid) name-bearer prototype relation, and so much the worse for Wittgenstein's cashing truth and falsity in terms of the existence and non-existence of states of affairs. This would leave the question of how a proposition could be both false and significant entirely mysterious.

C.) One could opt to go robustly possible-worlds: one could keep the direct-reference semantics, let our ontology swell, and argue, if perhaps a little anachronistically[18], that the 1's and 2's should be taken at face-value. Recall 4.112 where we read that "The object of philosophy is the logical clarification of thoughts." A modal realist interpretation would

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[17] Wittgenstein's talk of configuration, if literalized, would not seem to get him out of this difficulty, for to do this would be to ascribe to him the obvious mistake of conflating meterial relations with formal relations, or it would commit him to Russell's view of logical forms and universals, which in Chapter One is argued we should avoid. I am inclined to interpret Wittgenstein charitably here (as indeed I do elsewhere) and give him the benefit of the doubt; what may make this easier is that there is (I believe) a philosophically interesting alternative.

[18] Anachronistically because there is little evidence that Wittgenstein was familiar with the modal logics necessary to make the modal realist alternative actually work. From this it doesn't follow that I think Wittgenstein shares the same 'predjudice of the actual' (and neglect of possibility) that Russell faces. Indeed I set up Russell's views to better distance Wittgenstein from them.

seem to leave aside the fact that taking this route render the *TLP* a piece of metaphysical system-building (among other things) - the likes of which Wittgenstein dismissed later in the work. I shall argue against this view at some length in Chapter Three.

The difficulty dissolved?

The difficulty can be dissolved, I think, if we remove a premise on which it rested. The buried - or not so buried - assumption on which the difficulty rested was that Bedeutung was understood as "reference", which seemed to require our taking this on the purely designative, name-bearer model. The worry that Wittgenstein's understanding of Bedeutung is internally inconsistent, and fundamentally so, can be allayed if we understand Bedeutung to mean *semantic content.*

Apart from its anachronistic ring, understanding Bedeutung as semantic content allows us to avoid the first problem, the case of inconsistency pointed out by Carruthers. Recalling the problem of logical constants and connectives, we can see that these signs could have Bedeutung and yet not run afoul of his insistence that the logical constants do not represent. This is a bigger deal than it might appear on the face of it: The problem of the status of the logical constants was one that exercised both Russell and Wittgenstein. We also know that Wittgenstein took his insistence that there were no logical objects or constants to be of fundamental importance. From this, then, we can take it that there is good reason to avoid understanding Bedeutung as reference.

The paramount virtue of this reading is that we are not required to assimilate all semantic relations to the model of a name to its bearer. By semantic content of an expression I mean what the expression says, or in the case of a sub-sentential expression,

what that expression contributes to the truth-conditions of the expression of which it is a part. So in the case where the expression in question is a proposition, the semantic content of a proposition is identical to its Sinn - its truth-conditions; and where the expression is a sub-sentential expression, the semantic content of the expression is what the expression contributes the sentence containing it.[19] Key to the notion of semantic content is the idea that knowing the semantic content of an expression is tantamount to knowing what the expression contributes to the truth-conditions of the proposition of which it is a part: The semantic content of an expression is the semantic role it plays in an expression's having truth-conditions that it does. The insistence that the semantic role of a sub-sentential expression be specified in terms of its contribution to the proposition of which it is a part issues from Wittgenstein's context principle at 3.3. For with this, Wittgenstein can be seen to insisting on, with Frege's, in the primacy of the sentence in semantics as it is the smallest linguistic unit with which we can, non-parasiticly, effect an assertion[20]. Sluga's formulation of this notion is helpful:

> ...intuitively we mean by semantic content the information conveyed
> by an expression given the reference of its constituents, it seems plaus-
> ible to say that for simple expressions, i.e., those without composition,
> semantic content varies with reference. In other words: Two simple
> expressions have the same semantic content if and only if they have
> the same reference. And for complex expressions, we can lay down:
> Two complex expressions have the same semantic content if and only
> if they are constructed in the same way out of constituents with the
> same semantic content. Sluga, (1986)

Thus, while the semantic content is held to depend on the reference of its constituents, there is nothing in the notion of semantic content which requires that the reference relation

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[19] I am indebted to Carruthers for this formulation.
[20] This locution I owe to Carruthers.

be of a name-bearer variety; there is no requirement that the object of reference need necessarily be a medium-sized item in the world. But note that on the notion of semantic content on offer here, we could with complete consistency say that the semantic content of a proper name is the object to which it refers. While identity of reference would entail identity of semantic content, the reference relation is left (for the time being) non-specific: there is nothing to require that the semantic of an expression be an existing object (in the intuitive, non-philosophical sense of the world) in the actual world. Taking Bedeutung in this way allows for the semantic content of a name to be the object to which it refers. So, for example, in the case of an elementary proposition a name could pick out an individual - it could refer to an object - where the function of elementary proposition is to predicate some property of the object. However, a virtue of this interpretation is that we aren't required to assimilate all semantic relations to the model of a name to some extra-linguistic entity. Such a reading of Bedeutung would allow us to avoid the semantic dilemma sketched earlier, as it is *not* committed to the Russellian view that the semantic content of a name is exhausted by its bearer.

Lastly, in need of mention is the fact that the notion of semantic content is compositional and so the semantic content of a sentence or propositions (its Sinn) is a function of the semantic content of the sub-sentential expressions of which it is composed. This should be unsurprising once we recall that one of the functions of the notion of semantic content is to explain how it is that the components of an expression contribute to the sentences containing the expression. And as Carruthers insists, "Even sentences themselves may be said to have Bedeutung on this reading, as Wittgenstein appears to do

at 5.02. For the semantic content of a sentence is its Sinn. Indeed, Sinn is a kind of Bedeutung: it is the distinctive type of semantic content that sentences have."[21] While Carruthers may not agree, it is precisely here that we can see Wittgenstein's context principle of 3.3 at work (recalling that propositions are sentences in their projective relation to the world.)What makes the semantic content of sentences identical to the Sinn, and hence 'distinctive' (from the other sorts of semantic content which sub-sentential expressions have) is just that the sentence, as a linguistic unit, is the minimum necessary to effect an assertion; the sentence is the smallest item with which we can, non-parasitically, *say something*. The semantic content of names, and sub-sentential expressions in which they occur, determine the semantic content - the truth-conditions, the Sinn - of the proposition of which they are a part. And hence, what makes the semantic content of sentences (propositions) distinctive is that, unlike the semantic content of names, predicate and relational expressions, and sub-sentential expressions generally, the semantic content of sentences can, to use a Wittgenstein's phrase, picture reality, and if one understands the Bedeutung of a sentence (or equivalently, its Sinn), one understands the situation that it represents.

At this point it may be remarked that, while it has been shown that Wittgenstein employs a Sinn/Bedeutung distinction, what hasn't been shown is the extent to which Wittgenstein has offered a FS-style semantics. The Fregean element in the semantics of the *TLP* has been minimal, if it exists at all. To this point, the remark has force: All that has been shown is that Wittgenstein does adopt Sinn/Bedeutung terminology by employing a distinction between the truth-conditions of a proposition and the semantic content of the

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[21] Tractarian Semantics, pg.29.

expressions from which it is composed. It would still be open to a critic to charge that

Wittgenstein's semantics are only minimally Fregean in the sense that they employ a notion

of the Sinn of propositions which adopts *merely one aspect of Frege's multifaceted notion*

of Sinn, namely, that the Sinn of a proposition is its truth-conditions. To this, one could

add that what makes the FS semantic theory so robustly three-place is that Frege takes *all*

sorts of expressions to have Sinn, not just sentences, and that Sinn itself is a qualitatively

different sort of thing than is Bedeutung; the objection would continue: the story

presented here has only associated Sinn with propositions, and that the Wittgensteinian

Sinn/Bedeutung distinction doesn't exclude the possibility that Wittgenstein held a RS

direct-reference theory after all. Wittgenstein's notion of Sinn is applied to propositions,

where it is simply the notion of truth-conditions. Fregean the other hand, while not to be

identified with linguistic meaning[22], had other functions, namely that of a mode of

presentation of the Bedeutung of expressions; of giving the referring conditions of names,

and the predicating conditions of predicates and relational expressions; and lastly, of

functioning as the bedeutung of expressions in oblique contexts. None of this has been

located (yet) in Wittgenstein, and to the extent that there is a FS semantic theory in the

TLP, the objection would conclude, Wittgenstein's notion of Sinn seems pretty anemic by

comparison.

As far as my case has been made, this objection (or cluster of objections) has

merit; fortunately, there is another component to my account of Wittgenstein's Sinn

Bedeutung distinction which should address these concerns. Section IV will seek to

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[22] see Burge, T "Sinning against Frege", *Philosophical Review* 88, 1979, 398-432. and "Frege on Sense and Linguistic Meaning".

demonstrate that Wittgenstein does indeed find room for other components of Frege's conception of Sinn, and that these elements are found in the obscure discussion of expressions qua symbols, and in Wittgenstein's talk of modes of signification in the 3.0's of the *TLP*.

IV.

Whence and whither the Fregean mode of presentation?

One of the functions of Fregean Sinn is, as was mentioned earlier, to explain what it is for words to have cognitive value, and this was shown in "On Sense and Reference" through the problem of how a statement of identity can nevertheless be informative. This notion of cognitive value, or cognitive content, was seen to apply to other expressions more generally. Frege's view was that the senses are "modes of presentation", that is to say, the way(s) the referent of an expression is presented to a thinker.[23] This element of Fregean Sinn is vital for understanding why he takes there to be no such thing as the bare reference of a name to its bearer, as on this picture, the Sinn of an expression determines its reference, and in such a way that there is a dependence of reference upon sense: the Sinn of an expression fixes its reference.

This aspect of Sinn as a 'mode of presentation' has been absent from the discussion of Wittgensteinian Sinn, and thus far, it seems as if his notion concerned only the truth-conditions of entire propositions. Lest we leave with the impression that

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[23] Burge, in his paper "Frege on Sense and Linguistic Meaning" puts the matter succinctly: "Senses are 'modes of presentation': ways things are presented to a thinker - or ways a thinker conceives of or otherwise represents entities in those cases where there are no entities. Not all modes of presentation are senses. But where modes of presentation are senses, they are associated with linguistic expressions.[...] Being a (possible) mode of presentation to a thinker is what is fundamental. A sense is a possible mode of presentation that is 'grasped' by those 'sufficiently familiar' with the language to which an expression belongs." (ibid, pp.30-31.)

Wittgenstein was unconcerned with matters of how it is that we understand a language, it is necessary to consider his remarks about expressions, symbols, and modes of signification.[24] The fact that he makes use of this notion of a mode of projection is what firmly secures Wittgenstein's membership in the camp of Frege-style semantic theorists.

Sign and Symbol in the TLP:

Recall from our discussion above, in section III, that the Tractarian notion of *Satz* is both important and problematic, embodying, as it was shown, disparate elements. As you will remember, the *TLP* contained the following passages.

> 3.1: In a proposition a thought finds an expression that can be perceived by the senses.
> 3.11: We use the perceptible sign of a proposition (spoken or written, etc.) as a projection of a possible situation. The *method* of projection is to think of the sense of the proposition.
> 3.12: I call the sign with which we express a thought a propositional sign.
> - And a proposition is a propositional sign in its projective relation to the world.

And the notion of proposition is identified by way of 3.31 identified with both the notion of *symbol* and *expression*.

> 3.31: I call any part of a proposition that characterizes its Sinn an expression (or a symbol.) (A proposition is itself an expression.)

Thus, a *Satz*, a proposition is at the same time, a symbol and an expression. Coupled with Wittgenstein's distinction between a *Satz* and a *Satzzeichen* (propositional sign), we see that a proposition is different from its propositional sign in virtue of the former's both being a symbol, and its having a *method of projection*. This sorts out as follows:

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[24] Again, it was Carruthers who explicitly made the connection between Frege's notion of Sinn and Wittgenstein's talk of symbols vis-a-vis their mode of signification. Nevertheless, such a connection has, I believe, antecedents in Hide Ishiguro's important paper "Use and Reference of Names" and Peter Winch's Introduction to Studies in the Philosophy of Wittgenstein, ed. P. Winch, Routledge, 1969. Also anticipating this line of interpretation is Brian McGuiness' essay "The So-Called Realism of the Tractatus" in ed. I. Block. (ibid.)

<u>Satz</u> (proposition): is the propositional sign (composed of simple signs - names) *plus* its

method of projection. In fact, it is in virtue of this 'projective relation to the world' that

the prop. sign is *proposition.* A proposition, by possessing this 'projective relation to the

world', is able to characterize its Sinn (3.31.) It is also this projective aspect that makes it

a *symbol.*

<u>Satzzeichen</u> (propositional sign): A proposition is composed (in part) of names; these

names are 'simple signs' (3.202: The simple signs employed in propositions are called

names.) These simple signs which constitute the propositional sign. (3.14: what constitutes

a propositional sign is that in it its elements (the words) stand in a determinate relation to

one another.) This propositional sign is the perceptible, syntactical aspect of the

proposition: "We *use* the perceptible sign of a proposition (spoken or written, etc.) as a

projection of a possible situation. (3.11) Most plausibly, the *Satzzeichen* is what we refer

to in contemporary (professional) parlance as a sentence-token.

Propositions are identified with symbols and expressions. (From above, 3.31.)

<u>Signs</u>: From 3.32, Wittgenstein appears to hold that the sign is the syntactic, perceptible

element of a symbol: "A sign is what can be perceived of a symbol." And that the same

syntactic sign can be common to two different symbols: "So one and the same sign

(written or spoken, etc.) can be common to two different symbols-in which case they will

signify in different ways."

<u>Symbols</u>: In addition to the syntactic features of signs (including propositional signs),

there are, Wittgenstein thinks, different *ways of signifying.* It is this additional element

which distinguishes the syntactic features of words or propositional signs from their means

of signifying what they represent; and in addition, it is the difference in way or mode of signification that distinguishes between symbols, esp. if they have similar syntactic features. This is seen at 3.322:

> This points to the fact that what is arbitrary or conventional for Wittgenstein is the syntactical aspects of expressions - the particular syntactical features which are the signs; what *is not* arbitrary (from the point of view of referring to an object) is what the expression *qua* symbol contains, namely, the *way the expression signifies what it signifies.*

This is confirmed by the next entry in the *TLP*, especially in Wittgenstein's talk of signs and words *belonging* to symbols:

> 3.323: In everyday language it very frequently happens that the same word has different modes of signification - and so belongs to different symbols - or that two words that have different modes of signification are employed in propositions in what is superficially the same way. Thus, the word 'is' figures as the copula, as a sign for identity, and as an expression for existence; 'exist' figures as an intransitive verb like 'go', and 'identical' as an adjective; we speak of *something*, but also of *something's* happening. (In the proposition, 'Green is green'- where the first word is the proper name of a person and the last an adjective-these words do not merely have different Bedeutung: they are *different symbols.*

This aspect - the mode of signification - in virtue of which a sign belongs to a symbol, Wittgenstein takes to be of fundamental importance, as in the very next passage, he writes:

3.324: In this way the most fundamental confusions are easily produced (the whole of philosophy is full of them.)

Almost immediately following this remark, Wittgenstein draws the connection between symbols and use explicit.

> 3.326: In order to recognize a symbol by its sign we must observe how it is used with a Sinn (sense).
> 3.328: A sign does not determine a logical form unless it is taken together with its logico-syntactical employment.

3.328: If a sign is *useless*, it is meaningless (Bedeutungslos.) If everything behaved as if a sign had meaning, then it does have meaning.

And in 3.34 and 3.341, Wittgenstein identifies these features of symbols both with what is essential to propositions, and with what enables them to express its Sinn:

3.341: [...] 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 represent its sense.
3.341: So what is essential in a proposition is what all propositions that can express the same Sinn have in common...

Generalizing this to apply to all symbols, Wittgenstein concludes: "...And similarly, in general, what is essential in a symbol is what all symbols that can serve the *same purpose* have in common." The symbolic element is of primary importance, semantically speaking, even to the point where the some syntactic features of a name may be inessential, so long as the expression *qua* symbol in order: "So one could say that the real name of an object is what all symbols that signified it had in common. Thus, one by one, all kinds of composition would prove to be unessential to a name" (3.342); and also 3.344: "What signifies in a symbol is what is common to all the symbols that the rules of logical syntax allow us to substitute for it." The "serve the same purpose" clause in 3.341 provides the key: what is essential to all symbols is that they can be *used to effect an assertion*.

More on the mode of presentation/ method of projection

The question forces itself: what, precisely is the content and role of Wittgenstein's notion of symbol? In a nutshell, Wittgenstein's talk of a *method of projection, modes of signification*, and a *projective relation to the world* seems to encompasses the function of Frege's Sinn which he terms the mode of presentation (of an expression's Bedeutung).

Beyond this, the precise content of the notion is left indeterminate. What is reasonably clear is that the method of projection concerns *how* the determinate elements of an expression - the articulated parts of the proposition - portray "like a *tableau vivant*" a possible scenario. The method of projection/mode of presentation is what allows the proposition to portray (to a competent language-user) a possible state of affairs. To revert back to the comparison between propositions and pictures, that it is the method of projection that allows the proposition to be compared to reality in order to determine its truth or falsity. This aspect of propositions *qua* symbols is a sustained theme from the *Notebooks* to the *TLP*. Perhaps the best explanation is from Wittgenstein himself. On November 1, 1915 he writes "... The method of portrayal must be completely determinate before we can compare reality with the proposition at all in order to see whether it is true or false. The method of comparison must be given [to] me before I can make the comparison. Whether a proposition is true or false is something that has to appear. We must however know in advance *how* it will appear." This is very similar to Frege's mode of presentation. Because, for Wittgenstein, all types of expressions are symbols and thus contain a mode of projection, it is further like Fregean *Sinn* (and unlike Wittgenstein's conception of *Sinn*) in that this common functional feature is an objective feature of all types of expressions - including sub-sentential expressions.

This aspect of expressions *qua* symbols is what places Wittgenstein's semantics squarely in the FS camp. His talk of method of projection, mode of signification, and ways of signifying also shows quite conclusively that he intended to get more mileage from his comparison of propositions with pictures than is commonly thought. Witness 3.11 and

3.12 where we are told that "We use the perceptible sign of a proposition as a *projection* of a possible situation", and that a proposition is "a propositional sign in its projective relation to the world." The idea seems to be that there is something intrinsic to the nature of a proposition that serves as a kind of projection, or picture, of a possible situation. Recalling that it is the truth-conditions (Sinn) that are expressed by a proposition, the talk of projection of a possible situation puts us very close to the a Fregean notion of a mode of presentation. This suspicion is confirmed shortly thereafter on 3.31 where Wittgenstein stipulates that "any part of a proposition which characterizes its (Sinn) is an expression (or a symbol). And a proposition "itself is an expression." Equating the concepts of a proposition with those of a symbol and of an expression, Wittgenstein proceeds to say that one and the same sign (for example, a name) which is the perceptible part of a symbol (3.32) can "be common to two different symbols - in which case *they will signify in different ways* (italics mine)". This amounts to saying that a syntactical item, a propositional sign, for example, also contains, *as a symbol*, the mode of signification, or mode of projection of a possible state of affairs.

It isn't implausible, then, to attribute to Wittgenstein the view that propositions, as symbols (as distinct from a mere propositional sign sans its 'projective relation to the world) have something akin to a Fregean mode of presentation - something that would serve a mediating role between an expression and the state of affairs (or portion thereof) that it pictures. 3.321, which talks about symbols signifying in different ways, seems to imply that one and the same sign (e.g., a proper name) can be common to two different symbols, which would permit the sign's referent to be characterized in different ways. If

this is true, Wittgenstein would be committed to the view that the Bedeutung of a sign could be fixed in a number of ways. To take a well-worn example (leaving aside the issues of complexity and simplicity), the sign 'Aristotle' could be common to two different symbols involving the author of the *Prior Analytics* and the teacher of Alexander the great. In each case the sign would signify in different ways - it would pick out Aristotle in two distinct ways. The point seems to be, as Carruthers points out, that Wittgenstein employs the notion of a symbol in such a way as to suggest that a symbol is a sign together with its mode of projection onto reality. Since this notion of a symbol involving a projection of a possible situation is very close to Frege's notion of the mode of presentation of the Bedeutung of an expression, and that this accounts for the cognitive value or content of expressions, I shall refer to this aspect of Fregean Sinn (as it appears in Wittgenstein) *sense*, in order to distinguish it from Wittgensteinian Sinn.[25]

At 3.31, we read that any part of a proposition which characterizes its Sinn (truth-conditions) is an expression. On the face of it, there are two ways this may be interpreted: it may be read to mean an expression is either 1.) any part of a proposition, where the part (itself) characterizes its Sinn; or 2.) any part of a proposition, where the proposition is what characterizes its Sinn. Since (1) patently contradicts Wittgenstein's insistence (at 3.3) that only propositions have Sinn, (2) will be understood to capture the intended

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[25] While Carruthers and I agree on this much, there are significant disagreements in the background. For example, while emphasizing the Fregean elements in Wittgenstein's semantics, Carruthers seems to take one of the main motivations behind both Frege's and Wittgenstein's projects to be one of offering a theory of communication, which I think is not the case with Frege. I take Frege to be interested primarily in the nature of judgment, thought, and of truth. And his logicist programme, his *Begriffschrift*, the *Grundlagen*, etc. were directed to this end. Frege's concern with language was subordinate to these concerns; to the extent that Frege advanced a theory of communication, it was incidental to his overall objectives. There are other disagreements, among them is Carruthers' claim that 3.31 commits Wittgenstein to Frege's view of the dependency of reference upon sense. While Wittgenstein may have held such a view, there isn't much textual evidence in the *TLP* for ascribing the view to him.

meaning, where "any proposition which characterizes its sense" is simply redundant according to 5.4733: "Frege says that any legitimately constructed proposition must have sense(Sinn). And I say that any possible proposition [that is, one with Sinn] is legitimately constructed.." So interpreted, we can take 'expression' to mean any component of a proposition (including a proposition itself), and hence all classes of expressions: names, predicate and relational expressions, elementary propositions, and propositions themselves, would qualify as symbols, and would therefore have sense (cognitive content.) The question naturally arises: "So these sorts of expressions have sense, in that they have cognitive content; How is it, precisely, that cognitive content is supposed to function? How is it informative?

The notion of sense of an expression functions in the *TLP* to exhibit (make manifest at the level of linguistic practice) the *semantic content* of the expression in question. A grasp of the sense of, for example, a proposition will give the speaker some sense of how, exactly, a sentence is to be "laid against reality like a measure" - of *the way in which* it is a projection of a possible situation. In fleshing out this view, we need to interpolate, as it were, the content of this notion of the sense of expressions, given that Wittgenstein doesn't fill in the picture. In what follows, I have adapted a substantial principle of charity and at times gone beyond the letter, but not, I hope, the spirit of the text.

Recalling from Chapter One that predicate and relational expressions (as distinct from names) don't refer (in any sense), and that from section III, the semantic content of

names can be, but needn't necessarily be exhausted by an item in the world which is its bearer.

The table (see table 1) summarizes the interpretive results so far. While I take the particular elements and their inclusion as having been established in the preceding chapters, now is a good time to emphasize a few points. The sense (cognitive content) of an expression will reflect the semantic content (Bedeutung) of the expression, and the truth-conditions of the proposition in which the expression occurs. The sense of each class of expression is very close to Frege's application of Sinn - vis-à-vis the mode of presentation - in that the sense (for Wittgenstein) of names and predicate expressions will come to resemble the referring conditions and the predicating-conditions, respectively, of those expressions. And thus, for the interpretation I am presenting, Wittgenstein's talk of the modes of signification and projection harbor, if only obscurely, another function of Fregean Sinn - that of the mode of presentation of the referent to a thinker.

To conclude, if my arguments have been persuasive, I take there to be good evidence for ascribing to Wittgenstein the following:

1.) That the *TLP* does contain a Sinn/ Bedeutung distinction, and that it incorporates some aspects of Frege's distinction, though it assigns the functional roles differently.

2.) A case for how Wittgenstein's Sinn/Bedeutung terminology is to be explicated. and

3.) Other aspects of Frege's distinction, namely its function as a mode of presentation of its referent, is to be found in Wittgenstein's talk of expressions (and equivalently symbols)

containing modes of signification and projection, but where Bedeutung is to be understood as semantic content.

In the preceding discussion, as in our discussion of logical form in Chapter One, we have seen Wittgenstein's comparison between pictures and propositions is meant seriously. As witnessed by our discussion of the two aspects of picturing that he distinguishes in the 2's, that is, between the aspect of standing for and the element of form in picturing. Underscoring the importance of the Picture Theory, we have just seen that Wittgenstein gives great weight to the notion of modes of signification, methods of projection, and ways of signifying.

Chapter Three: The status of objects in the *Tractatus.*

Introduction

On 4.112 of the *TLP*, we read that "The object of philosophy is the logical clarification of thoughts." What then are we to make of his talk in the 1's and 2's of the objects which apparently serve to guarantee reference for the names in elementary propositions? The "sectarian battle" as David Pears terms it, hinges over how we are to read Wittgenstein's claims in the beginning two sections of the *TLP*. What is to be made of such claims as 2.021: "Objects form the substance of the world.." and 2.0211, "If the world had no substance, then whether a proposition had sense would depend on whether another proposition were true." Most commentators, among them Russell, Anscombe, Black, and Pears, are of the persuasion that the Tractarian objects - which correspond to names in analyzed propositions - are in some sense metaphysically real. From this, they take Wittgenstein to be offering a realist metaphysics to support a purely designative semantics. This Chapter will attempt to challenge this understanding.

Considering that many interpreters have situated Wittgenstein's doctrines in the TLP closer to Russell than Frege, it is unsurprising that Wittgenstein is often credited with holding a theory of meaning which is a variation of Russell's logical atomism. Indeed, if one identifies the meaning of a logically proper name with its bearer, or equivalently, if one understands Wittgenstein's talk of a name having an object as its *Bedeutung*, where the latter is translated as "meaning" or "reference", it seems *prima facie* implausible that Wittgenstein could be interpreted as departing radically from Russell. Supporting this intuition are remarks in the 1.0's and 2.0's of the *TLP*. Here, Wittgenstein's talk of simple

names comprising elementary propositions, and elementary propositions combining to form propositions, and these categories of linguistic items in turn corresponding to simple objects, atomic states of affairs, and facts seems to map very neatly onto Russell's linguistic and ontological categorization. Simply recall Russell's talk of logically proper names combining to form atomic propositions, which in turn comprise molecular propositions; these linguistic items signifying particulars, atomic facts, and at times, perhaps, even molecular facts. When one takes this together with the fact that both Wittgenstein's and Russell's atomisms were developed simultaneously in mutual exchange with one another, it might be thought that Russell's variation was, in some sense, the dominant strain. Looking at the very beginning of the *TLP*, particularly in isolation from the rest of the work, one might take it as established that Wittgenstein is laboring exclusively under the paradigm of the Russellian variety of logical atomism. For all of its initial plausibility, I nevertheless want to suggest that a more satisfactory reading of Wittgenstein is at hand if we emphasize the differences between the philosophers. This will help us to see more clearly that the *TLP* contains much that is unique and insightful.

In this chapter, I will examine Wittgenstein's notion of simple objects. Recall that for Wittgenstein, simple objects (for brevity, "object") constitute states of affairs

2.0272	The configuration of objects produces states of affairs.
2.03	In a state of affairs objects fit into one another like the links of a chain.
2.031	In a state of affairs objects stand in a determinate relation to one another.

These objects, standing in configurations, comprise states of affairs. The names, which comprise elementary propositions, have as their Bedeutungen, the objects in the states of affairs[1]. Wittgenstein also stipulates that both names and objects are simple, at least in the sense of not being susceptible to further analysis.[2] I say *stipulates* quite deliberately, for as many commentators have noted, *Wittgenstein was unable (or unwilling) to give an example of either an object, a name, an elementary proposition, or some criteria by which we knew we had reached the terminus of analysis, and hence, had before us a genuine name.*

Section I of this chapter will set out the Russellian backdrop for the debate as to the nature of Wittgenstein's objects. In Section II, I will begin by giving several reasons for not taking the apparently metaphysical theses at the beginning of the *TLP* at face value. This will be done, so far as it is possible, without addressing any particular interpretation of the Tractarian objects that has been advanced. I will then criticize two approaches for construing objects. The first is a view advanced by Jaakko Hintikka, which identifies the Tractarian objects with Russell's objects of acquaintance. The second approach is to take Wittgenstein to be holding on to a kind of possible-worlds semantics. According to this view, the talk of objects being the form of this world (or any possible world) is to be cashed out as the view that objects are the necessarily existing referents of the names that comprise propositions. In both of the above cases, I hope to show that the difficulties with

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[1] Lest we forget, 3.203: A name *bedeutet* an object. The object is its *bedeutung*.

[2] As will become clear, the notion of analysis, belongs to a family of notions which includes names, objects, and elementary propositions about which Wittgenstein was particularly obscure. To take a relevant example, while Wittgenstein "tries on" various candidates for the role of objects in his *Notebooks*, he is dissatisfied with each to the point that he leaves the content of the notion of objects in the *TLP* very sketchy.

each view are of sufficient seriousness to urge us to look for another interpretation. From the problems arising with those views considered Section III will go on to argue that, *pace* Ishiguro and McGuinness, the objects in the *TLP* are not metaphysically real in anything like the common-sense view we have of things. Rather, they are intensional notions, which add no extra-logical content to the semantic theory. To anticipate, albeit in a sketchy way, the Tractarian objects are nothing more than the role they serve as a kind of semantic placeholder in a possible state of affairs, and function as little more than the vestigial correlates of names in the propositions which picture the possible state of affairs.

I.

The Russellian Background:

With respect to his philosophical views, Russell was apt to change his mind. This fact has been amply noted and presents difficulties in trying to sketch the Russellian background against which to discuss Wittgenstein's views[3]. Nevertheless, I shall try to sketch out the main features of Russell's version of logical atomism. The tensions which arise in Russell's semantic theory are helpful in trying to understand Wittgenstein's Picture Theory of meaning (of propositions).

According to Russell's version of logical atomism[4], the non-logical expressions of factual language fall into two categories: the analyzable and unanalyzable. An expression is meaningful if it or the expressions contained in it (which are arrived at through analysis) signify existent things. Furthermore, "every proposition which we can understand must be

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[3] Much of the textual evidence for Russell's view was published after the *TLP*, but was developed in dialogue with Wittgenstein's views (if not with Wittgenstein himself.)

[4] I am indebted to David Pears' account of Russell's logical atomism in his *Bertrand Russell: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. by David Pears. Anchor Books, New York. 1972.

composed wholly of constituents with which we are acquainted"[5]; the simple,

unanalyzable components of the proposition - the logically proper names and simple

general expressions - must signify existent entities if the proposition of which they are a

part is to be meaningful. These logically proper names (not further analyzable, and hence

simple) signify, or refer to, the existent things, where these "things" are taken to be objects

of acquaintance - that is, sense data. Russell dubs these objects of acquaintance

particulars, and says:

> Particulars have this peculiarity, among the sort of objects that you have
> to take account of in an inventory of the world, that each of them stands
> entirely alone and is completely self-subsistent. It has that sort of self-sub-
> sistence that used to belong to substance, except that it only persists
> through a very short time, so far as our experience goes. That is to say,
> each particular that there is in the world does not in any way logically
> depend upon any other particular.[...] In the same way, in order to under
> to understand a name for a particular, the only thing necessary is to be
> acquainted with that particular, you have a full, adequate, and complete
> understanding of the name..[6]

To summarize, these particulars are, for Russell, the referents of logically proper names.

The properties and relations possessed by these particulars are signified by the simple

general expressions in analyzed propositions.

There are numerous problems with Russell's logical atomism, but I will focus on

three difficulties bearing on his treatment of logically proper names and particulars that are

outlined very nicely by David Pears.

> Russell's procedure is to replace complex singular expressions by definite
> descriptions of the simple particulars constituting the original complexes. In
> the most straightforward kind of case the original complex will consist of a
> a single simple particular possessing simple qualities, and the definite
> description will mention all of these simple qualities. and identify the one that

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[5] From Russell's *Problems of Philosophy* (1912), quoted in Pears (1972) pg. 27.

[6] "The Philosophy of Logical Atomism," in *Essays in Logic and Knowledge*, ed. by R.C. Marsh, London: llen & Unwin, 1956, pp 201-202.

possesses them. It is evident that a particular identified in this way will be simple in the following sense: no fact will be embedded in it [..] and so it will have no essential nature. It follows that, if it is named, its name will be a logically proper name, devoid of any descriptive content. The meaning of this name, according to Russell, is the particular that it signifies, and it can be learned only through acquaintance.[7]

Initially, there is the recurring problem of the false proposition, that is, the case in which the particular named does not exist. In that case, it would seem that the name is meaningless, not simply false. Since the particulars signified by names in atomic propositions must exist (for the name to be meaningful) it would seem that every atomic proposition would be true. Russell faces this difficulty on account of the uneasy conjunction of his empiricist construal of particulars (as objects of acquaintance) with his taking the meaning of a logically proper name to be just that *particular signified* by the name. Over and above this, there are the following difficulties many of which cluster around the issue of possibility:

The Persistence/Identification Problem: The relationship between a logically proper name and the particular it signifies is supposed to be (to use Pears' phrase) a "connection" of meaning, which would appear to involve, at least minimally, that the particular's criteria of individuation and identity must remain stable across time and language-users.

This difficulty takes the form of a dilemma. Given that Russell takes his particulars to be momentary bits of sense-data with which we are acquainted, it would seem that if a proper name were to have a bearer (and thus have meaning) it would seem to have that bearer (and thus be meaningful) for only the short time the sense-data persists. Even if that were to be solved by the strategy of saying that names are actually veiled definite description there is still this problem: without adopting talk of essential properties (which would be uneasy bedfellows with his robust empiricism) Russell would seem to be at a loss to

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[7] Pears, ibid. pg. 33.

distinguish between the contingent features that characterize a particular through successive alterations. As Pears puts the worry in the case of the particular John (which, strictly speaking, Russell would treat as a logical construction) "the difficulty is to see how Russell could use...contingent facts to construct a definite description of the particular that would yield an analysis of a proposition about John when it was substituted for John."[8] It seems that any set of criteria specific enough to successfully pick out a particular would involve contingent features of the particular which it may very easily lack. Thus, the identification of a particular by its properties would form, at best, a contingent relation given the different atomic facts about the particular.

The Problem of Necessary Existence: Given that the connection between a logically proper name *"a"* and the particular that it signifies (that, strictly speaking, is its meaning) is supposed to be a connection of meaning, "it seems to follow both that the particular must exist, and that *"a"* could not have signified a different [particular]."[9] In cases where the atomic proposition contains a name which is lacks a bearer (there is no particular that the names signifies) then the name would actually then be a kind of definite description.

A Russellian wants to say that the meaning of a word is the thing to which it applies; she also wants the connection of meaning to be, for lack of a better term, durable. When the particular that is the bearer of a proper name exists, all is well in the Russellian semantic paradigm (except for the fact that the particular is supposed to have only a momentary existence). In cases where the object made to be the reference of the name (its meaning) does not exist (i.e. in cases of falsity) then analysis is supposed to show the name to be a veiled definite description. True, a definite description could single out a particular across

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[8] Pears, pg. 35. The example used, namely John, is strictly speaking incorrect for Russell. He would maintain (our intuitions notwithstanding) that John, the person, is a logical construction. The example was used to make salient the difficulty.
[9] Ibid, pg. 38.

worlds, but given the nature of Russell's particulars, it isn't clear how such a view could

actually will work. Note that such means of reidentifying a particular in the actual world,

or in identifying the same particular in another world (which is necessary for a false

proposition to be meaningful) would appear to be unavailable for Russell's particulars,

which are, by nature, momentary 'bits' of sense-data. This has the paradoxical implication

that insofar as one 'means anything' by a factual statement containing a proper name, it

appears that one could not be mistaken, as Russellian particulars have the agreeable

property of being true and epistemically self-certifying. In the cases where an atomic

proposition is false, what is apparently a fully analyzed atomic proposition contains a term

(a name) which is actually in need of further analysis. Thus analysis is supposed to solve

the problem of falsity. This would lead to the conclusion that whether one and the same

atomic proposition would be fully analyzed would depend on whether it is true. Thus his

claim that denoting phrases only have meaning when they are a part of a proposition. This

militates against the original (and elegant) intuition that the meaning of a word is its

bearer.

The Problem of Simplicity: If we accept that the connection between the logically simple
name *"a"* and the particular that is its meaning is a kind of necessary connection of
meaning, then it follows that *"a"* could not have signified a different particular. "The
connection between *"a"* and *a* "is the sort of connection of meaning that is rooted more
deeply in the nature of things than any other, because *"a"* fastens on to *a* without the
mediation of any descriptions. But for precisely this reason the natures of the particulars
signified by the logically proper names are inexpressible. The theory is the limiting case of
essentialism. If the particulars are simple, what their names capture must be zero-
essences."[10]

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[10] Ibid, pg. 41.

This concern unpacks in at least two ways. The first matter concerns the worry that if both the logically simple name and the simple particular are, by definition, unanalyzable and hence simple, then it would appear that at base, names have no descriptive content and simple particulars have no essential natures. This plays out in the form of a dilemma: if the logically proper name has descriptive content, then understanding the name might suffice to pick out the particular it signifies, which, by definition would lack any properties (being simple); *but*, if the name had descriptive content, the name would appear to be, in some sense complex, and hence, not logically proper. Similarly, if the particular had essential properties, then the name could, strictly speaking, refer to those identifying features; but in this case, the particular is not really simple but complex, and thus leaves it open that the reference of the proper name is actually some part of the complex. (C.f. Wittgenstein's discussion of the watch lying on the table in the *Notebooks*, June 22, 1915.) As Pears puts it, "It is only through its type that descriptions can get the kind of grip on it that they need if they are going to work as its criterion of identity. However, if simple particulars are assignable to types, it follows that they have essences.."[11] If this were the case, these simple particulars have essences, and thus, to use Russellian terminology, there are atomic facts (other than the contingent facts of certain properties and relations holding of the particular) about the particular, and thus the particular is not simple (which would be contradictory for Russell.)

Without considering possible solutions, these are three groups of problems facing Russellian logical atomism; and without addressing steps that Russell took for reconciling

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[11] Ibid, pg. 44-45.

these tensions in his views, it suffices to show that this was the backdrop for Wittgenstein's semantic doctrines.

From what has preceded, there are at least three ways to impute Russellian aims to Wittgenstein, depending on whether one ascribes to him a.) a Russellian semantic theory, one that, at bottom, equates Bedeutung, reference, and meaning; b.) a Russellian empiricism viz. the objects; or, c.) a (broadly speaking) realist interpretation of the objects of reference. Chapters One and Two have attempted to, among other things, show the implausibility of (a). In section II, I will argue against two interpretations of Tractarian objects. These two interpretations seek to build a case for ascribing to Wittgenstein either a conjuction of (a) and (b), or (a) and (b), respectively. Section II will first build a general case against (c), that is, a broadly realist interpretation of objects. I will then go on to criticize the interpretation of Jaakko and Merrill Hintikka, who hold that Wittgenstein's objects are equivalent to Russellian objects of acquaintance (particulars); this amounts to ascribing to Wittgenstein (a) and (b). I will then address - revisit, to be more precise - in general terms the view that Wittgenstein holds on to (a) and (c) in the form of a marriage of Russellian and possible worlds semantics - in essence, the view that Wittgenstein was committed to a kind of modal realism. This is done toward the end of building my positive thesis in Section III.

II. *The general case against the realist interpretation.*

Wittgenstein's talk of facts, states of affairs, and objects in the 1.0's and 2.0's of the *TLP* suggests that in the joint development of logical atomism, Russell's version was dominant to the extent that Wittgenstein seems to adopt his metaphysics (while distancing

himself from the empiricist commitments of Russell.) Despite this appearance, I want to argue that Wittgenstein's ostensibly ontological talk in the 1.0's and 2.0's should not be taken at face value. I will support this claim with textual evidence, citing in particular, the recessive form of the *TLP* itself, the conception of logic and philosophy at work in the *TLP*, and *prima facie* difficulties with an interpretation of objects that involves a reified view of their possibilia - their possible occurrence in states of affairs.

To begin, consider the form of the *TLP*. The work is characterized by a kind of recessive form whereby the force of the claims made in the early going are undercut by subsequent claims made in the rest of the text . The work begins with what appear to be bold ontological proclamations about how the world must be, given that we are able to represent it through language. As Max Black and Anthony Kenny have held, Wittgenstein seems to be laying out a metaphysics that follows the requirements of linguistic representation. This *seems* right: In the later 2's, 3's, and 4's, the *TLP* spells out how we gain access to the world - presumably by means of the resources available through the metaphysics limned earlier in the 1's and 2's - that is, through language. Here he sets out what commentators gesture at when they refer to Wittgenstein's picture theory of meaning. But this reading soon faces difficulties. After the 3's and 4's the recessive form becomes salient. We are told that in a strong sense, the language through which I have access to the world, is *my* language: on 5.6 he writes "The limits of *my language* mean the limits of my world." And later on at 5.63, "I am my world - the world and life are one." The subject doesn't belong to the world, it is a limit of the world". Taken in concert with his remarks at 6.341 about different systems describing the world in different ways, more

or less accurately, we see Wittgenstein to be introducing an element of subjectivity to his claims about language, and thus the medium through which we access the world. The 6's consider various limits to language, with its attendant implications. 6.54 sees Wittgenstein labeling the propositions of the *TLP* as non-sensical. And then there is the infamous proposition 7: "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent."

The final step in this recessive writing style is manifest in the skepticism Wittgenstein shows toward the power of philosophy itself to answer these questions *at all*. This is seen in both his claim that there are no philosophical propositions (4.112,) and in 6.53, when he writes: "The correct method in philosophy would really be the following: to say nothing except what can be said, i.e. propositions of natural science - i.e., something that has nothing to do with philosophy - and then, whenever he wanted to say something metaphysical, to demonstrate to him that he had failed to give a meaning to certain signs in his proposition[...] *this* method would be the only strictly correct one." The last claim is particularly illuminating, as it seems to sketch (very roughly) Wittgenstein's vision of philosophy, in which the urge to engage in metaphysics is shown to arise from a misunderstanding, as it were, *within* language. This should create the presumption against taking the "metaphysical" claims in the 1's and 2's at face value, for to do otherwise would render the *TLP* a patently incoherent text.

The second general reason to reject a realist interpretation of the 1.0's and 2.0's lies in Wittgenstein's conception of logic: given his claims about logic, it seems doubtful that he intended those statements as the metaphysical underpinnings to his logic. In this, Wittgenstein broke ranks with Frege and Russell in that the latter had a conception of

logic that held it to be (among other things) the maximally general science. On this view,

logic would yield rules for every subject matter, irrespective of its content. As Thomas

Ricketts puts the matter: Both thinkers [Frege and Russell] believe that logical principles

articulate universally acceptable canons of inference, canons that apply to reasoning on

any subject matter whatsoever."[12]

Wittgenstein disagreed with this view vehemently. For him, their mistake was to be

found in their *stating* the rules and axioms with which one would be licensed in drawing

inferences. This shouldn't be overlooked, as Wittgenstein took this to be one of his most

important insights, as witnessed by it recurrence both in the *Notebooks* (it appears as one

of the first entries, in 1914) and in the *TLP* 5.454. Logic was to be found - or more

precisely, it was to be *shown* - in the structure of language. To the extent that the world

has a logical structure, it is got at, (better, manifested) through language (witness 6.13,

"Logic is not a body of doctrine.") This conception of logic is at the root of Wittgenstein's

criticism of Russell's theory of types on 3.31 and 3.32, "Russell's error is shown by the

fact that in drawing up his symbolic rules, he has to speak about the things the signs

mean." On Wittgenstein's account of logic, these rules are *shown* in an adequate

symbolism; and so Russell's having to make mention of the meanings of the signs points

toward his wrong step. To speak metaphorically, the immanent logic of the world is

mirrored, and indeed shown, in language. Echoing Frege's *Begriffschrift*, Wittgenstein

envisages the task of logic (and philosophy) to be the development of a perspicuous

notation that would preclude errors in factual discourse due to ambiguity. Thus a theory of

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[12] Ricketts, Thomas G. *Facts, Logic, and the Criticism of Metaphysics in the Tractatus*, unpublished
paper, pg. 3. I am indebted to this paper, as the second and third reasons given in this section are for the
most part, distillations of points that he has raised.

types, as Russell sets forth to solve the paradox of classes, strikes him as wrongheaded: that certain variables can range over certain types of objects and not others is shown in language, and made clear with a logically correct notation. Leaving aside the vexed questions of analysis, the following example may illustrate this point. Consider two expressions: (1) *The moon is made of green cheese*; and (2) *Seven is Nietzsche*. Apparently, the difference is that while (1) is false, it nevertheless is significant - it has sense; (2) does not have sense. But whereas Frege would diagnose (if he were to give rough diagnoses) the problem by *saying* that the error in (2) lies in its components referring to two saturated objects, and lacking an expression picking out a concept; Wittgenstein would likely disagree[13], saying that (2)'s lacking sense could only, strictly speaking, be *shown*, and not stated overtly because it would involve trying to say why the proposition could not picture a state of affairs (and hence lacked sense).[14] This would require a second proposition, which in turn would attempt to represent (and falsely reify) the very truth-functional structure or form that enables a proposition (including the ones used by Frege to give his diagnosis) to have sense (and Sinn) prior to being compared with a fact. To put the point in terms of Wittgenstein's comparison with pictures, though a picture cannot be without the structure that it shares with the fact that it pictures, the picture itself cannot depict this logical, structural isomorphism. As it is put tersely at 6.13:

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[13] Cf. 5.4733 "Frege says that every legitimately constructed proposition must have a sense (Sinn); and I say: Every possible proposition is legitimately constructed, and if it has no sense (Sinn) this can only be because we have given no meaning (Bedeutung) to some of its contituent parts."

[14] Of course, while he manages to *say* according to Wittgenstein, this could only, strictly speaking, be *shown*. It was this tendency of the *TLP* that Clive Bell was getting at in his poem:
For he talks nonsense, numerous statements makes,
Forever his own vow of silence breaks:
Ethics, aesthetics, talks of day and night,
And calls thing good or bad, and wrong or right.
(Monk, 1990) pg. 257.

"Logic is not a theory but a reflexion of the world. Logic is transcendental." Contrary to the intuition that the metaphysics in the 1's and 2's are a kind of transcendental condition for the possibility of linguistic representation, Wittgenstein is clearly maintaining that it is *logic* that is transcendental, not objects. Taking his conception of logic and philosophy together with the criticism of Russell's theory of types, it seems implausible that the first two sections of the *TLP* were intended to set out a metaphysics. Given this, it just seems implausible that the *TLP* is actually taking on Russell's metaphysics of objects; to ascribe this view to Wittgenstein would appear to situate him closer to Russell than the text would permit.

The third reason concerns the objects themselves. Doubtless Wittgenstein's talk of objects "containing the possibility of all states of affairs" and "the possibility of its occurrence in atomic facts is the form of the object" seems ineluctably to lead to the notion of a possibility being understood as a property of an object. Two difficulties present themselves. The first is that, in the absence of any specification of content to the notion of analysis, Wittgenstein's simple objects face the Problem of Simplicity that Russell faced: if the objects are simple in the sense of being unanalyzable - on the most plausible construal of this along the lines of a particular possessing monadic properties - it is difficult to see how they would have any individuating features at all. On the other hand, if there were individuating features of these objects, e.g., their possibilities of occurrence, then it would appear Wittgenstein would be at a loss to specify in what way these objects are simple, and hence different in kind from ordinary things. Another difficulty is that an ontological interpretation of objects as in some sense "containing" their combinatorial

possibilities is that it renders the 1's and 2's , considered even in isolation from the rest of the *TLP*, incoherent. If possibilia are essential features of Tractarian objects, then matters of simplicity aside, they possess certain determinate and individuating features. But this is plainly inconsistent with Wittgenstein's claim that objects are themselves the *constituents of facts*.[15] Put another way, the *TLP* is clear that objects are more basic than facts. If this is so, it would be inconsistent to hold that there are facts about these objects, for then one could ask: whither these facts and are there constituents of these facts about objects, and if so, how does one maintain the thesis that the objects are metaphysically basic? If this difficulty were surmounted, there would be the problem that there would be a certain class of necessary facts - the essential facts about the objects - but it runs counter to Wittgenstein's claim that facts are contingent. Even if we were to grant that the objects were in some sense metaphysically real, speaking of object's essential properties would seem to be the sort of grammatical pitfall that Wittgenstein cautions against in 6.53: it would be a mistake to refer back from the possibilities that essentially are object, to "some

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[15] Another reason to not understand objects as being *of this world* is the 1.1: "The world is the totality of facts, not of things." It is possible that Wittgenstein is after a parallel between, on the one hand, the way objects combine to form states of affairs, whose existentce and non-existence, in turn, comprise the facts pictured by propositions; and on the other, the context principle (of 3.3) which states that only in the context of a proposition does a name have Bedeutung. Thus understood, Wittgenstein is setting up a parallel organization of language and (ostensibly) the world. This is consonant with the *Notebooks* entry of May 24, 1915: "Even though we have no acquaintance with simple objects we do know complex objects by acquaintance, we know by acquaintance that they are complex. And in the end they must consist of simple things/" This sets up a picture whereby the simple objects are inferred, as it were, by our ability to have acquaintance with complex objects. I think the parallel 'context' principle for both names and objects is helpful; the difficulty with this, however, is the following frequently taken step: *From the fact* that we are able to represent complexes (medium sized, dry-goods in the world) by means of propositions, and this is possible (in part) on the basis of the constituents of both the propositions with which we represent the complexes and the simple objects which are the constituents of the complexes (states of affairs) we *infer* from this semantic accomplishment a metaphysical fact about the world. Aside from not squaring with the rest of the *TLP*, the whole point of 1.1 is to prevent readers from making this inference. Whethr or not one ultimately accepts the equation of objects with things (made by some commentators) substituting 'thing' for 'object' in 1.1 is instructive: "The world is the totality of facts, not of objects."

thing, I know not what" that possesses these possibilities. If there were such *things* as objects, then their simplicity would entail that factual assertions could not be made of them, as they occupy an order of being in which factual assertions about their essential natures could not be made.

Before turning to the interpretation of objects on offer from the Hintikkas, I want to point in the direction that the dialectic will proceed. On 3.23, we read that "The requirement that simple signs be possible is the requirement that sense be determinate." This requirement of simple signs - names - and the objects which are their bedeutung is identical with the requirement that the Sinn of propositions in which the names occur be determinate. The connection between the requirement of determinate Sinn and names is made explicit. We have also seen arguments to support the idea that the relationship between the names and objects admits of forms other than the name-bearer variety, given the possibility of false propositions. What is crucial to see (and this will be developed in Section III) is that the Tractarian objects are got to backward, as it were, via the analysis of a proposition into its constituents (names.) Objects are posited, or less controversially - picked out, as the correllates to names, and that 3.3 tells us that this semantic relation must occur within the context of the proposition; without a sentential context, there is no name-object relation. Thus, if there is an intimation of symmetry between the propositions, elementary propositions, and names on the one hand, and the relations between facts, states of affairs and objects, on the other, then the context principle of 3.3 makes the symmetry explicit. Taking this in conjunction with 3.221 ("Objects can only be *named*...") we see that Wittgenstein seems to hold two context principles: one with respect to names

and their semantics, and the other about how these objects are 'picked out', namely, through language. When the matter is put in this way, we see that we could not have access to these objects apart from language, as it is only through language that are able to pick out these objects. While Wittgenstein thinks that names, to speak loosely, are the 'hooks' by which language 'catches' on to the world, 3.3 makes clear that this connection cannot occur apart from the sense of the proposition in which the name occurs. This hangs together well with the claim in 1.1 where Wittgenstein takes the essentially articulated *fact* as the basic constituent of the world. Reflecting on some of the passages used in the preceding Section, we see that this view squares well with what we have seen. I shall now turn to a set of arguments against this conclusion from the Hintikkas, who seek to show that the Tractarian objects are actually Russellian particulars with which we have acquaintance.

Hintikkas' case:

In *Investigating Wittgenstein*[16], Merrill and Jaakko Hintikka advance and defend the thesis that the Tractarian objects are objects of acquaintance, on par with Russell's particulars. With respect to the "crucial subject matter" of interpreting the Tractarian notion of an object, the Hintikkas take Wittgenstein to be maintaining both: (a) a (broadly speaking) Russellian semantic theory, one that, at bottom, equates Bedeutung, reference, and meaning; and (b) a Rusellian empiricism viz. objects, which takes objects of acquaintance to be the reference of logically proper names and simple general expressions. As will become clear, there is little textual evidence in the *TLP* to support such a reading,

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[16] Merrill B and Jaakko Hintikka, *Investigating Wittgenstein.* Basil Blackwell, Oxford. 1986. All references in this section will be to this work, and so I will simply give the page number.

and what's more, there is reason to believe that Wittgenstein was aware of some of the difficulties faced by the 'pure form' Russell's theory of logical atomism that were sketched above.

The Hintikkas begin by tracing a "persistent and pervasive misunderstanding" concerning the *TLP*, one with a venerable tradition in the literature[17]. The Misunderstanding is just the idea that "objects include only individuals (particulars) but not properties and relations.(pg. 31)" Concomitant with this misunderstanding is the view that names are, strictly speaking proper names, and therefore to be construed narrowly to exclude simple general expressions (simple predicates and relational expressions), the Hintikkas maintain that it is an error to exclude the possibility that names include predicate and relational terms. They argue that, as a result, we should take names to include predicate and relational expressions and simple objects to include relations and properties. Now in Chapter One we saw arguments against such a wide reading of names, and I will spare the reader a rehearsal of those arguments here; Instead, let's look at the evidence the Hintikkas marshal in support of their claim.

Surprisingly, the Misunderstanding the Hintikkas seek to dispel does not have a great deal of textual evidence *against* it in the *TLP*. In fact, the Hintikkas are unable to marshal a *single line from the TLP* in direct support of their thesis[18]. In place of evidence

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[17] The "eminent victims of this misunderstanding include G.E.M. Anscombe, Irving Copi, George Pitcher, Richard Bernstein, and a host of other philosophers.(pg.31)"

[18] There is one piece of "good indirect textual evidence" and that is 5.02 "The arguments of functions are readily confused with the indices of names...For example, when Russell writes '+c', the 'c' is an index which indicates that the sign as a whole is the addition sign for cardinal numbers. But the use of this sign is the result of the arbitary conventions and it would be quite possible to choose a simple sign instead of '+c'...(...An index is always part of a description of the object to whose name we affix it...). The Hinitikkas take this to amount to "virtually conclusive evidence" of their interpretation. But I think their case is much overstated, and for two reasons. The first point is that Hintikka takes the passage to imply "two different ways the symbol for addition is a name and hence stands for an object. First it can have an

from the work in question, they give passages from the *Notebooks*. They cite evidence

from a eight-day stretch of entries in June of 1916: "Relations and properties, etc., are

objects too."(June 16); speaking of *Socrates* and the *property of mortality*, Wittgenstein

concludes that "here they just function as objects."(June 22); and lastly, "A name

designating an object thereby stands in a relation to it which is wholly determined by the

logical kind of the object and which signalises that logical kind."(June 22). This is

disappointing. These passages represent the total of their textual evidence, with the

exception of some passages from the *Philosophical Grammar*, written in 1932-34, which

Wittgenstein never intended to publish! At most, citing these passages from an eight-day

period in his *Notebooks* shows that he entertained the thought that objects include

properties in relations. It does not establish that this is his mature view (even in the sense

that the *TLP* could be said to be.) The fact that Wittgenstein experimented with this

notion of objects for a brief time, and no similar views were subsequently entertained,

either in the *Notebooks* or the *TLP* creates a presumption *against* taking such a view to be

his considered opinion.

Here a word on the practice of commentators making generous use of the

Notebooks may be in order. It has been frequently noted that Wittgenstein was at a loss to

give examples of his simple objects or the elementary propositions (names) which

correspond to them. Indeed, in his notebooks we see Wittgenstein trying on, as it were,

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index, which is a characteristic of names. Second, it is equivalent with a simple sign, i.e. a name."(pg.33) But note that the above implications only concern *names*, and from that point, nothing follows (without begging the question) about the nature of objects. The second point to be made is that Hintikka omits the part of the passage which concerns the "p" and "-p". This part of the passage would clearly count against their reading, for on their account, the negation sign would have to signify an object. This would run afoul of Wittgenstein's insistence that the logical constants do not represent and that there are no logical objects (in direct opposition to Frege and Russell.)

different candidates for role of objects. That none of them survive to the *TLP* is instructive for two reasons. The first is that there may be no mention of what they might be, because strictly speaking, Wittgenstein does not think that they are any *thing*. This view, which I will later defend, gains some plausibility from the fact that Wittgenstein was well acquainted with the options that most commentators have seen him holding; the fact that they don't survive to his published work points to his dissatisfaction with those options. Secondly, it bears emphasis that the *Notebooks* are just that - notebooks. In them, we see Wittgenstein wrestling intensely with these kinds of questions. Yet, there was never any intention to publish these writings; and this most likely because what Wittgenstein saw of value in them, he carried over to his published work, the *TLP*. These considerations are often obscured by commentators who rely on the *Notebooks* heavily for their interpretation, and tend to quote from them as if they were on all fours (with respect to offering textual support) with the *TLP*. The danger is one of considering the passages contained therein to carry the same weight as those of the works he intended to publish.

The Hintikkas conclude their case against the Misunderstanding of taking objects to include only individuals - to the exclusion of properties and relations - with the following:

> Thus the usual identification of the 'objects' of Wittgenstein' *Tractatus* with individuals (saturated entities) is not only mistaken, but diametrically wrong.[...] The misunderstanding which was initially called persistent and pervasive *is also perverse.* (pg. 42)[emphasis mine]

Without knowing quite what form perversity in Wittgenstein scholarship would take, I will press on at my own peril. Having shown to their satisfaction that the objects of the *TLP* will include properties and relations, the Hintikkas proceed to build a case for identifying

Tractarian objects with the sorts of objects of acquaintance the Russell took to be fundamental for his logical atomism. Countering passages 2.021 to 2.0271 in the *TLP* which point to objects being "persisting, objective ingredients in the world", they cite more passages from the *Notebooks*: "As examples of the simple, I always think of points in the visual space.." and "It seems me perfectly possible that patches in our visual field are simple objects....; the visual appearances of stars even seem certainly to be so." This is far from conclusive. In addition to the reservations already noted about this textual strategy, notice that the very passages cited are far from unreserved endorsements of the particular view that they advance. That this is so is confirmed in an entry three weeks after the passages that the Hintikkas cite. In it Wittgenstein abandons the view they are trying to ascribe to him: *"Even though we have no acquaintance with simple objects* [emphasis mine] we do know complex objects by acquaintance, we know by acquaintance that they are complex. And in the end they must consist of simple things? (May 24, 1915)"[19]

The final interpretive effort made proceeds by trying to square an phenomenalistic, Russellian interpretation of Tractarian objects with passages in the *TLP*. The problematic passages concern objects constituting the form of all possible states of affairs, having persistence through time, (nay, even necessary existence, in some sense), containing the possibilities of their occurrence. These features of objects do not fit together with a phenomenalistic reading of objects. Russell's objects are momentary sense-data, and their transience creates tremendous difficulties, as we saw above. It would be patently inconsistent for Wittgenstein to hold *both* that objects constitute the form of all possible

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[19] Though I will not discuss it, the next move is made by defending the thesis of "the ineffability of objectual existence". This strategy serves only to make a difficult issue murkier than it was. In doing this, they seek to deflect (the word "smokescreen" comes to mind) text-based criticism from the *TLP*.

states of affairs *and* that they are momentary objects of acquaintance. Nowhere in the *TLP* does Wittgenstein claim the latter thesis. Since ascribing this view to Wittgenstein lacks textual support, would saddle Wittgenstein with the Problems of Necessary Connectedness and Simplicity that fraught Russell's logical atomism, and would render Wittgenstein obviously inconsistent, I conclude that the Hintikka interpretation has little to recommend it.

A case for a modal realist reading of objects?

We have seen that Russell's conception of objects suffered from, among other things, the difficulty that as objects of acquaintance, the connection of meaning between, e.g., a logically proper name *"a"* and the particular *a* (an object) that it signifies becomes mysterious when *a* does not exist. We are left puzzling as to how an expression containing the proper name can still be meaningful and false. Recall that the problem was compounded by Russell's objects persisting "through a very short time, so far as our experience goes." This would appear to make mysterious our ability to reidentify and refer to the same particular through time. Despite the attractiveness of Russell's robust common-sense empiricism, perhaps taking objects of acquaintance for the foundations of a semantics faces insurmountable difficulties.

The general worries about a realist interpretation notwithstanding, it remains to be seen whether the *TLP* can support a modal realist interpretation of objects. The proposal under consideration conjoins a broadly speaking Russellian semantic theory, one which equates meaning and reference, with a realist conception of objects. What separates this view from the one countenanced under the heading of a generic realist construal of objects

is that a modal realist interpretation would take objects to include possibilia, that is, possible but not actual entities. The core idea of this strategy would appear to be this: if one accepts the idea that the ontological category of existence has room for both *actual* and *possible* objects, states of affairs, and facts, then one's interpretive options open up. The perennial difficulty of the false proposition for the Russellian direct-reference semantic theory can be easily handled. Admit possibilia into one's ontology, and the problem of falsity is solved: the logically proper names cannot fail to signify; in the case of false propositions, the names refers to a possibly, but not actually, existing objects.

Concerning objects, to say of an object (in a given state of affairs) that it is possible but not actual is to say that it exists in some possible world, but does not exist in the actual world; it is possible that the object could actually occur in that state of affairs. Indeed, some passages from the 2's seem to give plausibility to this:

2.0123	If I know an object I also know all of its possible occurrences in states of affairs. (Every one of these possibilities must be part of the nature of the object.)
2.0124	If all objects are given, then at the same time all *possible* states of affairs are given.
2.014	Objects contain the possibility of all situations.
2.0141	The possibility of its occurring in states of affairs is the form of an object.
2.02	Objects are simple.
2.021	Objects make up the substance of the world. That is what they cannot be composite.
2.0211	If the world had no substance, then whether a proposition had sense would depend on whether another proposition were true.
2.022	The substance of the world *can* only determine a form, and not any material properties. For it is by means of propositions that material properties are represented - only by the configuration of objects that they are produced.
2.0233	If two objects have the same logical form, the only distinction between them, apart from their external properties, is that they are different.
2.024	Substance is what subsists independently of what is the case.

2.0271   Objects are what is unalterable and subsistent; their configuration is what is changing and unstable.

2.0272   The configuration of objects produces states of affairs.

What is required to show that such a proposal is viable interpretation is to show that Wittgenstein thought that there was such a thing as possibilia, where, for the discussion of objects, possibilia are possibly but not actually existing objects. We need some evidence from the *TLP* that Wittgenstein held there to be a category of existing, but not actual simple objects. In order to show this, we need to show that, as Bradley puts it, Wittgenstein *did not* hold to either of two points: "1.) that all "There are..." or "There is.." statements should be treated as existence-claims, formalizable in predicate calculus by the existential quantifier..; and 2.) that to say something is nonactual is to say that is does not exist. It will then follow that the claim 'There are some things which, though possible, are nonactual" is self-contradictory.'"[20] Now most, if not all, of the existence-claims in the *TLP* that Wittgenstein considers are treated in a manner consistent with (1), so for example, on 4.1272 he writes:

"Wherever the word 'object' ('thing', etc.) is correctly used, it is expressed in conceptual notation by a variable name.
For example, in the proposition, 'There are 2 objects which...', it is expressed by '($\exists x,y$)....'.

This appears to show that Wittgenstein thought such a treatment of existence claims was to be canonical in a logical notation. This treatment is upheld throughout the text. With respect to (2), we have seen a paucity of evidence for believing that Wittgenstein countenanced possibilia in his ontology. That this is so receives additional support from 4.25: "If an elementary proposition is true, the state of affairs exists: if an elementary

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[20] Bradley, Raymond, *The Nature of All Being:* A Study in Wittgenstein's Modal Atomism. New York, OUP, 1992. pg.52.

proposition is false, the state of affairs does not exist." [21] The realm of the possible but not

actual seems to be missing from Wittgenstein's ontological catalogue. Nor does it follow

that Wittgenstein's use of truth-tables commits him to a kind of realism about possible

worlds; that a proposition is a truth-function of the expressions contained within it tells us

nothing about the spatio-temporal world. This seems to be the point of 5.44: "Truth-

functions are not material functions" It may be worthwhile to belabor one additional point.

In the same way that one saying "In the best of all possible worlds, I wouldn't have to live

hand to mouth in order to be a philosopher" does not commit us to asserting the existence

(taken in a modal realist sense) of a possible, but not actually existing world alike in all

respects except that I do not have to live hand-to-mouth in order to be a philosopher; so

too, Wittgenstein's informal talk of imaginable and possible worlds does not commit him

to the view that there are existent possibilia in the inventory of the universe.

While it is true, and this is amply shown by some of the passages quoted above,

that Wittgenstein was concerned with possible states of affairs in a way that Russell was

not, does it follow that he broke free of the "prejudice of the actual" and was willing to

countenance possibilia in his ontology? I think not. Notice that 2.0123 and 2.0124 remain

agnostic on the metaphysical status of the possible occurrence of objects in the state of

affairs. In particular, 2.0124 speaking of all possible states of affairs being given is most

easily understood, not in the material mode, but as a conditional statement about what is

given, epistemically, to a speaker of a language. 2.014 speaking of objects containing the

possibility of all situations, though obviously made in the material mode, does not entail

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[21] In the passage immediately following (4.26), we see: "If all true elementary propositions are given, the result is a complete description of the world. The world is completely described by giving all elementary proposition, and adding which of them is true or false."

that these possibilities are existent, but not actual *things*. Recall that claiming these

possibilities to be in some sense, facts about the objects themselves would run afoul both

of 2.02 "Objects are simple."; and of claiming that certain facts hold of objects would

ascribe to Wittgenstein the inconsistency that, while objects, via their occurrence in

existing states of affairs, constitute facts; there are, nevertheless, facts about these objects.

Claiming this would be tantamount to giving up the game. Additional evidence against

taking Wittgenstein's talk of possibilities to commit him to the existence of possibilia is

found at 2.021-2.023 where it is unambiguous that Wittgenstein holds that, at most,

objects determine the *form* of the world, *"and not any material properties."*[emphasis

mine.] This substance (constituted by objects) determines the form, and it is this substance

which subsists independently of what is the case - that is, of what is actual.[22] If one takes

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[22] While it is not my aim to engage the modal realist in any extended way, there is still a "general argument for possibilism" which a commentator (Bradley) has tried to extract from Wittgenstein which I should like to address in a cursory way. Passages 3.031: "It used to be said that God could create anything except what would be contrary to the laws of logic.- The reason being that we could not *say* what an 'illogical' world would look like."; 5.123 "If a God creates certain propositions which are true, then by that very act, he creates a world in which all the propositions which follow from them come true. And similarly he could not create a world in which the proposition "p" was true without creating all its objects."; and 6.1233: "It is possible to imagine a world in which the axiom of reducibility is not valid. It is clear however, that logic has nothing to do with the question whether our world is really like that or not." Now whatever follows from these three passages (even with the *Notebooks* passages 127 and 98, whose admission should be looked on with suspicion), it does not seem to follow that "3.031(a) commits Wittgenstein to saying that we can infer that [certain worlds where true statements about the possibility of certain facts, states of affairs, and objects] are all possible. And if this is so, then according to 5.123, all propositions that follow [from those statements] will be true in those worlds, including propositions asserting (or, as some would prefer, presupposing) the existence of whatever objects mentioned [in those statements.]"(Bradley, pg.42-3). I am unable to see how the three very general remarks cited can be used to license those particular inferences. Slightly later, Bradley says that citing 3.023 "A name means an object. The object is its meaning." as an objection will not work; For to cite a name that lacks a (actual)bearer, and say that it lacks meaning (his example is "Excalibur has a sharp blade" as a counterexample, is to beg the question: "First, the objection assumes that when Wittgenstein says that the meaning of a name is an object, he means an actual object. But this is to beg the question. After all, so far as naming is concerned, the question at issue is whether Wittgenstein allows for the possibility of names' being assigned, in worlds other than our own, to objects which don't exist in our own."(pg.42.). I think the burden of proof is misplaced here. It is incumbent upon the modal realist to show that Wittgenstein countenances nonactual entities in his class of objects, and toward this end, the general argument for possibilia given was far from conclusive. As a result, the charge of question-begging loses its force. Furthermore, the above inferences drawn (overdrawn?) from the three passages cited presuppose an

Wittgenstein's talk of objects and substance at face value (which we should avoid, as I have argued, and will argue further), his talk of substance subsisting independently of what is the case represents a very different spin on the traditional notion of substance as that which persists (remains actual) through time.

I will now turn from the examination of two options for the interpretation of objects to my own positive account. This account will examine the Tractarian notion of objects from a functional perspective; it will take as its point of departure the examination of the *role* these objects play in the semantics of the TLP. We have at hand (from earlier in Section II) some good reasons to take Wittgenstein's ostensibly metaphysical theses with a grain of interpretive salt. Most notable among those reasons for circumspection is that understanding the passages about Tractarian objects to be statements of ontological fact makes the *TLP* a superficially inconsistent piece of philosophy. My suggestion is that we should look at objects from the point of view of *how* and *what* they contribute to the semantic theory of the *TLP*. To bring this point to bear in the text, consider the conjunction of two passages:

> 3.22   In a proposition a name is the representative of an object.
>
> 3.23   The requirement that simple signs be possible is the requirement that sense (Sinn) be determinate.

Here the connection between objects, simple signs (names), and determinate Sinn (truth-conditions) is explicitly drawn; more to the point, when we recall that names have objects

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account of naming, which takes names to be something like rigid designators. Without argument (with a grounding in the *TLP*) ascribing such a view of naming seems to take into account two things 1.) Wittgenstein, per impossible, was familiar with Kripke's work; and 2.) held an essentialist view of objects. We have seen that (2) is textually problematic, at least as a metaphysical thesis about what proprties putatively simple objects are supposed to have.

as their bedeutung, we have the intimation that Wittgenstein's motive for introducing

names and objects is to guarantee determinate Sinn, that is to say, determinate truth-

conditions. In Section III, I will attempt to develop this suggestion. I will develop Hide

Ishiguro's insight that for Wittgenstein, the bedeutung (usually translated as reference or

meaning) of a name is secured by the use of a name in a set of propositions.

III.

The Ishiguro Thesis:

In her important paper "The Use and Reference of Names", Hide Ishiguro asks the

question whether "the meaning of a name can be secured independently of its use in

propositions by some method which links it to an object, as many including Russell, have

thought, or whether the identity of the object referred to is only settled by the use of the

names in a set of propositions. If the latter holds, then the problem of the object a name

denotes *is* the problem of the use of a name."[23] This question is tantamount to asking

whether Wittgenstein held a broadly Russellian semantic theory. In the preceding sections

of this chapter, I have been arguing for a negative answer to the second question.[24] I will

advance the Ishiguro thesis as a preliminary approximation of the view I want to ultimately

defend.

The Ishiguro thesis can take two strengths, depending on how one construes

Wittgenstein's talk of *use*. The weaker form is a kind of Fregean/(weak) Davidsonian

holism whereby the meaning of a word depends on the sentences in which it occurs. The

second, stronger thesis holds that referring expressions are those used by speakers to refer

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[23] Ibid (Chapter II), pgs 20-1.
[24] As is hopefully clear, this has been one of the central themes throughout my project.

to things. This stronger dependency claim suggests a relation between semantics and pragmatics that is altogether different from the weaker form. The weaker claim is about dependence of reference upon use in a proposition: it holds that "it is only by determining the use of a name that one can determine its reference." The Intensionality thesis says that the dependence of the reference of a name upon its use in a proposition (that is, the Dependency Thesis) has consequences for the interpretation of the *TLP* account of names, objects, and reference. The thesis, as I understand it, is as follows[25] :

(1.) The Dependency Thesis: The reference of a proper name is secured by its use. There are two forms of this claim: a.) weaker: that only in the context of a proposition does a name have reference (bedeutung.); and b.) stronger: that the reference of a name to an object can not be settled apart from its use by a particular speaker (*ala* Strawson.)

(2.) The Intensionality Thesis: The theory of meaning (reference) employed in the *TLP* is an intensional one, and "the simple objects whose existence was posited were not so much a kind of metaphysical entity conjured up to support a logical theory as something whose existence adds no extra content to the logical theory."[26]

The first half of the Dependency Thesis (1.a) is asserted boldly in Wittgenstein's 3.3. Echoing Frege, he writes: "Only propositions have sense (Sinn); only in the nexus of a proposition does a name have meaning (Bedeutung.)" Now it is important to recall that for Wittgenstein, names are semantically simple, they do not admit of further analysis, and the objects that are their bedeutung are themselves simple in such a way as to rule out being identified by a definite description (c.f. 3.24: A complex can be given only by its

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[25] A terminological point. Ishiguro adopts the standard translation of Bedeutung as reference, even though she distinguishes reference from meaning. She ultimately argues for ascribing to Wittgenstein an intensional theory of reference, and I agree with her on that, but I translate bedeutung as "semantic content" so as to distinguish my view of the intensional notion of reference from the Russellian direct-reference theory, which equates the meaning of a name with its reference. With some reservations to be noted later, what Ishiguro means by reference is very close to the notion of semantic content that I employ.

[26] ibid, pg. 40.

description, which will be right or wrong..; and 3.221: Objects can only be named.) And as if to put to rest any suspicion that this was an aberration, Wittgenstein repeats at 3.314 that "An expression has meaning (bedeutung) only in a proposition." This is strong prima facie evidence for taking Wittgenstein to be departing from a Russellian semantics. 3.3 tells that apart from its occurrence in a proposition, a proper name or expression does not have reference. This receives further confirmation in the context of his discussion of signs (of names) at 3.326: "In order to recognize a symbol by its sign we must observe how it is used with sense." This elaborates the dependence relation, as it tells us that in order recognize a symbol (recall from the last chapter, a symbol is a sign plus its mode of projection/signification) by its sign(e.g., a name) we must observe how it is used with sense. Conjoining this with 3.3's insistence that only propositions have sense, 3.326 tells us that not only is the reference of a name dependent on its being in the context of a proposition, but the name *qua* symbol can only be recognized in the context of a proposition. This serves both to illustrate Wittgenstein's commitment to the context principle, but it also to remind us that Wittgenstein's conception of a name must be very much unlike that of proper names in ordinary, unanalyzed factual discourse, for the latter (consider an ordinary proper name) seem to have a fair degree of context-independence.

The stronger form of the Dependency Thesis (1.b) - that the reference (bedeutung) of a name to an object cannot be settled apart from its use by speakers - is supported by 3.326 as we saw above, but also by 3.327-3.328. Recalling that, for Wittgenstein, every name is at the same time a sign, we see that "A sign does not determine a logical form unless it is taken together with its logico-syntactical employment."; and "If a sign is

useless, it is meaningless...(If everything behaves as if a sign had meaning, then it does

have meaning."[Wittgenstein's emphasis.] At the risk of belaboring the obvious, note that

he did not claim the converse, namely that if a sign was meaningless, it was useless: The

use-clause, if we could term it thus, is explicit about the direction of the asymmetric

dependence relation. What's more, we are told that the use of a sign (a name) will actually

serve to disambiguate what the sign expresses: "What signs fail to express, their

application shows. What signs slur over, their application says clearly." This seems right;

for ignoring the complexity of the names involved, we see that in Wittgenstein's example

"Green is green" where the first name is a proper name and the last an adjective, its clear

that the difference in what each sign expresses will be shown in their different uses. And in

the simple example given above, it is important to see that the meaningful (nay, Sinn-ful)

use cannot take place except in the context of a proposition.[27] To bring up one more

passage to drive the point home, the role of use in his semantic theory is clearly brought

out in 5.47321: "Occam's maxim [see 3.328] is, of course, not an arbitrary rule, nor is it

one that is justified by its success in practice: its point is that *unnecessary* units in a sign-

language mean nothing. Signs that serve *one* purpose are logically equivalent, and signs

that serve *none* are logically meaningless." Also supporting the stronger thesis are: 5.557 -

5.62:

> 5.557: The *application* of logic decides what elementary propositions
> there are. What belongs to its application, logic cannot anticipate.
> It is clear that logic must not clash with its application.
> 5.6   *The limits of my language* mean the limits of my world.
> [italics Wittgenstein]
> 5.61   Logic pervades the world: the limits of the world are also its limits.

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[27] A reminder that for Wittgenstein, a proposition is itself a "propositional sign in its projective relation to the world."

So we cannot say in logic, 'The world has this in it, and this, but not that.' [...] We cannot think what we cannot think; so what we cannot think we cannot *say* either.

5.62   This remark provides the key to the problem, how much truth there is in solipsism. For what the solipsist *means* is quite correct; only it cannot be *said*, but makes itself manifest. The world is *my* world: this is manifest in the fact that the limits of my *language* (of that language which I alone understand) mean the limits of *my* world.

What does the stronger Dependency Thesis amount to? One possible, relatively conservative construal given the preceding passages is this. The stronger thesis claims that names and predicate (and relational expressions) "can be said to have the role of referring when they occur in propositions. Names refer to objects and predicates (whether monadic or relational) refer to what holds of the objects."[28] What the thesis states is plausible, and is illustrated by considering how we make reference to a particular. We can use a name to identify a particular in part because we successfully use the name in the contexts of expressions making assertions about the particular, "It is green", or "It stands to the left of the chair", etc. The signs have their fixed role in logical syntax, and it is in virtue of this role that they can be used to refer to whatever it is that they refer to. Note that there are no particular extra-logical commitments made as a result of successfully referring to an object. Ishiguro puts the point nicely:

To be an object, or function, or a fact, is not a classification of things in the sense in which to be solid or to be coloured or to be moving is. It is a purely logical notion, as it was for Frege, which the *Tractatus* calls a 'formal concept.' We cannot properly ask in isolation if John is an object, or a colour is an

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[28] Pg. 25. Ishiguro notes that "Strictly speaking, one can do without predicate expressions in any subject-predicate proposition, since one can always express the predicates that are true of objects by the ordered concatenations or pattern [on the basis of conventional stipulation] of the names of the objects." Here I depart from Ishiguro, as I argued in Chapter One, names should be taken narrowly so as to exclude predicate and relational expressions. What Ishiguro says we could to without (predicate and relational expressions occurring as names), I argue that Wittgenstein holds we actually do without (predicate and relational expressions 'fall out' at the level of names.)

object, or relations are objects. Nor is the question whether 'objects' are physical things or mental objects appropriate...The *Tractatus* view is that if one uses names in propositions and one understands the syntactical role they play, then the proposition would not have a definite sense [Sinn] unless the names obtained a definite reference [Bedeutung.][29]

So according to the Dependency Thesis, there is a dependency of the reference of names upon context, and part of settling the context will involve the significant employment of expressions containing the names. This is shown clearly in 3.263: "The meaning of primitive signs [names] can be explained by means of elucidations. Elucidations are propositions that contain the primitive signs.."[30] The role of elucidations (propositions in which the name occurs significantly)in settling the reference of names is fully in accordance with the Dependency Thesis, as it is through the use of names in propositions with Sinn (truth-conditions) the we "settle" the identity of the object referred to be a name. From this we have a criteria of identity ready to hand: "Two names refer to the same object if the names are mutually substitutable in all propositions in which they occur without affecting the truth-value of the propositions."[31] The truth-value clause at the end of the last statement points to the fact that in order for us to settle the identity of an object referred to be a name, we will need to use (or understand) the role of the name in some contexts where the propositions are true. Later I will illustrate ways in which this account needs to be qualified and augmented in order to be made satisfactory. For now, I will take

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[29] pp. 26-7.
[30] The fact that Wittgenstein goes on to say "So these propositions will only be able to be understood if the references of the signs are already known." needn't cause us worry. As Ishiguro is quick to point out, what is not required is that we have prior knowledge of the meaning of the primitive signs in the proposition (per impossible, according to the above-cited passages), rather "Identifying the reference of the primitive signs, and understanding the elucidations are not two separate epistemological steps steps because the identity of the references of names is not *logically* separable."
[31] Ibid, pg.34.

the weaker part of the Dependency Thesis (1a) to be established; (1b), while it may have

some *TLP* evidence to recommend it, will be set aside..

The second part of the Ishiguro thesis (2), the Intensionality Thesis claims that the

objects which are the reference (bedeutung) to the names are intensional objects, they are

correllates to names, the meaning of which is not exhausted by its reference. That

Wittgenstein took there to more to the meaning of a word, simple sign, or expression that

its reference was discussed at some length in Chapter Two, where we saw a case not only

against understanding *Bedeutung* in the *TLP* simply as "meaning" or "reference", but also

that Wittgenstein's talk of the method of projection and the mode of signification

incorporates many elements of Fregean Sinn - elements which explain the cognitive

content that expressions have. Taking the Dependency Thesis in conjunction with the

results of our discussion of the cognitive content from the last chapter, it becomes clear

that Wittgenstein took a significant departure from Russell's basic equation of the meaning

of an expression with its bare reference to an item or fact in the world. Although Ishiguro

arrives at this point without the theoretical machinery that I introduced in the previous two

chapters, her conclusion is the same, namely that for Wittgenstein in the *TLP*:

> Thus one can raise the question whether a fact expressed by one proposition
> is the same or different from that expressed by another (by a discussion of the
> logical equivalence relationship etc.), one cannot say of a verbally unidentified
> fact, f1, unexpressed by *any* processional method, whether it has *n* elements, or
> whether it is the same as fact f2, as we have not yet settled the identity of the
> "it" that we are talking about. ..We understand the what the proposition
> describes by understanding the constituents (4.024). And by constituents, Witt-
> genstein means (unlike the early Russell) the words, signs, or pictorial elements
> which make up the propositional sign. (pg. 38)

Wittgenstein's insistence on the context principle, his discussion of methods of projection and modes of signification (of signs and symbols), and his three-place semantic theory taken generally are ingredients is his Picture Theory of meaning that serve to distinguish it very sharply from Russell's logical atomism. The Picture Theory of the *TLP* sketches a theory of meaning for the expressions in a purely fact-stating language, and does this in a way that has many antecedents in Frege. So to take, for example, the case of entire propositions, the modes of projection and signification are necessary mediating elements in securing the reference of a proposition, that is, of settling the matter of the identity of the fact or state of affairs the proposition pictures. This intensional aspect to the meaning of expressions in a language allow for the determinate truth-conditions (Sinn) that the theoretical machinery of simple names and objects was invoked to help secure (see 3.23.) For without the prior settling of the question of the identity of the fact a proposition is said to picture, there is no possibility of determinate truth-conditions that we require in order not only to see, in advance of determining its truth-value, that it is significant; but what's more, this possibility seems to be a semantic requirement in order to say we understand a proposition *at all*. It is on these grounds that I conclude the notion of reference (and meaning) at work in the *TLP* is intensional. On the strength of this claim, then, the notion of objects is seen to add no extra-semantic content to the Picture Theory of meaning: at the risk of over-simplifying, it as if the Tractarian objects are (Russellian) vestigial[32] components of a semantic theory that was developed in dialogue with - and opposition to Russell.

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[32] Ishiguro places a nice point this claim by pointing out our ability to still successfully use (make reference with) the name 'Socrates' in identifying the man who once existed, and going on to say: "Just as references of names are permanent in our language, so according to Wittgenstein objects are unalterable

There are two objections, the responses to which will lead me to amend Ishiguro's thesis in a way that draws upon my examination of logical form in Chapter One and on the results of Chapter Two. The first objection is that the Ishiguro thesis, as articulated above, at best gives an account of *speaker reference:* that is, roughly, the story on offer here is only about how particular language users come to establish the reference of expressions in their language. The second is the charge that the view, if Wittgenstein held it, would lead to the absurd conclusion that expressions have the same reference just in case we treat them as having the same use. This seems to pin a strongly anti-realist position to Wittgenstein.

The first objection would continue: The Ishiguro thesis, if ascribed to Wittgenstein, would leave out the question of *semantic* reference altogether; that is, the story of how language users come to attach the references they do to the expressions they use is certainly interesting, but it leaves out the purely semantic question of what is it to say that a word has the meaning that it does? The objection will continue, that it is this latter issue that an adequate theory of meaning tackles, and to the extent that the interpretation on offer is true of the *TLP*, Wittgenstein's picture theory of meaning is sterile. To answer, it should suffice to note the following. While the interpretation of objects on offer is one which establishes their nature, as it were, through their role in the semantic theory, and this theory explains holds that the reference of names to objects is mediated by their appearance and use in propositions with Sinn, it does not follow that the issue of what

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and persistent (*bestehend*) (2.0271). Just as we use the same noun in affirming or denying or questioning, so objects persist independently of what is the case (2.024). These features of the objects, combine with their logical simplicity, in turn imbue names which refer to them with very peculiar features."(pp. 40-1)

constitutes the meaning of a name (or expression) has been left unanswered. This fact may be obscured by the heavy emphasis Ishiguro placed on *use*. Recall that in Chapter Two, we saw the reference (Bedeutung) of a name is the semantic contribution (role) it plays in expressions, where there reference to an item, e.g., an individual, in the real world would be a sufficient but not necessary component of the name's bedeutung. The Ishiguro thesis tells us part of the story: namely that the Bedeutung of a name will be secured by seeing how that name is used in well-formed propositions with truth-conditions (Sinn). The rider that some of these elucidatory proposition be true is just the requirement that if the name has as its Bedeutung an object in the real world (questions of analysis aside), then the semantic content of the name will involve the semantic contribution it can make in virtue of combining with other objects, monadic and relational properties, etc., in possible states of affairs.

Giving further support for the weaker form of the Dependency thesis (1a) is the support given to the Intensionality thesis (2) from the interpretive results of Chapter Two. In that chapter we saw arguments marshaled in support of the claim that Wittgenstein is offering a two-tier semantics which has much in common with the intensional semantics of Frege. While it lies beyond the scope of my project to argue this point at length, suffice to note that the semantics limned thus far under the rubric of the Picture Theory (the meaning) of propositions is certainly not purely extensional.

The second charge is that the dependency thesis, as I have described it, leads to the absurd result that two expressions have the same reference iff we treat them as having the same use. The objection would continue: as you have said, charity in interpretation would

counsel against ascribing such a patently absurd view to Wittgenstein. Such a view would leave open the possibility that an expression's having the reference that it does is purely a matter of our linguistic convention; if this were true, the price of the dependency thesis would be very high indeed. Fortunately, however, one is not committed to this position if one adopts the dependency thesis. Saying that the reference of an expression is dependent on its use in the context of a proposition amounts to the view that, in Wittgenstein's terminology, a propositional sign (as distinct from propositions), in and of itself, does not say anything. It is only the propositional sign in its projective relation to the world that has Sinn. The key point which is implicit in Wittgenstein's distinction between the propositional sign, *simpliciter*, and the propositional sign along with its projective relation to the world is that the propositional sign itself is only a necessary - not a sufficient - ingredient in the picture theory of meaning. Strawson brings this point out nicely when - after distinguishing a sentence or expression, on the one hand, and the use of the sentence or expression, on the other - he proceeds to remind us that:

> 'Mentioning', or 'referring', is not something an expression does; it is some-thing that someone can use an expression to do. Mentioning, or referring to, something is a characteristic of a *use* of an expression, just as 'being about' something, and truth-or-falsity, are characteristics of the use of a sentence.[33]

The semantics of the *TLP* - whether its constituent Dependency Thesis is read strongly or weakly - is attempting to account for just this intuition. Depending on the strength of the Dependency thesis we accept, the is accommodated one of two ways. If we accept the weaker thesis, then Wittgenstein's talk of propositions qua symbols, modes of projection, and the like comes to look like his trying to account for the intuition that representing (like

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[33] Strawson, Peter. "On Referring", in A.P. Martinich, ed. The Philosophy of Language, pg. 223.

referring) is not, to borrow Ishiguro's turn of phrase, a simple word-world relation. If we accept the stronger thesis, then Strawson remarks a propos of referring are all the more relevant to the representational capacity of propositions: This is just what Wittgenstein's emphasis on use and the context principle in the 3's of the *TLP* is trying to get us to see.

Despite the resemblance to Russell in the 2's, to ignore the 3's emphasis on the use of a proposition, the context principle, and the discussion of projection/signification, is to miss the decisive ways in which Wittgenstein's views surpassed those of his former teacher. The picture theory of meaning advanced in the *TLP* is a theory of how it is that our expressions come to have the meaning that they do and how it is that we can use these expressions to make assertions; Wittgenstein's theory has, as an essential part, the outline of a coherent view about how reference is possible. It is a view that steers clear of Russell's identification of meaning with reference, and as a result, does not land Wittgenstein in many of the quandaries that Russell faces.

The objection misses its mark for the following reason. From the simple fact that it is through the use of an expression that we are able to secure the reference of names to objects (the Dependency thesis), it does not follow that our treating them a certain way *in and of itself* gives them the reference they have. The Dependency Thesis states that there is no reference of a name or an expression but for its occurrence (weaker) and use (stronger) in a proposition; in either event, there is no referring without use. The mere treatment of an expression in a particular way is not sufficient for the making of semantic fact, and, over against Russell, Wittgenstein does not equate meaning with reference, and

certainly does not hold that Bedeutung exhausts the meaning of an expression, as we saw in Chapter Two.

The initial purchase that the second objection to the Dependency Thesis traded upon the idea that, if reference were dependent upon use in a facile way, then our linguistic practices, particularly the normativity issuing from warranted truth-claims, appear to lose their footing. One might worry that without a straightforward identity of meaning and reference - one that is unmediated by considerations of the use of propositions *qua* symbols - we may be led to the skeptical conclusion that no one ever means what they say, as the very notion of meaning of the expressions in a language boils down to the treatment of expressions by a community (however defined) of language users. The solution to this worry is to recall Strawson's reminder that "the meaning of an expression is not the set of things or the single thing it may be correctly used to refer to: the meaning is the set of rules, habits, and conventions for its use in referring." With respect to the reference (Bedeutung) of names to objects, the Dependency Thesis does not make the reference of an expression a matter of mere linguistic fiat, for it only claims that in order for a name to refer to anything, the name must be located in the nexus of a proposition, which is to say, it must be *used* (at least in the sense of comprising part of the proposition's method of projection/mode of signification.) The rules, conventions, and habits of which Strawson spoke are part of an expression's meaning and comprise that part of an expression which governs its correct use in referring to an item in the world. What constrains the correct use of the expression is not only - or even primarily - the rules, conventions (regarding, for example, appropriate contexts of use), and habits;

rather, it is the *world* that constrains such expressions, for if the expressions do not

succeed in picking out the relevant features of the world, the items about which assertions

are made, then there is no possibility for truth and falsity. So while the dependence may be

crudely put as: no use, no reference; no rules for correct use, no successful referring; no

referring, no picturing. There is also the requirement of, for want of a better term,

linguistic adequacy: that without the language's capturing the relevant features of world

necessary to make true or false assertions, and in short, to mean anything, then the

language will be discarded. Wittgenstein thinks this consideration is the point of Occam's

maxim: (3.328) If a sign is *useless*, it is meaningless...(If everything behaves as if a sign

had meaning (bedeutung), then it does have meaning.)

What, then, are objects? What does Wittgenstein mean when he says that a name

has as its Bedeutung an object? Functionally speaking, objects are the correlates to names

in fully analyzed propositions; recall, too, that Wittgenstein identified the requirement of

simple signs (names) with the requirement of the determinacy of Sinn (truth-conditions.)

Conjoining this with Wittgenstein's context principle at 3.3 , we see that objects can only

be named in the context of a proposition. Objects function as a guarantor of Bedeutung

for names, names in turn, function to guarantee determinate truth-conditions. My

conclusion, following Ishiguro and McGuinness, is that objects are, strictly speaking,

nothing: they add no extra-logical nor extra-semantic content to Wittgenstein's picture

theory of the meaning of propositions. In claiming that the reference (bedeutung) of a

name cannot be settled outside of a proposition, Wittgenstein also demonstrated more,

Namely, that while there must be some 'thing' that guarantees that our language has more

than an accidental structural relation to the world it depicts, that this relation is not going to be established by a name being placed on an object - which is somehow present to the person doing the naming - like a name to a jar in a kind of Russellian name-christening. On further consideration, we can see that the objects in the *TLP* serve the role of "endpoints" in his semantic theory: they signal that analysis is complete and that there the names have determinate bedeutung. What objects do not do, as Ishiguro noted, is add extra-logical content; one will search the world in vain to find a specimen of a Tractarian object[34].

While a Tractarian object does not admit of a substantive example, it nevertheless functions as a kind of placeholder in a pictured (possible) fact for what is essentially the truth-value potential for a name. To speak crudely, that we can picture possible states of affairs, of whatever kind, *shows* the functioning of objects. Recall though, that the truth-value potential of a name just is the semantic content - the ***bedeutung*** of a name! As we saw in Chapter Two, the semantic content, the Bedeutung, of a name is the semantic contribution they play in expressions: in the case of a name's reference to an individual, the semantic content of the name it will be what the individual signified, its existence or non-existence, contributes to the state of affairs of which it is a part, and which the elementary proposition pictures. This, as I said above, is the upshot of Ishiguro's claim that the notion of reference at work in the *TLP* is an intensional one. It would appear that the very notion of an object is, apart from the semantic content of its 'corresponding'

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[34] In a subsequent project, I will attempt to show more precisely how the interpretation of logical form sketched in Chapter One can be developed. From this it should be possible to show how the logical form of the world (embodied in the semantic content of PRE's) is coextensive with the logical scaffolding of the world; thus understood, the name-object relation "falls out" for the most part, replaced by instantiations of predicate and relational complexes such that it is possible to give a complete description of the world without using the name-bearer semantic relation. That Wittgenstein considered this, C.f. the conversation with the Vienna Circle cited below.

name, entirely dispensable; and furthermore that the concept of an object is parasitic upon particular forms of language. Recalling that Wittgenstein thinks it entirely likely there are adequate alternate 'grids' with which to describe the world (C.f. 6.342), the Tractarian objects may well drop out of an adequate representation of the world, being contingent upon certain contingent forms that languages may take. That this is Wittgenstein's view receives additional confirmation from a conversation with some members of the Vienna Circle in 1929:

> When Frege and Russell spoke of objects they always had in mind things that are, in language, represented by nouns, that is, say, bodies like chairs and tables. The whole conception of objects is very closely connected with the subject-predicate form of propositions. It is clear that where there is no subject-predicate form, it is also impossible to speak of objects in this sense.[35]

Distancing himself from this, Wittgenstein goes on to say that it is possible to describe facts in completely different ways. Specifically, he points out that we could avoid altogether such a conception if we represent a fact - Wittgenstein uses the example of a room - "analytically" using a mathematical equation which would state the "distribution of colors on this surface." This shows that we could give a complete description without succumbing to the temptation of using the grammar of subject-predicate form as it occurs in ordinary language. He goes on to suggest that, in this case, the elementary propositions will have a "tremendously complex structure" of the equations of physics. The upshot of this is that objects are, strictly speaking, dispensable, and that the names ("elements of representation" in this conversation) would have the same form, irrespective of whether the names were variables in the equations of physics, as a variable in an analyzed linguistic

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[35] Waismann, Friedrich. Ludwig Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle. London: Basil Blackwell, 1979.) December 22, 1929. pp. 41-44.

proposition. He concludes that in this scenario: "Logical multiplicity is not depicted by subject and predicate or by relations, but, e.g., by physical equations. It is clear that there is no question of individual objects any more." The strict dispensability of Wittgenstein's objects, then, gives good grounds for disbelieving them to be something metaphysically real (or a possible, but not necessarily actual, existent) or phenomenological; the passage gives strong support to the contention of this chapter, namely, the Tractarian objects add no extra-logical or extra-semantic content to Wittgenstein's picture theory of meaning. On my interpretation, the dispensability of objects causes no problem for the semantics sketched in Chapters One and Three. Explicating the Bedeutung of a name in terms of its semantic content - the semantic role it plays, or equivalently, the semantic contribution it makes - allows us an interpretation of the *TLP* that is philosophically interesting and not patently at odds with itself for what is, ostensibly, its metaphysically lavish beginning. The reading I have argued for has the additional virtue of not foundering on many of the problems Russell had with his atomism.

Conclusion

*"Pictorial form is the possibility that the things are related to one another in the same way as the elements of the picture. **That** is how a picture is attached to reality; it reaches right out to it." (TLP, 2.151-1)*

For Wittgenstein what is essential to propositions is that they can represent facts. If one were to take the set of all propositions - that is the set of all of the significant strings of words which can express a *Sinn* (truth-conditions) - and abstract from the many and varied forms that characterize and individuate those propositions, there would still be a completely general aspect common to all members of that set. Witness 4.5. This common aspect which he describes as the 'most general propositional form' is shared by the 'propositions of *any* sign-language *whatsoever* in such a way that every possible sense (*Sinn*) can be expressed' is shown by the fact that no matter how one were construct a language, there would still be this general form of the propositions in that language. And what is this most general form of a proposition? "The general form of a proposition is: This is how things stand."(4.5)

Taken on its own, 4.5 appears entirely obscure. After what we have read, though, Wittgenstein's intent becomes clearer. In the passages leading up to 4.5, he sought to give an account to how it is that language is able to represent the world. Propositions are able to picture possible states of affairs because, like pictures, they contain two types of elements: those objects (names) which *stand for* objects in a possible situation, and the second element, *form*. How this distinction was to be carried over into the semantics of the *TLP* (and from there, how it was supposed to work) were the subjects of Chapters

One and Three. The interpretation of logical form in Chapter One argued for the identification of logical form with the semantic content of predicate and relational expressions along with the account of propositions *qua* symbols in Chapter Two provided the resources with which to give content to Wittgenstein's notion of form. The notion of the general form of the proposition in 4.5 is what he takes to be common to the forms of all well-formed propositions.[1] Conjoining this with the fact that (logical) form makes it possible for propositions to represent facts at all, 4.5 becomes rather innocuous. 4.5 is really asserting one of his desired conclusions: that there is an 'assertoric core' to all propositions of any language that is able to state facts. Furthermore (if the arguments of Chapter One were compelling) it is reasonable to believe that this 'assertoric core' common to all languages resides - along with the particular features of the semantic content of PRE's - in the semantic content of those expressions. Based on the arguments we have seen, it is reasonable to interpret 4.5 as a kind of detailed recapitulation of his observations of pictures, propositions, and representing from the previous sections.

If all (or even most) of this sounds plausible, then it shows the *TLP* to contain interesting ideas about how language functions; in particular, it gives an interesting account of the peculiar property of 'about-ness' that characterizes descriptive language. Paying close attention to the discussion of picturing and the related metaphors affords a more interesting and more coherent story than the standard interpretation.

Over the course of trying to draw out and clarify the semantics of both predicate/relational expressions and of names, a large hurdle has been Wittgenstein's lack of exposition, argument, and example. But if the *TLP* has been less influential than it might

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[1] Recall that the locution 'well-formed proposition' is strictly speaking redundant.

have, Wittgenstein deserves a large helping of the blame for his obscure prose. For all of this, however, I am aware that as far as the positive task of sketching out the semantics of the *TLP* is concerned, this thesis represents only the beginnings. To reiterate my introduction, my project makes no claims to completeness or immunity from counter example. What I hoped to have offered was a thought-provoking interpretation, one which hopefully stimulates further thought on the *TLP*.

Table One

Type of Content/ Type of Expression	Predicate and Relational Expressions	Proper Names (Referring Expressions)
Cognitive Content: the expression qua symbol Mode of presentation or signification of the expression. Broadly speaking, the 'method of projection' of an expression: in the language of the Picture Theory, how it pictures what it pictures.	What must be known in order for a language user to understand the expression. In the case of predicates, it will entail having a grasp of (including a recognitional capacity of the property that the predicate expression 'picks out'; including a grasp of its extension) The sortal rules governing the correct use of the predicate in propositions. In the case of relational expressions, there will need to be sortal rules governing permissible substitution of individuals picked out by the referring expressions that the relational expression is combined with.	Modes of determining the reference of the expressions in those cases where the expressions are genuine referring expressions; but even in this case, there will need to be knowledge (even if only tacit) of the names 'logical grammar' in virtue of the sorts of predicate and relational expressions it can combine with. Understanding the logical grammar of a names involves knowing its mode of presentation, criteria of individuation, as well as how the name functions in proposition.*
Semantic Content (Bedeutung) Where this could be understood either along the lines of Tugendhat's semantic role or truth-value potential or along the standard picture of a name to its bearer, where the semantic content of a name is exhausted by its bearer.	The semantic content of the P/R expressions simpliciter contains the sortal rules for singificant (well-formed) combinations of predicates(properties) and relations with individuals. It contains the deep semantic structures;the semantic content of P/R expressions specifies the extension of concepts and of functional expressions generally; will specify what semantic role the P/R expression is and how it contributes to the (Sinn) of the proposition of which it is a part.	The Bedeutung of names may, in cases of genuine referring expressions, be exhausted by its bearer; nevertheless, the semantic content of names would specify: 1.) of what type of thing the name may apply; 2.) the semantic role of the object/thing in the determining the Sinn of the proposition in which it occurs; 3.) the combinatorial features (formal properties of the object) which specify its sortal category. This deep logical structure deter- mines its logical grammar.

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* Although this is speculative (extrapolating from what skelatal evidence there is in the TLP) I think Wittgenstein would include all sorts of noun phrases, and so understanding the cognitive content of a name would include a cognizance of the grammatical and logical differences in the different categories of noun phrases.

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