3 Wittgenstein and the Inexpressible

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The greatest clarity [*Deutlichkeit*] was to me always the greatest beauty.
—G. H. Lessing, *Das TestamentJohannis*

Lessing once said, "Language can express everything we think clearly."
—M. Heidegger, *Holzwege*[1]

The most fundamental divide among interpreters of Wittgenstein lies, for me, between those who detect in Wittgenstein's writings some form of semantic or epistemic resource argument, an argument ultimately appealing to the finitude or expressive limitations of language—whether it be truth-functional, constructivist, social-constructivist, antirealist, assertion-conditionalist, formalist, conventionalist, finitist, empiricist, or what have you—and those who instead stress Wittgenstein's criticisms of the assumptions lying behind the desire for such resource arguments, criticisms that in the end turn upon stressing the open-ended evolution, the variety, and the irreducible complexity of human powers of expression. The former kind of reader sees the inexpressible as a limitation, a reflection of what is illegitimate in grammar or fails to be epistemically justifiable; the latter sees the inexpressible as a fiction, an illusion produced by an overly simplified conception of human expression.[2]

While there are several important readers of Wittgenstein who have, in insisting on the fundamental character of this divide in relation to Wittgenstein's later thinking (I am thinking here especially of my teachers Stanley Cavell, Burton Dreben, and Warren Goldfarb), it is to Cora Diamond that we owe the most wide-ranging and pointed articulation of what is at stake in this contrast of interpretive approaches for Wittgenstein's thought as a whole. Her work has forcefully and very originally pressed the latter approach forward, deepening and broadening it to include topics of central concern to contemporary philosophy—among them the nature of truth, of fiction, of realism, of ethics, of logic, mathematics, language, and experience.

An especially important feature of Diamond's work is her insistence that Wittgenstein's thought does not divide itself up neatly into isolated topics on the philosophy of x or y or z. The unity to be found in his thinking (both evolutionarily, within Wittgenstein's own historical development, and thematically, within his writings as a whole) is on this view not doctrinal or a function of subject matter or domain of concern, but instead a distinctive way of thinking about philosophical topics and problems, and, in particular, about the limits of empiricism (traditional and Viennese logical) as a reductive theory of knowledge, meaning, and human experience. This, for me, is the most fundamental insight to be found in Diamond's writings about Wittgenstein, one that has risked becoming obscured by recent debates, however influential and interesting they have been, about how to understand the topics of nonsense, irony, realism, and the *Tractatus*'s framing remarks.

I want in this essay to make a few suggestions about how we might come to see Diamond's idea of a "resolute" reading of the *Tractatus* (as Ricketts dubbed it[3]) in the light of wider themes in her writings, themes that were first broached in writings not explicitly devoted to reading the *Tractatus*. I believe Diamond's total corpus of work on Wittgenstein, and not merely her works explicitly advocating "resolution," are what allow us to see that this theme of the complexity and open-ended variety of expression is already present, in significant ways, in the *Tractatus*. Thanks to her corpus one can come to see the *Tractatus* as already containing within itself recognizable seeds of Wittgenstein's later philosophy, even if they occur in nascent form.

First, however, I give a brief account of how I personally have been most centrally influenced by Diamond, in order to make my own orientation on her writings clearer. From Stanley Cavell I learned that Wittgenstein's modes of writing are internal to his thought rather than mere literary embellishments, and that these features of his thought, with their particular idiosyncratic manifestations, require us to read him as a thinker opposed to tendencies within analytic philosophy that aim to divide content from style, expression's content from its form. From Burton Dreben and Warren Goldfarb, I learned that one cannot have any genuine appreciation of analytic philosophy in general, and Wittgenstein's philosophy in particular, without understanding how their roots lie, to a significant extent, in the development of logic as a branch of mathematics, inaugurated in the 1870s (when Frege developed the *Begriffsschrift* and Cantor's work began to have its effects) and firmly in place by 1936 or so (when Gödel's, Tarski's and Turing's work began to be appreciated and exploited by philosophers).

What Diamond's work did for me was to show, not merely the possibility of use-fully combining these two approaches with one another, but how much each of them is, in fact, very much in need of the other.

Broadly put, there is the Cavellian tradition, importantly furthered by Diamond, of making ethics, self-understanding, and the complexity of human expressiveness central concerns for Wittgenstein in all his writings.[4] But there is simultaneously the mathematically oriented tradition that insists on understanding the detailed interplay between mathematics and philosophy in the early decades of the twentieth century as crucial for our understanding, not only of Wittgenstein, but of the history of the very notions of analysis, content, and expressibility. For over a decade now, my own work on Wittgenstein has been focused on bringing the former, figurative tradition to bear on Wittgenstein's remarks on mathematics and ethics while simultaneously taking advantage, in interpreting him, of an increasingly precise and sophisticated literature relating to the history of mathematical logic and the philosophy of math-ematics.[5] Each of these two traditions, as I understand them, are driven by a concern to explore the temptation toward, and then overcoming of, a quest for "some general conception of meaning," to use a phrase from Diamond's most recent work (Diamond 2004, 217).[6] My work would not have been possible without Diamond's writings, which insist that Wittgenstein's remarks on mathematics are best taken to form an indispensable element of his philosophy as a whole, rather than an articulation of one position within the philosophy of mathematics, and that also insist on seeing Wittgenstein's philosophy as part of a wider tradition in early analytic philosophy.[7] Conversely, however, the power of Diamond's work on Wittgenstein is not compre-hensible, at least to me, without a firm understanding of how central her writing on Wittgenstein's remarks on mathematics and logic have been to her philosophical thinking, including her writing about the *Tractatus*.

In the first section, I touch on the question of whether there is a unified concep-tion of "showing" at work in the *Tractatus*. In the second, I consider the idea of explor-ing the *Fragestellungen* of philosophical questions, inspired by the text of the *Tractatus* and by Diamond's 1975–1976 essay "Riddles and Anselm's Riddle" (Diamond 1991a, Chap. 10). In the third, fourth, and fifth sections, I turn to the conception of the *Trac-tatus* as a work expressing a commitment to a metaphysics of "logical atomism," a conception that seems to me to stand in need of further investigation and that may be conceived differently if we place it against the backdrop of the idea of "complete-ness" as it exercised logicians in the generation that followed him. Finally, in closing, I make a few suggestions about how we might try to look at Wittgenstein's own view of his philosophical evolution (pre- and post-*Tractatus*).

1   Showing versus Saying

In the context of attempting to work out what Diamond's idea of a "resolute" reading of the *Tractatus* entails, Peter Sullivan and Warren Goldfarb have recently raised the interesting question whether there is one or at least one primary distinction involved in the contrasts Wittgenstein nominally draws in the *Tractatus* between "saying" and "showing." Goldfarb has gone some distance in arguing that the answer is No.[8]

Traditional commentary on the *Tractatus* has often assumed that this is so. And in inaugurating the idea of a "resolute" reading of the *Tractatus* by offering criticisms of readings that take "what is shown" in the *Tractatus* to point toward an ineffable truth or content or special inexpressible domain of metaphysics, Diamond herself, at least initially, left this question open. This is understandable because she was attempting a large-scale revision of attitudes toward the *Tractatus* contrast(s) between showing and saying as they had been interpreted in the past. In her wake, Thomas Ricketts, James Conant, and Michael Kremer went on to suggest that the idea of a show/say distinction must itself be seen to be nonsensical for a resolute reader; as Peter Sullivan put it, there was a "spreading" of that to which Diamond's idea of resolution was held to apply. Sullivan, for one, found it difficult to see why or how that spreading could have been necessitated by the idea of a resolute reading alone.[9]

For those interpreters who have taken the *Tractatus* to commit itself to an ineffable domain of necessities, contents, or things—that is, a number of claims that, though they cannot be said, may be shown or articulated in nonfactual or nonsayable discourse—such a view of a unitary or primary distinction has seemed, by contrast, to form part and parcel of a proper articulation of the book's aims and scope. A natural picture suggested by the assumption of a unified distinction between showing and saying is that of a line marking out a division between the sayable and the not-sayable.[10] Yet even if one accepted Diamond's view (articulated in concert with James Conant, as time went on) that traditional commentators failed to establish that the relevant remarks in the *Tractatus* give us (in Goldfarb's good phrase [2005]) "a ticket to the inexpressible" conceived as a domain of necessities, quasi-facts, or unsayable insights, one might still ask a question about the status of Wittgenstein's repeated contrasts between showing and saying and what our proper attitude toward them should be.

As I have conceived them since the mid-1990s, Wittgenstein's uses of the terms "formal," "nonsense," and "show" are like punctuation marks: they are question markers, not categorizations, flagging *particular* points at which misunderstandings of the logic of our language (our *Sprachlogik*) emerge, and they neither invoke nor pre-

suppose a *general* frame of meaning, much less a doctrine about which concepts *must* have formal uses and which may not.[11] I find this obviously the most charitable reading of the book, if one could secure it: as Quine (1981, 87) said of Austin, praising him for operating with no general theory of meaning, but only investigating particular cases of usage, "there is a certain immunity in the concrete case." When possible, I prefer *not* to saddle a philosopher with a view for which I see no need. Moreover, for me there was always an important difference to be borne in mind between Carnap's notion of the *formal* or the *analytic* and Wittgenstein's in the *Tractatus*. For Carnap the enterprise of labeling a truth "analytic" was itself empty of content, but not nonsensical—as, I assumed (following Diamond), the labeling of a usage as "analytic" or "purely logical" or as one involving a formal concept might well, by the *Tractatus*'s lights, end up being. If the *Tractatus*'s labelings with these notions were not taken to be nonsensical, but only remarks calling our attention to contrasting uses of words in sentences, they would not be conceived of in Carnap's way, it seemed to me, if only because I did not see in the *Tractatus* anything like a Carnapian interest in the engineering of formalized languages to unearth meaning- or logical-consequence relations (cf. Floyd 1997). (For more on the idea of the *Tractatus* on logical syntax and on Wittgenstein's way of excluding a theory of meaning- relations, see sections 3–4 below.)

For these reasons—and *not* because I thought there was any argument that could flow from the very idea of an "austere" conception of nonsense to such an under- standing & Wittgenstein's distinctions as a conclusion—I have always been uncom- fortable beginning with locutions such as *the* show/say distinction, or of *the* notion of the *formal*, or *the* logic of language, or nonsense as a general term of criticism or category. The "spreading" of resolution (to use Sullivan's phrase) worried me. Global talk about Wittgenstein's use of the term "nonsense," or the show/say distinction— talk I am afraid has been, unfortunately, encouraged by Diamond's joint work with Conant—positively encourages a tendency to talk about content-in-general globally or in terms of a method of analysis. This goes against certain tendencies that seem to me, not only documentable within the *Tractatus*, but crucial to its aims. It thus became important to me, beginning in the early 1990s, to try to articulate a refinement of the "resolute" reading that appeals to better angels I saw at work in Diamond's writings on Wittgenstein. Some of my suggestions for refinement have earned me the name of a "radical" or "Jacobin" or "strongly" resolute reader,[12] but accounts of my views in the literature—including accounts in work of P. M. S. Hacker (2001), I. Proops (2001), and recent joint work of Conant and Diamond (2004)—have misconstrued them. Part of what I shall be doing in what follows, therefore, is to clarify my own views.

When looking at the text of the *Tractatus* (as opposed to meditating on the concept of nonsense), it has never been clear to me, prima facie, that all of Wittgenstein's remarks concerning showing or nonsense fit together in one way, or, perhaps, even at all. It has never been clear that each individual remark involving a contrast between showing and saying has a univocal purpose or unique path of application. Nor have I ever been inclined to think that Wittgenstein's uses of the contrast between showing and saying are best conceived as primarily concerned with straddling and/or exploring the limits of the expressible. On the contrary, it seemed plausible to suppose that Wittgenstein was sometimes working with a contrast drawn *within* the domain of expression, and thereby resisting talk about content-as-such, generality-as-such, sentences-as-such. So much I surmised by thinking through Wittgenstein's criticisms of Russell's multiple-relation analysis of judgment (aided especially by Diamond 2002, Pears 1979, and Ricketts 1996), by pondering his resistance to Frege's essay "Der Gedanke" (Floyd 1998; Frege forthcoming), and by scrutinizing Wittgenstein's treatment of number words as they figure in arithmetic and in mixed statements (Floyd 2001a). Each of these represents an overcoming, on Wittgenstein's part, of the picture of thought as a relation between a judger's mind and a fact or proposition. Of course Russell too had resisted Frege's conception of the *Sinn* of a declarative sentence as a thought (*Gedanke*) even before he met Wittgenstein: the aim of his multiple relation theory of judgment was to avoid earlier theories according to which judgment is understood to involve a relation between a mind and a proposition. So Wittgenstein's resistance to a picture of thought as relational was, from one point of view, only a sophisticated extension of his teacher's.[13] As I shall be suggesting below, however, Wittgenstein's extension may be taken to radicalize an already skeptical point of view in ways that outstrip Russell's conception of analysis in important respects. The complexity needed to analyze forms of judgment just blows up in the *Tractatus*. (*Tractatus* 5.54–5.542, offering " 'p' says p" as a form of "A judges that p," admits as much.)[14]

Most readers, resolute and nonresolute, can make out that in the *Tractatus* showing has to do with that which does not admit of the question, "is it true or is it false?" something that is connected somehow with logical form, with specific features of our modes of expression of thought in language. But this leaves an awful lot of different examples swimming in the same stream.

Textually speaking, there is on the surface a quite daunting variety of cases of showing, both within the *Tractatus* and in Wittgenstein's post-*Tractatus* writings. In the *Tractatus* itself, we have remarks about a proposition showing its sense, showing how things stand if it is true (4.022), we have an analysis of statements of propositional attitudes that shows that there is no soul or subject (5.5421), we have a sign

for an elementary proposition showing that in its sense an object appears (4.1211), the remark that a proposition shows a logical form of reality (4.121), a remark that the falling under a formal concept by an object shows itself in the symbol for the object itself, so that the name shows that it signifies an object, the numerical sign that it signifies a number, and so on (4.126), the remark that generality is shown through the fact that one can infer by universal instantiation (5.1311), the idea that Frege's and Russell's employment of the logically meaningless assertion sign shows only that what they mark in this way they take to be true (4.442), the remark that tautologies show the formal—logical—properties of language, of the world (6.12), the famous self-reflexive, at first blush destabilizing "what *can* be shown *cannot* be said" (4.1212) (destabilizing, that is, if one insists that this remark *says* something about that-which-cannot-be-said and construes the latter as a something that we can gesture at in a quasi-propositional way), a remark in which operations are said to "show themselves" (5.24), another in which tautologies themselves "show" that they are tautologies (6.126, 6.127) and, last but not least, Wittgenstein's remarks about the inexpressible, which is said to "show itself" in connection with the solution to the riddle of the meaning of life (6.522). There are also, within the *Tractatus* itself, both explicit uses of the verb "to show" and also cases where Wittgenstein uses the slightly different locutions of "recognizing [*erkennen*] the symbol in the sign" (6.113, 6.1203), or just "seeing" or "being seen" (as in mathematical equations; see 6.232).[15] The connections among, and potential applications of, the various cases are not obvious, and are not to be promised at the outset by a general theory of meaning or of nonsense, or by a general theory of how to read the *Tractatus*. They are to be earned, as both Goldfarb (1997, 70–71) and I (Floyd 1997) put it to Diamond, case by case.[16]

This point about showing and saying (or "formality") not involving a single, over-arching doctrine of meaning does not imply there is no interest in looking for some unity, some lines or paths of thought that help us see connections among apparently disparate remarks in the text.[17] In particular, by offering a bold and novel way of seeing how Frege's context principle might be brought to bear on the kinds of reflections on realism she discerns in the *Tractatus*, Diamond has helped us to see how many cases in the *Tractatus* may be seen to express an effort to think through and past the tendency to reify or missummarize or oversimplify our means of expression in particular cases—just the kind of error Frege suggested we fall into when we ask for the meaning of a word outside the context of the propositions in which it figures.[18]

But this point about the importance of Frege's context principle to Wittgenstein, though nearly impossible to overstate, cannot secure a reading of every remark of the *Tractatus* on its own, even when coupled with Diamond's use of the context

principle to support resolution. For one thing, it cannot help us directly with reading passages in the 6s that concern *Scheinsätze*.[19] For another, Wittgenstein's distinctive effort to resist miscasting of our modes of expression is more far-reaching than Frege's, applying both to Frege's and to Russell's ways of analyzing many parts of discourse.

I admit that in the face of the *Tractatus's* daunting variety of showings, it is only natural, and is in fact desirable, to try to gain an overarching point of view. Goldfarb has, in particular, developed the beginnings of a sorting of passages on showing into at least three kinds that seems to me illuminating (see note 8). Other attempts to unify showing under a single banner are less persuasive. Thus it is sometimes held that there is a doctrine about showing in the *Tractatus* that derives from Wittgenstein's picture theory of the proposition. Although this may do as a first pass, to orient us with respect to the text, we need to refine our understanding of it. Showing is not always linked to the notion of picture or model: indeed, it was introduced in the pre-*Tractatus* "Notes on Logic" before Wittgenstein hit on the analogy between propositions and models of reality. There it is linked, as in the *Tractatus*, with the notion of expressive structures that "show themselves" (such as tautologies) in contrast to propositions that exhibit bipolarity, are true or are false. But it strikes me as important that the notion of picture or model, when it did enter his thought in the *Notebooks*, is not a fixed point for an analogy between sentences and pictures. To briefly illustrate this theme with but one example, we may consider the *Tractatus*'s transformation of the notion of generality as Frege and Russell analyzed it with the quantifier.

In the *Tractatus* the use of concepts as so-called formal or pseudoconcepts are not genuine or "material" uses of concepts, but, at best, only apparently material: these uses do not classify or sort, despite their surface appearance. Their proper expression is tied, not to concept words, but to *Satzvariablen*. But Wittgenstein's notion of *Satzvariable* is not our (i.e., Frege's) notion of a "variable," that is, he does not conceive a variable as a letter of *Begriffsschrift* that ranges over objects. Instead, a *Tractarian Satzvariable* displays a fixed collection of genuine propositions whose meaningfulness it presupposes. Its values *are* the propositions (3.316, 3.317, 5.501). Thus no *Satzvariable* can be used to state something about a general notion—say, the notion of *being a proposition* or *being a concept* or *being an object* or *being a number* (cf. 5.5351).[20] There simply is no gap between such purportedly general notions and what they may be seen to classify, no room for what we tend to think of as instantiation according to a general rule.

This is because Wittgenstein rejects, along with Frege's notion of a variable, Frege's and Russell's quantificational analysis of generality. First, he resists the idea that there is one notion of generality to be analyzed by bifurcating "material" from "formal"

generality and then divvying up the latter into various kinds ("formal" sometimes is related to the recursive presentation of a formal series, sometimes not). Then he denies that in any of its forms generality belongs to the content of what is said.[21] Differently put, the logical content and force of generality is for Wittgenstein something shown in our language through our ways of expressing instances, but is not a separable element of what is said; and its ways of being evinced are various. The logical or formal character of generality comes in, ready-made, with our manner of expressing and/or operating with particular instances. But this is very far from Frege's and Russell's quantificational conception of generality as a functional part of a sentence contributing a distinctive element to its sense. Wittgenstein is conceiving generality to be expressed in something like the way a genre painting expresses an archetypical feature or scene. Such a picture is applicable to an aspect of each concrete situation exemplifying the relevant features. That is what its being a genre painting is, and that is what makes any exemplar an exemplar of *it*. Its own way of representing is, of course, not reducible to the depiction of any *one* such example, but each such example exemplifies the characteristic on its own, without an intermediary principle. This is reflected in the fact that the very *same* picture could be used to depict a *particular* scene and also a genre scene; there is nothing in its internal structure that *says* how it should be interpreted. This comes out in our applications of it.

Such is but one example, briefly sketched, of how complicated Wittgenstein's transposition of the notions of picture and generality becomes within the *Tractatus*. (Similar complexity may be seen in the way he attempts to revitalize and transpose the notion of logical necessity, necessity having been traded away by both Frege and Russell in favor of universality.)[22] And if we pursue the fate of Wittgenstein's various analogies turning on the notion of picture after the *Tractatus*, we see that far from surrendering these metaphors he explores, extends, and elaborates them. He applies the notion of *Bild* constructively, to all sorts of cases: the generality of recursive proofs, proofs by diagram, number words, ordinary pictorial representations, illusory models of grammar, world-pictures, and so on. Further transposition of the notion goes on through his last writings (e.g., the notion of a world-picture in *On Certainty*).

Taken together these transpositions seem to me to give the lie to the notion that Wittgenstein's evolution can be fully understood by holding that there was a picture theory of language in the *Tractatus* that carried with it a commitment to a single show/say distinction, and that this commitment to an overarching show/say distinction fell when Wittgenstein surrendered his ways of thinking about logic in the late 1920s.[23]

Wittgenstein is a thinker who explores and fashions new analogies and models of his own: he rips phrases and ideas out of one context (sometimes from his own earlier writings, sometimes from the writings of others) and throws them into another, often shifting metaphors over time into a number of different directions. This densely rich allusiveness, this transformation and self-transformation of language, this ramification and retransformation of words, formulations, problems, metaphors, and questions is an important feature of his writing throughout his life, constituting a kind of unity of approach that is not merely literary, but part and parcel of his ambition to transpose, revitalize, and recast our relation to philosophical questions. As Wittgenstein said to Waismann in a conversation about philosophical method in the early 1930s, "to make the unclarities and vagueness of our words perspicuous, one might exhaust oneself in devising pictures and similes" (Baker 2003, 277).[24] I shall return to this theme of transformations of problem formulations in a moment because it is this theme that lies at the heart of what I find deepest in Diamond's writing about Wittgenstein. But in making a transition to this idea, I would like to make one final remark about the attitude I have toward *Tractatus*'s ways of contrasting showing with saying.

It seems to me important to allow for a certain looseness in the ways we invoke the contrast between showing and saying in explicating Wittgenstein's writing, and especially in the case of the *Tractatus*, where the literary form of its remarks is more or less obviously self-allusive and poetic. Consider the word structure of his terminology as it is laid out in the opening lines of the book. At the risk of sounding too Heideggerian, Burton Dreben used to emphasize that the structure of the opening lines (untranslatable into English) sought, among other things, with a kind of word-play, or movable word-structure on the page, to display the internal relatedness—if you like, the nongenuineness or formal uses—of the notions in play in phrases like *Sache*, *Tatsache*, *Sachverhalt, Sachlage, sich verhalten, Fall, zerfallen, Zufall*, and so on. By this he took Wittgenstein to be suggesting that the apparently substantive metaphysics formulated in the opening lines allows itself, in its very formulation, to be seen as a kind of verbal rearrangement or restructuring of words. Whether or not this is the right way to state the intent behind the construction of these opening lines, on Dreben's account the important point is that the lines may themselves be taken to show the reader the need to reflect on the character of the concepts themselves, rather than, as it appears at first blush, to apply them in statements true or false.[25]

This, if there is anything to it, would count for me as one kind of exemplification of a Tractarian contrast between showing and saying, even though the word "show" does not occur there in the text. In this sort of case, "show" would not, perhaps, best be understood as "proves that," or "gives us reason to believe"—each of these are part

of the idea of showing *that* something is the case—but, rather, as showing us *how* to do something, perhaps by example, in virtue of what the author's words *do*.

Among other things, these words apply to, although they conjure up and transpose, the language of previous philosophers. Wittgenstein's accepting the translation into English of Russell's language of "atomic facts" makes it clear that he wanted to connect his remarks with Russell's philosophy, in particular. But the idea that he simply agreed with Russell about the existence of such facts, or had a direct concern with discovering a basic ontology, has struck many readers (H. Ishiguro, R. Rhees, B. McGuinness, Goldfarb, Ricketts, and Diamond among them) as not the only possible, or even the best reading of this allusion. It has been felt that Wittgenstein is trying to put these terms themselves into question.

Now for many such readers, what is happening is best viewed as a kind of pretence talk. McGuinness ([1981] 2002, 85) called the opening remarks of the *Tractatus* "a kind of ontological myth," one of whose chief results would be "the rejection of all such myths," when its status as "a transferred and illegitimate use of words (like *bestehen*)" is shown. Wittgenstein is, on this view, setting us up for an unmasking of the emptiness of such ontological talk; he will encourage us to think through the talk to the point where it "falls apart" on us (Goldfarb 2000), where his rhetoric "cancels itself out" (Ricketts 1996b), where we "throw it away" or "transition" beyond what is a "masquerade" (Diamond 1991a,b). Perhaps, it has been suggested, the whole book might be viewed as a grand reductio, or an effort to "liberate" us via a certain kind of "therapy," or a form of "deconstruction".

Though each of these summary terms have been pursued by interpreters—and, let it be said, interpreters from whom I have learned a great deal—I myself have never felt comfortable employing them. For the record, let me stress that I have never jumped to the closing lines of the book to understand its opening.[26] Nor have I ever thought of the progress of the *Tractatus* as having the familiar form of a reductio.[27] And although I do think the ideas of therapy and liberation have their perfectly legitimate uses, I have always resisted relying on them as clarifying notions with respect to Wittgenstein's philosophical methods.[28]

My approach, indebted above all to Diamond's writing on riddle-talk (see her 1991a, chap. 10, 2000b, 2004), has attempted to distill something more constructive from Wittgenstein's words. Without sounding Polyannish, I think the *Tractatus* offers a great (if evidently flawed) defense of philosophical activity itself—understood, of course, as a distinctive sort of activity. I prefer the idea of "overcoming" to that of "transcending" for the *Überwinden* recommended at the close of the book, but that is because I do not see that overcoming connotes the idea that we are to be left in just one kind

of space or place when we achieve it, and I see it as a positive construction or creation, not merely a negative turning away or letting go.[29] To repeat: I prefer not to look at Wittgenstein's idea of philosophical clarification in terms of any one overarching aim or end or goal, but instead, in terms of a mode of thinking that is, if not "transitional" somewhere, then is at least reflective and transformative in a distinctive way.[30] Following out Diamond's idea of philosophical clarification as analogous, in certain respects, to the solving of riddles, I incline toward seeing some of the opening of the book posing and/or confronting what may helpfully be thought of as opening questions, some of which are riddles like the riddles of myth, some of which may be conceived of as conceptual problems that Wittgenstein was hoping to solve, or resolve, in the course of the book.[31] On this view, the opening passages aim at refining the reader's understanding of what its own talk has and might come to by inaugurating reflection on the *Fragestellungen* within which discussions of logic, the world, objects, facts, and philosophy has and might proceed. The next three sections elaborate this suggestion.

2   Fragestellungen

The German word *Fragestellung* (setting of a question, question-context, question formulation) occurs in the very first place where Wittgenstein uses the word "show" in the *Tractatus*, in the preface:

The book deals with philosophical problems and shows [*zeigt*], as I believe, that the formulation of these questions [*Fragestellung*] rests on misunderstanding the logic of our language [*Logik unserer Sprache*]. Its whole meaning could be summed up somewhat as follows: What can be said at all can be said clearly; and whereof one cannot speak thereof one must be silent.

The notion of a "misunderstanding of the logic of our language" was not drawn by Wittgenstein from Frege or Russell, but from an afterward to an edition of *Grimm's Fairy Tales* by the Austrian poet Paul Ernst.[32] Wittgenstein (1993, 3: 266, item 110, p. 184) later wrote that he was sorry he had not acknowledged this in the *Tractatus*; we may conjecture that that is because he felt that the Nietzschean literary tradition lying behind his idea had been underplayed by those (such as the members of the Vienna Circle) who appropriated the book without taking this tradition seriously. Brian McGuinness (1988, 251–252) has suggested that Wittgenstein drew from Ernst the idea of "graphic modes of expression and metaphors" being mistakenly taken "literally." I do not disagree, but I would add that a closer look at Ernst's *Nachwort* suggests a view of the evolution of language more complicated than one that can be understood through the distinction between literal and nonliteral (poetic or

metaphorical) language, the critique of myth by reality, or reality by myth, alone. (For a translated excerpt from this *Nachwort*, see the appendix to this essay.)

Ernst's idea seems to have been that there are specific forms of language belonging to different eras, hence a variety of *Fragestellungen*, and therefore a variety of different misunderstandings of *Sprachlogik* (cf. *Tractatus* 4.002). In particular, he stresses the tendency of later eras of thought to try to solve the "insoluble" problems of earlier eras by means of descriptive "inventions," inventions that inevitably encounter problems "insoluble through the experience of reality"—riddles about God, the soul, the world, and so on. In the end, Ernst imagines a point at which the aim of solving such problems by the fashioning of new modes of description or accurate depiction will end, leaving one to drop the whole process of descriptive correction of myth as "insignificant or foolish." Intellectual, poetic, and spiritual progress, on this view, require us to get past the need to critique our means of expression when they do not stand up to a comparison with reality and to appreciate how modern science itself (Ernst mentions Darwin's theory of evolution) may play a mythological role as well (compare and contrast *Tractatus* 4.1122 on Darwin). Hence the importance of fairy tales, which, Ernst agrees with the brothers Grimm, contain within them our "ethics" and perhaps what is ethical for all humankind (cf. Diamond 1991b on Wittgenstein and fairy tales). Hence too the character of modern poetry, according to Ernst: this is poetry in which the search for new materials or subject matter (a more detailed comparison with reality) has exhausted or transformed itself.

If we trace the history of Wittgenstein's ideas about *Fragestellungen* and the evolution of language, I think we see a similar picture of language in play in the *Tractatus*, at the very least in regard to a fascination with the idea of shifting the *Fragestellungen* of questions. I am suggesting here that at least some of the showing at work in the *Tractatus*, some of its images of philosophical clarification, may be understood by reflecting on how it serves this end of transforming philosophical questions. If this idea has any merit, it suggests that the *Tractatus* contains within it the seeds of Wittgenstein's later idea of a philosophical investigation, the form of which, as we read in the *Philosophical Investigations*, is in the first person: "I don't know my way about" (*ich kenne mich nicht aus*: "I'm stumped," "I'm at a loss," "I don't know what's what") (*Investigations* §123).

An "investigation" in the relevant sense always involves a kind of search that is not purely empirical, but partly conceptual, a problem whose very formulation contains terms that require interrogation, or reconception, in order to be solved. Over and over again, throughout his life, Wittgenstein drew a sharp contrast between searching when you haven't any idea in advance what will serve you as a satisfactory answer and

searching when you do have some such idea; searching when you have a framework within which to ask and to answer questions and searching when you do not. What goes on in a philosophical investigation is always searching without a method of inquiry, outside a system, as he would say in the middle period. In such an investigation, we face a problem of expression, not of discovery, a need for clarification of a question, not unearthing of an ontology. We work, in part, on ourselves (in the first person) because we work on coming to an understanding of our own words.

Wittgenstein always contrasts this sort of unsystematic searching with empirical inquiries, the sort of inquiry that might be settled by observation or comparison with reality. He also always contrasts it with searching in contexts where rules may be calculated with in an automatic, mechanical, unreflective way, as in calculations. Philosophy is not the only activity that relies on this sort of nonsystematic searching, such conceptual or symbolical or expressive investigations: Wittgenstein gives many such examples, many of them from the history of mathematics, often likening them to the search for a new means of expression, a new symbolism, or new concept. He gives the example of a word puzzle or riddle, recounting the story in which the king told the princess to come to him neither naked nor dressed: she answered him by arriving wearing fishnet. Wittgenstein constructs his own examples of mathematical problems whose solutions demand that we develop a whole new conception of what a solution must be (the trisection of the angle, classical impossibility proofs in geometry, the semantical paradoxes). He likens these in turn to cases where one understands the verbal form of what one is supposed to do, but has no idea what it would be to do it: being ordered to try to wiggle one's ears without hands or to will an object to fly across the room when one doesn't have any idea what it would be like to do it. (This latter is a favorite of mine because I *can* wiggle my ears without hands.)[33] In his later remarks on psychology, he brings in under this rubric certain first-person investigations. To ask what my own thoughts or beliefs are involves, not an empirical inquiry, but some kind of movement in language or self-expression, perhaps the invention of a new symbolism, a symbolism that might, at least in certain cases come (in words of Whitehead that were known to Wittgenstein) "to do the thinking for us." (The solution may lie then in what thinking can make visible to the eye or the ear through the hand, allowing us not to *have* to think when we use it.)[34]

Commenting on Wittgenstein's early views on ethics and religion, G. E. M. Anscombe (1971, 171) writes:

The most important remark he makes [in the *Tractatus* about ethics] is: "The facts all belong to the task set, and not to the solution" (6.4321). "*Aufgabe*," which I translate "task set," is the German for a child's school exercise, or piece of homework. Life is like a boy doing sums. (At the end of his life he used the analogy still.)

As I read it, this analogy is not meant to make ethics look like an intrinsically inso-luble, hopeless task, much less like an algorithm or a machine.[35] Instead, life itself is a task like a child learning to do elementary mathematics: as soon as you solve one life problem, you are faced with another that you haven't any idea how to solve. In such cases, you need to rearrange your own conception of what a solution would be. You adapt your means of expression to particular applications and come to measure the facts in a new way. There is no guarantee or necessity or theory that can make clear in advance what success will look like to you since success comes through a reconception of the *Fragestellung* itself. It may not be clear, before you do so, whether or not you have failed to give a *Bedeutung* to a given expression, and so spoken non-sense. In such cases a context remains to be constructed, has not yet been seen. The job of philosophical clarification consists in investigating the contexts in which an expression might appear to be apt.

I shall call this sort of problem or question a conceptual problem, so long as we remember that what is at stake in the answer is not the application of a previously given framework of concepts to a new case, but the forming and structuring of con-cepts, a new way of thinking about a question for a new occasion, a distinctive process of clarification. Such conceptual inquiries have the peculiar feature that once an answer has been found, one can't wonder about whether or not the question is really settled. For part of what it is to give an answer is to settle on a proper understanding of what the original question was. To doubt the answer would then be to doubt one's understanding of the question. Where there was a riddle, there remains none—not because of a general theory of the meaningfulness or meaninglessness of riddles. Instead, a question one had no idea how to solve is no longer asked. In the words of Ernst and the *Tractatus*, it vanishes as a problem. The dynamic of this is not directed first and foremost at a fixed Yes or No—a sense, in the *Tractatus*'s understanding of this—even if the result is in the end something to which we do incline with a Yes or a No.

Under the influence of Diamond's powerful essay "Riddles and Anselm's Riddle," I have often emphasized this idea of transformation as reformulation in connection with philosophical questions in Wittgenstein's writing: the transition, if one wants to use that phrase, is from not really understanding what one wants to say to under-standing how to say it better (see Floyd 1995, 2000 and Diamond's borrowing back from this idea in her 2002). This idea of philosophical clarification as expressive trans-position Diamond has called, in her most recent writing on Wittgenstein, the "trans-formation" or "reconception" of a problem or question, and she has become more and more explicit, as time has gone on, that she takes this idea to be one that we can see at work, however imperfectly, in the *Tractatus* (this is a major theme of Diamond

2004; cf. especially p. 215 and also Diamond 2005). She has also come to emphasize, as I had long ago urged that she should, that resolution in reading the *Tractatus* does *not* require one to subscribe to a "general" or "wholesale," but only a "piecemeal" or "retail" kind of investigation of purported sentences and their senses.[36] The two ideas: the transformation of questions and the rejection of a general theory of meaning, go hand in hand. So the "resolute" reading has matured into something much more subtle than its original formulation in the context of resisting certain forms of realism and metaphysics as proper interpretations of the *Tractatus*.

3   Logical Syntax and "Logical Atomism" in the Tractatus: Some Questions for Resolute Readers

I once wrote (Floyd 1998, 85) that it is "a great myth of twentieth century philoso-phy that Wittgenstein was a logical atomist." I intended "great myth" in something akin to an Ernstean sense. What I had in mind is that readers of the *Tractatus* would do well to take with a large grain of salt Russell's vision of logical atomism in the *Trac-tatus* as a research program to which he and Wittgenstein had contributed as part of a common scientific enterprise. This "great myth" struck me as a profoundly influen-tial idea of Russell's for which he deserves philosophical credit rather than a primary constraint on how to read the *Tractatus* and Wittgenstein's evolution beyond it. I simply do not believe that at the time of writing the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein conceived himself as signing on as an underlaborer to an intellectual program that would dis-cover, like chemistry, an analysis of ultimate substance or simples in anything like the way that Russell conceived of it.[37] That he later felt he had conceded too much to the structure of Russell's epistemologically saturated idea is undeniable. But the conces-sion, whatever else we want to say about it, was complicated. At the very least its ulti-mate motivations, applications, and structure within the *Tractatus* remain worthy of further conceptual scrutiny, especially in relation to sections of the *Tractatus* that have remained less scrutinized in detail than they should be. In particular, I believe that we should not assume that because the later Wittgenstein came to reject the *Tractatus*'s notion of a "final" or "complete" analysis as dogmatic and mistaken, we already have to hand a full or even primary account of his philosophical evolution away from the *Tractatus*, much less a sufficient guide to interpretation of the *Tractatus* itself. Some-thing more Ernstean, something more akin to a philosophical transformation of the idea of analysis itself, is going on within the *Tractatus*.

   This is not to deny important connections between Wittgenstein and Russell, but to insist that interpreters of the *Tractatus* think through the nature of these relations

in light of their complexity. Of course Russell assented, at one time or another, to many remarks made in the *Tractatus*, remarks we would not be wrong to see Russell as having in some way begotten through his impact on Wittgenstein. Among them are the claim that the theory of classes is superfluous in mathematics; that the transition from one term to another in the series of natural numbers doesn't require intuition, but in some way comes built-in with the logical structure of our language; that surface grammatical form must be separated from analyzed form, as in the theory of descriptions; that it is a mistake to take judgment to consist in a relation between a mind and a proposition. But, while important to emphasize, this nominal agreement is misleading if left to stand on its own, as a marker of full-throated "doctrinal" agreement. The trouble lies with interpretations that list various commitments associated with the "ism" without sufficiently investigating the conceptual problem contexts within which Wittgenstein's philosophy was formulated. Better, as an approach, is to see how Wittgenstein is transforming that which Russell really should have wanted to say, using an "inchoate" understanding of, for example, *truth* (cf. Diamond 2002 on "inchoate" understandings).

I suggest, more generally, that we should beware of insisting that the best way to do history of philosophy is to look for labels that join these philosophers together in a tradition by way of commonly held doctrine or method. Instead, we should look toward how the *Tractatus* is transforming the *Fragestellungen*, the problem-contexts and concepts that it inherits from Frege, Russell, and others. This implies that we may sometimes need to look outside the *Tractatus*, to its wider intellectual context, in order to gauge its language's purposes, effects, debts, successes, and failures. It also implies that we need to be willing at times to question the idea that the most interesting way to account for Wittgenstein's philosophical evolution, and the evolution of early analytic philosophy as a whole, is in terms of the mistaken-thesis, correction-of-the-mistaken-thesis model. The situation is more complex. The evolution might be better conceived as an evolving expressive tradition within philosophy, a way in which the formulation of various kinds of conceptual questions and problems is constructed rather than foreseen, in which certain questions and problems come to be solved in their very formulation and certain others are, in Ernst's vivid phrase, simply allowed to fall away as silly or insignificant.

My worries about pinning the phrase "logical atomism" on the *Tractatus* were several. First, an insistence that logical atomism is the primary, overriding story about the *Tractatus* had led to the neglect, historically, of study of parts of the book that fail to fit easily into the mould of Russell's program. (The *Tractatus's* passages on ethics and on arithmetic are but two clusters that spring to mind here.)[38] Second, an

insistence on assimilating Wittgenstein's overall aims to the ontological orientation of Russell—however sophisticated an analysis of Russell that might be forwarded in this context—had misled some readers about Wittgenstein's commitments in the *Tractatus* (see n. 66 below). Finally—and most important relative to my aims in this essay—Diamond's own articulation of a "resolute" reading of the *Tractatus* had left underdetermined, at least for the first decade of its reception, precisely what we are to say about the *Tractatus*'s atomism and Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* conception, both of the outcome of logical analysis and of the formalization of language in a logically perspicuous notation such as Frege's or Russell's.

Longstanding tradition, from Russell's introduction onward, holds that Wittgenstein *did* think an analysis of language could be carried through, that he did take himself to be laying down conditions on a logically adequate notation. This, as F. P. Ramsey (1923) already remarked in his review, is not at all obvious; the *Tractatus* sees the sentences of our language as, logically speaking, already in perfect logical order. But a natural question then arises about how Wittgenstein viewed the activity of formalization or translation of our ordinary language into logical notation when he wrote the *Tractatus*. For the Russellian tradition of reading the *Tractatus* as a work of ideal-language philosophy encourages the idea that there is some characteristic, logical form that somehow our language reflects and that, as a kind of underlying grammatical framework, may be used to characterize *the* logical structure of language.

Although Diamond was the first and most influential critic of the idea that Wittgenstein was committed in the *Tractatus* to a domain of ineffable necessities or contents or truths, it was clear in the mid-1990s that she intended, if not to join, then at least not to question this part of the longstanding Russellian tradition of reading the *Tractatus*.[39] On her view, as initially articulated (see Diamond 1991a), the nonsensical quality of the apparent propositions of the *Tractatus* may be conceived of in quite Fregean, ideal-language terms: they are elucidations (*Erläuterungen*) of basic notions, transitional and often metaphorical remarks designed to exhort us to adopt the use of a good notation. She took the *Tractatus* to generalize Frege's stance vis à vis Kerry: we can only attain the right logical conception by seeing how to work within an adequate or correct *Begriffsschrift*. Elucidations, in not being expressible in the notation, may not make sense by its lights. But we neither need nor are able to account for basic logical notions and categorical contrasts in prior or independent terms. We simply accept and grasp them in the use of language. Logical analysis, reflected in the activity of translating our thoughts into the formalized language of a Russell-or-Frege type reveals what our uses of logical notions—such as *object*, *number*, *concept*, and

proposition—come to, even if it does not reflect certain real categories comprehensible independently of that activity.

Yet, as Warren Goldfarb pointed out in 1995 (cf. his 1997), Diamond's initial Fregean picture of the *Tractatus* runs the risk of chickening out precisely in accounting for the notion of *analysis*. Logical distinctions would be ineffable yet in some way genuine if they could be shown in the workings of what could be conceived of as a correct or adequate concept-script—what would be, one supposes, an outcome, however ideal-ized, of successful analysis. For Frege, logical distinctions expressed in the *Begriffss-chrift* reflect something deep in the nature of logic itself. But, one wondered, how could that be so for Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus* if, as Diamond was emphasizing, the whole idea of a *something* deep in the nature of logic (or of language) is part of the idea under attack in that book? As Peter Sullivan (2002, 47) would put the point later on, "Why can a notation be designed by make logical similarities and differences clear *unless there are* logical similarities and differences?"[40]

My reaction by 1996 to this cluster of issues—partly under the influence of con-versations with Burton Dreben, Eli Friedlander, and Matthew Ostrow—was to deny that Wittgenstein's attitude toward logical notation, analysis, and the elucidatory activity of philosophy ought to be conceived of as a smooth or undifferentiated exten-sion of Frege's and Russell's. And I pressed Diamond explicitly to say so (Floyd 1997). I proposed an alternative interpretive approach, an approach on which the very idea of a canonical, *correct* concept-script reflective of *the* logical order of thinking would be seen to be an idea Wittgenstein was trying to overcome in the *Tractatus*.[41]

The way toward such a revision of Diamond's earliest writings seemed open if only because, as Goldfarb, (1997, 72) noted, the *Tractatus* faces us with "a silence on what guides analysis." It seemed desirable in light of the obviously programmatic state of resolute readings of the *Tractatus*: one wanted detailed interpretive work on specific passages within the *Tractatus*, not just slogans and disputes about how to read the preface.[42] And when one did look at the inner details of the *Tractatus*, it seemed clear that Wittgenstein's remarks on notation are so vague and scattered that the idea that the development of a smooth-running formalized language was his aim requires, at the very least, some working out.[43] More generally, present in Wittgenstein's writing is something absent in Frege, namely, repeatedly expressed worries about uncritical idolatry of *Begriffsschrift* notation (for example: confusing the structure of an equation with the holding of a relation, confusing the sign for generality with a functional element of a sentence contributing separately to its sense or content, confusing two distinct uses of the same sign though they express different symbols, as in Russell's paradox). As the contradiction emerging within Frege's own

Grundgesetze system illustrated, "just because a *Satzzeichen* may be logically parsed and operated upon in a formal system is no guarantee that there is thinking going on" (Floyd 1998, 85).

Russell and Ramsey were—I would say in contrast to Wittgenstein—out to advance a positive program of research in analysis: the proving of theorems, causal accounts of belief, and so on. Their implementation of these programs was, after they read it, unquestionably shaped in part by their respective understandings of the *Tractatus*. Wittgenstein himself clearly wanted to leave open the possibility that further clarification might take place in mathematics, psychology, and physics; he hung out with the crowd, so to speak, and it is natural to assume that he shared something of their attitudes. And yet, beyond the use of the truth-operational structures and the discussion of simples and objects, the most striking applications that he makes of the various analyses he proposes in the *Tractatus* are negative: to cut off certain paths and routes into certain philosophical questions and problems, to show that the *Fragestellungen* of certain purported a priori analyses are illusory, in some way not genuine.[44] This suggests that what Sullivan (2004a) has called Conant and Diamond's idea of "the replacement strategy"—that is, the idea that Wittgenstein had primarily in mind, in cases where formal uses of concept words confuse us, to replace our philosophical talk with the activity of fashioning or translating it into the setting of a formalized language that is logically perspicuous—has its limits in relation to our understanding of the *Tractatus*'s conception of philosophical clarification.

Back in 1997 I began to try to work out a different picture of Wittgenstein's Tractarian conception of logical syntax and of analysis by means of a logically perspicuous language. I came to the conclusion that the various notational proposals that were made in the *Tractatus* were, in fact, critical of the ways in which Frege and Russell had conceived their uses of formalized languages. As I (Floyd 1997) wrote, "Wittgenstein's [*Tractatus*] remarks concerning notation can, on reflection, be shown to undercut the whole attempt to construct a correct *Begriffsschrift*. *That*, I wish to claim, is precisely their purpose." Again, in my 2001a I wrote that

by examining the details of what Wittgenstein actually *did* with the *Begriffsschriften* of Frege and Russell in the *Tractatus*, we can see that he is rejecting [their] ideal of clarity of expression. According to this ideal—vividly set out by Diamond—we imagine ourselves to be depicting *the* inferential order among thoughts (or sentences of our language) when we work with a logical notation. But on my reading, one aim of the *Tractatus* is to depict such notions as "*the* inferential order," "*the* logical grammar of language," and "*the* logical form of a proposition" as chimeras. In this sense the Frege (Russell) ideal stands as a primary philosophical target of the *Tractatus*, and not just an ideal Wittgenstein inherited from them. For Frege and Russell write as if, at least ideally, there is a single context of expression within which we may discern the structure of

thought, a systematically presented *Begriffsschrift* within which we can use logical notation to make perspicuous *the* logical order. In contrast, I have emphasized Wittgenstein's insistence in the *Tractatus* that no single imposition of a logico-syntactic order on what we say is or can be the final word, the final way of expressing or depicting a thought. On the *Tractatus* view (as I interpret it) there is thinking, but thinking without thoughts, thinking without an inferential order. For Wittgenstein—even in the *Tractatus*—however useful the formalized languages of Frege and Russell may be for warding off certain grammatical and metaphysical confusions, these languages must simultaneously be seen as sources of new forms of philosophical illusion—indeed the deepest kind of illusion of all, the illusion of having found ultimate clarity.[45]

In beginning to work out this idea I was egged on, not only by an interest in how Diamond's interpretation of the *Tractatus* might be made to answer the worries about analysis that had been raised, but also by reading Frege's reaction to the *Tractatus*, as revealed in his correspondence with Wittgenstein (see Frege forthcoming). These letters strike me as of some genuine philosophical importance. For Frege did to the opening lines of the *Tractatus* exactly what Carnap would later do to Heidegger's remarks in *What Is a Metaphysics?*: he held up the language of the opening lines of the *Tractatus* against the standards of clarity appropriate to his *Begriffsschrift* and found them intrinsically wanting. Just as Heidegger's language failed miserably to find plausible translation into such a logically perspicuous language, so did Wittgenstein's. Since Wittgenstein did not, in the face of these requests for clarification, rework the opening lines of the *Tractatus*, we know that he was aware of the anomalous character of his remarks. They are anomalous, moreover, in a way that goes beyond the kind of anomalousness that made the Kerry paradox a challenge to Frege.[46] The "totality of facts" would be expressed, in a notation, by a collection of elementary propositions. But whose? What would they be? How would their totality be expressed or given to us? And why could Wittgenstein write (5.5571) that to try to specify them in any other way but a priori would be nonsense?

For me it is of great philosophical interest, quite apart from questions about how to read Wittgenstein, that the language of the world, of facts, things, and states of affairs, fails to be illuminable by such an exercise in *Begriffsschrift* translation. (Quine [1980, 1] admitted as much in the opening lines of his famous "On What There Is" when he answered the ontological question with a joke, namely, "Everything.")[47] But the important point for my purposes here is that Frege's effort to come to grips with the logic of the opening lines of the *Tractatus* (those that I have suggested, following Dreben, are intended, at least in part, to put their own status and logical structure into question) led to his transforming his understanding of the kind goal for which the author of the *Tractatus* was striving. As Frege (forthcoming), wrote to Wittgenstein

What you write me about the purpose of your book strikes me as strange. According to you, that purpose can only be achieved if others have already thought the thoughts expressed in it. The pleasure of reading your book can therefore no longer arise through the already known content, but, rather, only through the form, in which is revealed something of the individuality of the author. Thereby the book becomes an artistic rather than a scientific achievement; that which is said therein steps back behind how it is said. I had supposed in my remarks that you wanted to communicate a new content. And then the greatest clarity [*Deutlichkeit*] would indeed be the greatest beauty.

Frege, if I am right, was an acute, though unsympathetic reader of the *Tractatus*. His allusion to Lessing (conscious or not) invokes an aesthetic appropriate to his own conception of logic, and it was intended to show Wittgenstein that he understood at least some of the author's distinctive philosophical aspirations. Not a "new content," but a new way of conceiving an old way of talking about content: this is what the *Tractatus* seems to be after.

Because I have always felt philosophical fascination with what gets called radical opinion, I do not mind being called a "Jacobin" (after all, look what happened to the Girondistes!!!). But I am not chopping off philosophy's head. My interpretive position is not to be understood as embracing anything like an "end of philosophy" thesis— unless one believes, with Frege, that "the greatest clarity" *must* involve what we do recognize as communicating a new content (say, a new ontological insight). I say this because some of my suggestions as to why and how we should differentiate Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* aims from the kinds of attitude toward logical notation found in Frege and Russell have, unfortunately, been misconstrued. Some (Goldfarb [2000]) understood me to be claiming that the *Tractatus* is one grand reductio designed to show the illusoriness of the content of any notion of clarity, an "all-pervasive under-mining" of the notion of analysis itself. Some (Conant and Diamond [2004]) took me to be denying that there are any canons of analysis at work in the *Tractatus*, and even that the *Tractatus* is committed to the idea of a "completely adequate" analysis of the proposition (ibid., 97 n. 82)[48]. Some (Hacker and Proops) found it preposterous that I was calling for investigation of the notion of *logical syntax* in the *Tractatus* and questioning whether the evolution from Russell to Wittgenstein was as yet well understood. Hacker (2001, 119 n. 32) thought that my remarks could only be understood to be "deconstruction with a vengeance." Proops (2001), wrongly assuming that I agreed with Conant's emphasis on resolution wholesale, took me to be denying that Wittgenstein could have been right when he said that he had been mistaken in the *Tractatus* about the whole idea of a complete analysis.

For the record, I have never said or believed that there is an absence of significant or interesting evolution in Wittgenstein's philosophy. Nor have I ever denied that by

the later 1920s he would have rejected significant portions of the *Tractatus*. Nor have I ever said or believed that all the remarks about showing and pictures in the *Tractatus* are nonsensical. Nor have I ever said or believed that there are no canons of analysis at work in the *Tractatus*, or that the whole has the simple form of a reductio. On the contrary, where many have seen doctrine or general strategies or methods, or a theory of meaning, or—even absent each of these—the dream of a single, overarching, perspicuous formalized language at work in the *Tractatus*, I have seen unclarity and complexity, the kind that begins to make sense of at least some of the complexity we see, both in Wittgenstein's early writings about a "complete" analysis and in his post-*Tractatus* remarks in which the in-principle "completeness" of analysis is transposed into the in-principle "completeness" of a grammatical system. So, rather than being willing yet to latch on to metaphysical doctrines or attitudes that might be listed as clear "metaphysical" commitments of the early Wittgenstein (as even Conant and Diamond now do [2004, 82–83]), I have tried to begin documenting some of the idiosyncrasies and complexities of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* talk about analysis, both from his point of view as it evolved and against the background of the historical evolution of logic that he lived through and which we today have imbibed. This is not to deny that some of what Diamond (for one) now formulates as the "metaphysical" commitments of the *Tractatus* might indeed be pinned upon it. But it is to call for a complicated investigation of the significance of such "commitments" by investigating the very terms in which they are phrased ("all" propositions, "complete" analysis, "one logical order," and so on).

Peter Hacker and David Pears were perfectly in order, it seems to me, to ask for concrete interpretations of passages and to ask of Diamond and New Readers, "What will you say about Wittgenstein's evolution, and specifically about the remarks he made in the 'middle' period about his 'mistakes' in the Tractatus?" But for all the breadth and range of scholarship they have applied to this question in their own works, neither one of them has looked in detail at the logico-mathematical problem context in which the *Tractatus* inserted itself. This has led to oversimplifications of the *Tractatus*'s notion of logical syntax.

For Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus* it is not, of course, that we have a notion of expression wholly independent of what is subject to the logical. But, as I have just said, it has seemed to me hardly obvious that the *Tractatus* must be taken to have insisted that all expression is beholden to the logical, to the structure of the proposition, in the same kind of expressible-in-the-one-ideal-formalized-logical-language way. As I see it Wittgenstein never insisted on, but instead resisted, the idea that thoughts must be imagined to be expressible, in principle, in a single universally applicable, logically

fully perspicuous "ideal" language. As I put it, "the *Tractatus* was written to wean its readers from Fregean and from Russellian accounts of the definiteness of sense, from all accounts intended to explain or justify the application of mathematical logic to everyday language and from all accounts attempting to use mathematical logic to explain or justify the application of language in general" (Floyd 1998, 86). Part of the point is the case-by-case nature of philosophical reflection: Wittgenstein is stalking and criticizing particular analyses of notions that Frege and Russell had actually offered (e.g., "One is a number"). But part of the point is a shift in the very idea of what goes on in the translation of sentences into a logically perspicuous notation.

One measure of the kind of conceptual difficulties that faced Wittgenstein's attempt to recast and readapt Russell's picture of analysis as a classification of forms is that there are fluctuations in his own writings, both before and within the *Tractatus* (and especially in his *Notebooks 1914–1916*, in June 1915) about what definiteness of sense presupposes and requires—what he imagines is entailed by the specific demands on clarity and explicitness in grammar involved in thinking through the nature of the proposition.[49] This is one index of the problem-situation within which his thoughts about the nature of, and constraints on, analysis, were being formulated.

Peter Sullivan has recently pressed to the fore a connection between these June 1915 passages and the idea of logical atomism, offering a novel account of the latter that will serve as a stepping stone into a suggestion I shall be making, later on, about what differentiated Wittgenstein's *Fragestellung* from Frege's and from Russell's. Writes Sullivan (2003, 72):

Wittgenstein seems to be committed to a project of analysing everyday propositions as truth-functional compounds of elementary propositions, in which reference is made only to what is ultimately, intrinsically simple. At the same time, he admits complete ignorance of how, in any particular case, this analysis would work out. So we are led to ask, first, and specifically,

1) How can he know in advance that analysis would vindicate a particular inference?
2) Just what does Wittgenstein suppose is going on when logical principles are applied to ordinary propositions *as if* the expressions occurring in them were simple?

Yet another question is why—assuming it makes some sense to regard the image of an ultimately articulated language as a limit that may not be reachable—Wittgenstein held onto the demand that elementary propositions should be logically independent; but Sullivan separates the latter question off from the former two and goes on to suggest that a certain form of "atomism" may be motivated by way of the business (more or less explicitly grappled with in the June 1915 *Notebook* passages) of taking logical notions to apply to surface patterns of our language in connection with the deductive validity and invalidity of arguments. His discussion has the virtue of

locating Wittgenstein's ideas about atomism and the idea of an ultimate analysis within a broader context than the usual one that interprets Wittgenstein's talk of "simples" in terms of the practice of straightening out existential import in connection with singular terms and/or talking about modal properties of objects at the ground level.[50] Whether or not atomism has to do with these as projects, on Sullivan's account each of these practices may be seen to find a place within a more immediate, intuitively accessible kind of activity, namely, the process of depicting, massaging, and altering our linguistic means of expression to a point at which we can *see* logical patterns (e.g., tautologousness) exemplified within them. This engages with the issue of how we are to view the *Tractatus'*s attitude toward logical syntax and the role of a logically perspicuous notation.

Sullivan (2003, 73) begins with a remark about our uses of logic:

There is in general nothing very puzzling about how we show or explain the invalidity of a given invalid argument. Nor is it in itself puzzling that such explanations should sometimes be available: as Frege said, we do not speak a language designed to meet the special needs of an exact science; in particular, we do not speak a language over which any purely grammatical criterion of correct inference could ever be sound. But what *is* puzzling, I think, is that we can sometimes be certain, without any obviously adequate grounds, that such an invalidating explanation is *not* available.

Unless we could, on occasion, be certain of this, deductive inference would be a less impressive epistemic instrument than it is. To know that one may be as certain of the conclusion of an inference of a given form as one is of its premises would be of relatively little use if *whether* an inference *is* of that form were always a matter of doubtful speculation.

Sullivan regards this concern about what he calls "covert complexity" as an "epistemic" question facing Wittgenstein, and possibly ourselves. What it naturally yields, if we think of our ordinary practices with logic, is a "maxim of minimum mutilation" that Sullivan (2003, 74–75) associates explicitly with Quine:

In applying logical principles to actual arguments we make a virtue of not pushing analysis too far. In recommending that as a maxim we presume that, in another sense, one cannot push analysis too far: that is, we presume that, by delving deeper into the structure of an argument than is necessary to establish its validity, one wouldn't undercut the results of the relatively superficial analysis. . . . the commitment carried by our mundane explanations is this: if an argument *really* has a certain form, then *the real form* of the argument is a substitution instance of that form.

That commitment might well be described as a form of atomism.

Now it would take me too far afield to try to assess the merits of Sullivan's characterization, both of our ordinary maxims in formalizing arguments and of the *Tractatus*'s talk of simples (much less of Quine). All I have space to do here is to concur that for

Wittgenstein, analysis does indeed have to do with the identification of validity, but add that the phenomena to which Sullivan calls our attention (covert complexity, contingent presuppositions, and so on) do not have to be viewed either in clearly epistemic or in clearly ontological terms, much less in terms of a notion of logical *truth*.

I would like to emphasize this idea for a number of reasons that will, I hope, become clear in what follows. Proops (2000, 86) has, like Sullivan, explicitly maintained that "Wittgenstein's true target is an attempt to answer . . . the question what kind of fact it is about a particular argument that makes it a valid argument." But Michael Kremer has explicitly denied that Wittgenstein was in any way directly concerned with the concept of validity. He (Kremer 2002b, 327) writes that Wittgenstein "is not concerned with theoretical characterizations of validity, but with the justification of particular inferences," because "no rule can justify inference." Kremer (2002c, 654) prefers to say that on Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* view, "*logic* itself is beyond justification, neither a source of justification nor something to be justified, neither a theory nor a principle, but an ability which pervades all our thinking, even our thinking of objects." In the spirit of Kremer's view, Conant and Diamond (2004) criticize Sullivan's discussion of the *Tractatus* on "p entails q" (set out explicitly in Sullivan 2004b) by suggesting that in that phrase "entails" can be "replaced" by the rewriting of a particular sentence as a tautology.

Now I am sympathetic enough with Kremer's idea of logic as an ability pervading our thinking that I (1998, 83) have myself written that "Neither logic nor ethics are 'theories' or 'points of view' which may be attacked or defended by philosophy." But I feel that Kremer (and Diamond and Conant) have been too quick to dismiss the very notion of validity from the purview of their concerns. In the following section of the essay, I want to say why.

In exploring the extent to which Wittgenstein's attitude toward the development of a *Begriffsschrift* differed in spirit, commitment, and aim from attitudes to be found in Frege and in Russell, I place great weight on the book's notion(s) of the *formal*: indeed, the formality of the notion of the *analysis* itself is one of the *Tractatus*'s most important hallmarks. But my picture of the formal is (to repeat) not exhausted by the kind of clarification that the translation of sentences into *Begriffsschrift*- or *Principia*-style notation accomplishes (say, by replacing a formal-use concept with a variable, or writing out an equation between a tautology and a sentence).[51] Instead, the emphasis I would place on Wittgenstein's idea of a formal use of notions ties the *Tractatus* in, historically and conceptually, with certain important strands in the philosophy of logic that pushed, *via* Carnap, to the center of more recent philosophical

attention in the work of Quine. These strands are deeply critical of the epistemic and meaning-theoretic strands of thinking about analysis (and formalization) that we see at work in Russell. They are also deeply critical of (at least one way of reading) Frege's idea that each declarative sentence may be taken to express a thought, that style and content may be severed from one another, that different sentences in different languages *must* reflect a common store of thought-contents. That the Quinean strands find a kind of distant lineage in the *Tractatus* is, I think, historically and philosophically important to bear in mind.

4   Some Difficulties with Logical Atomism Enumerated

I am glad that since I bothered to question how useful a label "logical atomism" is for the *Tractatus*, readers of the book have striven to make it stick through further articulation of its attendant themes and ideas.[52] What is interesting is that commentators have tended to differ with one another about precisely what this "ism" of "logical atomism" involves. Is it the ontology of Tractarian objects and facts? The idea that there is one and only one analysis of the proposition? Is it the claim that in analyzing we must reach the point where we have atomic propositions because of the determinacy of sense? Does it include the independence thesis about the elementary propositions? Wittgenstein's evident commitment to classical negation or two-valued logic? The content of the supposed doctrine(s) is and remains under discussion.

Now in the pre-Diamond period of reading Wittgenstein, this unclarity encouraged interpreters to lay down certain kinds of constraints on interpretation of the book that have, after Diamond, come to seem questionable to many readers. Some supposed that a proper interpretation must tell us whether Wittgenstein was a realist or antirealist or a mystic or an antimystic or an empiricist or a modal realist. Others have held that a restrictive answer to the question, "What kind of objects were the ones Wittgenstein had in mind in the *Tractatus*?" is required to specify the content of his atomism (that is, a specification of the objects as phenomenological, as phenomenalistic, as space-time points, as physicalist, or what not). None of these interpretations has held sway for very long, though many of them help to situate and apply the *Tractatus*, bringing it to life against a larger and very complicated history of philosophy.[53]

I think that an interpretation of the *Tractatus* need not bother with such ways of specifying the atomism, the particular character of the simple objects. The first thing to note is that Wittgenstein himself fails to do so. Why? Is it that he was merely uninterested in the practical business of analysis (or perhaps not smart or decisive enough)? Is it because he thought it a purely empirical matter? I would say that it cannot be

just this. Wittgenstein was not a lazy programmatic thinker. Nor was he ever an empiricist about matters of logic. Instead, I suggest, he was trying to recast the conceptual framework, the very *Fragestellungen*, within which Russell's talk of analysis could proceed. Analysis was not just an empirical or logical problem for a rainy day. It was a problem needing reformulation, reconception of its very *Fragestellung*. Wittgenstein's attempted recasting of the idea misfired, but in a variety of ways not best reduced to a matter of an overarching doctrine. These ways are better understood as unclarities arising from some of the very *Fragestellungen* he himself constructed for himself in the *Tractatus*.

Wittgenstein's Tractarian connection between the notions of *analysis* and *internal relation* is neither equivalent to, nor obviously dependent upon, having a "method" of analysis, or a "methodical procedure" for analysis, or even a recognizably ontological "doctrine" of simples.[54] First, the theory of descriptions is not a method, but a contextual device. Second, it may best be viewed, as Sullivan (2002, 80ff.) suggests, as a device whose usefulness, if construed generally across all terms of a speaker's language, is relative to a particular speaker's language at a particular time (recall the difficulties about "Moses" in *Investigations* §79: these are connected with the *Tractatus*'s effort to leave what is empirical out of logic, and yet nevertheless have something to say about the logical as such, names as such). Third, Wittgenstein's way of treating the quantifiers as nothing more than a way of presenting elementary propositions, along with his elimination of identity, does not allow him to view the implementation of the theory of descriptions in a Russellian way—not only because that way essentially involves reliance upon identity, but also because the elimination of apparently referring phrases is regarded by Wittgenstein as a rearrangement in expression of form of the original sentence. Wittgenstein's own notational proposals amount to the denial that there are such things as identity *conditions* for objects or senses, and this positively rules out debates about the correctness or incorrectness of given applications of the theory of descriptions based upon the vagaries of our empirical assessments or the meanings of our complex referring expressions. It is worth adding that although Wittgenstein clearly has the theory of descriptions in mind in various passages, he in no way limits analysis, when it eliminates an individual sign as unnecessary or misleading to clear expression of a thought, to the application of this technique.

Finally, it is important that Wittgenstein's requirement of simple signs—which the *Tractatus* holds is equivalent to the definiteness of sense—seems at times to amount to no more than the idea that analysis is analysis of propositions, and insofar as it is, it must begin and end in expressions that are determinately true or false—expressions

subject, that is, to logic. This is the innocent-sounding, pleonastic face of his talk of analysis—perhaps, as he seems later to have thought, its most seductive and dangerous face. Analysis will stop where it stops, "will reveal what it reveals" (Moore 1932–1933, 3b, 2/6/1933, p. 88; quoted in Proops 2001, 392). What could be wrong in this? It will terminate, either in there being no proposition to be analyzed—the speaker acknowledging unclarity, an indeterminateness in what he or she was saying— or in the production of an expression to which the truth-operations determinately apply in such a way as to capture fully the original sentence's logical place.

Appeal to notions of *formality* is intrinsic to Wittgenstein's conception of analysis, but such appeals are foreign, both to Russell and to Frege, and not simply because they are intended to be antimetaphysical. For analysis in the *Tractatus* is expressive (re)construction at the level of the sentence, ideally adequate for assessing the totality of its logical role within language. Analysis is *not* aimed at discovery of forms adequate to derive other forms we already have in view as deducible, as in Frege's and Russell's respective analyses.[55]

There is no distinction within the parameters of this pleonastic strand of the discussion between bottom and top, surface and depth, apparent and real logical form. We can think of it, in fact, as a kind of extensionalized, Quinean view, however nascent and unclearly articulated. When we formalize language, we paraphrase, for purposes local to whatever context we are in. Paraphrase is context- and purpose-relative. Paraphrase has no commitment to meaning- or content-preservation, and there is probably no general method or systematic routine for achieving it. This is partly because paraphrase involves an exercise in the home language as much as in the object of assessment. For Quine, there is in this sense nothing to be correct or incorrect about in formalizing (applying logic to) our language. "Paraphrase" is his phrase for avoiding space for the kind of worries about meaning he saw Russell and Carnap generating. We apply logic and formulate its structure. We need no general justification to do so.

From this perspective, questions such as: What strategies and techniques do we need to employ in order to stop? Does analysis depend upon accepting certain empirical truths? Certain meaning-theoretic principles? How will we recognize when we have made a complete catalog of the complexity in an expression? What is our right to the "*must*" in the idea that analysis "must" end at the elementary propositions? How can we be sure, for any given analysis of an argument, that an invalidating explanation of its deeper logical structure will not be found?—Each of these is a question asking for something we cannot have and do not need. So long as truth-functional orienta-tion (*sense* in the sense of the *Tractatus*) is preserved through the entire context

relevant for reasoning, replacement (i.e., expressive rearrangement) can proceed as it proceeds. And that is all.

This is not even to begin to give a full reading of the role of the remarks on objects and simples in the book, much less of the kind of activities that would characterize philosophy in contexts where we are not involved in working on developing a logically perspicuous language.[56] But it is to suggest that there were materials within the *Tractatus* leading Wittgenstein to suppose that the requirement of determinacy of sense was innocent sounding enough to have accomplished what he wanted without having committed him either to ruling out or ruling in any particular analysis of phenomena involving subsentential complexity. And it is to suggest that we can take the *Tractatus* to be recasting our understanding of the formal use of the notion of analysis itself, away from an image of a quest for *the* logically correct notation (logical syntax conceived as *a* correct syntax) and toward a more complicated, piecemeal conception of the role that translation into formalized languages may play in the activity of philosophical clarification. With this comes a more complicated conception of the relationship between ordinary language, with its variety of expressive powers, and the kinds of translations ordinary language may or may not be capable of receiving in a formalized language designed to make logical form perspicuous.

5   The Universalist Conception of Logic Transformed: The "Tractatus" and the Idea of the "Completeness" of Logic

That it is essential to take into account the problem context within which Wittgenstein was writing about logic is something long emphasized by those whom I would count as part of the wider logical tradition of reading the *Tractatus*, among them not only J. van Heijenoort, Dreben, and Goldfarb, but also Thomas Ricketts, and Jaakko and Merrill Hintikka. Wittgenstein's conception of logic, his very concept of an object, swims in the wake of the universalist conception of logic forwarded by Frege and Russell. Frege's and Russell's mark of the logical had been the explicit formulability and universal applicability of its truths: they conceived of logic as a maximally general science of the most general features of reality, framing the content of all other special sciences. Their quantificational analysis of generality was what they had on offer to make this conception explicit. But as is well known, there were internal tensions within this universalist view. Since the content and applicability of logic is assumed by the universalist to come built-in with the maximally general force of its laws, it is difficult to see how to make sense of its application as *application*, for from

what standpoint will the application of logic be understood, given that the applica-
tion of logic is what frames the possibility of having a standpoint? Frege's and Russell's
views led them to resist the idea of reinterpreting their quantifiers according to varying
universes of discourse, for they conceived their formalized languages as languages
whose general truths concern laws governing all objects, concepts, and propositions
whatsoever, full stop; there was no clear conception of ascending to a metalanguage.
Now there is, both in Frege's *Grundgesetze* and in Whitehead and Russell's *Principia
Mathematica*, ample precedent for the drawing of a contrast between what must be
shown and what can be said, ample precedent for a perspective that squeezes out any
room for general questions about how language hooks on to the world (cf. Floyd
2001a). Moreover, this perspective formed a tradition in thinking about logic. Wittgen-
stein was not the only philosopher to get interested in the inexpressible by thinking
about Frege and Russell: in 1908 Harry Sheffer submitted a dissertation on the subject
of logic at Harvard that grappled with just these issues.

Such considerations illustrate how misleading the phrase "logical atomism" is as an
umbrella phrase for a supposed common doctrine or philosophical method that
Russell and Wittgenstein are often alleged to have shared. If there is a shared problem
context, then it is the universalist conception of logic and the problems that this con-
ception generated according to its own lights. But, I would emphasize, this is a back-
ground problem-context to the *Tractatus*, not a doctrine advocated in the book. Here
I differ with Jaakko and Merrill Hintikka, who believe Wittgenstein belonged, like
Frege and Russell, to a doctrinal tradition, "the universalist tradition," in which logic
and language are conceived of as the universal medium within which all thought takes
place. A corollary to this conception, according to the Hintikkas, is that semantics is
ineffable. As J. Hintikka (2003, 12) has put it,

It would have been virtually predictable that a thinker in Wittgenstein's historical situation
should have thought that semantics is ineffable. . . . In different ways, and for different reasons,
Wittgenstein's two main background figures, Frege and Russell, both entertained a variant of the
ineffability view. It should therefore come as no surprise that Wittgenstein, too, should have
done so. What makes the difference between him and his predecessors and what makes his state-
ments so striking is the boldness of his thinking and of his ways of expressing himself. . . . Frege
and Russell had noted some of the particular problems into which the ineffability view leads in
special cases. But neither of these two earlier thinkers had the temerity to raise the question of
the expressibility of the entire enterprise that would later be called logical semantics. What dis-
tinguishes Wittgenstein's attitude toward the ineffability of semantics from that of his prede-
cessors is thus not his mysticism, but his *chutzpa*.

Now what I want to do is to shift Hintikka's interpretive framework, precisely by
emphasizing that the *Tractatus* was trying to transform the universalist *Fragestellung*,

not simply elaborate it. This angle is important for indicating the legacy of the idea of a show/say contrast within early analytic philosophy, including within Wittgenstein's own development, which emerged partly in reaction to the reception of the *Tractatus*.

For Hintikka's story has a distinguished lineage. In his introduction to the *Tractatus*, Russell held that a hierarchy of languages might defeat what he called the *Tractatus*'s "precise sense" of the inexpressible—this is perhaps the first place in print where the idea of a hierarchy of languages and metalanguages was aired. Later Carnap held in *The Logical Syntax of Language* that Gödel's technique of the arithmetization of syntax refuted Wittgenstein's contrast between showing and saying. Carnap, like Russell, took the showing/saying contrast to amount to the thesis that you cannot make claims about a language from within that language itself, that is, he took Wittgenstein to have denied the possibility of meaningful ascension to a metalanguage. Many readers of Wittgenstein's later remarks on Gödel would argue that Wittgenstein could never have accepted model theory, on a priori grounds, because he remained mired in the *Tractatus's* ineffabilist view.

But I think the *Tractatus's* uses of showing and saying are not refutable in the way that Carnap, Russell, and others believed, and I think Wittgenstein thought so as well—not because he had no theses in the *Tractatus*, and so could make no mistakes: not because he thought there was something wrong in principle with Gödel's rigorization; and certainly not because of verificationism. Instead, what Wittgenstein wrote in the *Tractatus* does not rule out as meaningless the notion of a metalanguage (or self-reference of a certain sort) a priori.[57] I think Carnap, like Hintikka, failed to see that certain kinds of "self-referential" uses of language were not being ruled out by Wittgenstein. But unlike Hintikka, I am skeptical that a general thesis about the so-called "ineffability of semantics" can fully account for the issues.

The *Tractatus* suggests, following the *Principia* itself, that we operationalize (treat as formal) the idea of ascent at work in the theory of types, in the sense that we view the generality of that process of iteration as recursive in nature, and as such fully acceptable. Wittgenstein takes the ellipsis, the ". . . ," the "and so on . . ." to be basic to our formulation of logical notions as logical (cf. Floyd 2001a). Indeed, as I would emphasize, this suggestion formed part of Wittgenstein's rejection of Frege's and Russell's respective extensions of the notion of *function* across the logical operations, and, in particular, their functional, quantificational analysis of generality. That Wittgenstein's use of his notion of an *operation* did not carry within it the solution to all kinds of problems we now recognize as requiring an adjustment of stance at the metalevel is clear. But that is a different matter from claiming that he ruled out an

adjustment of stance altogether from within a single language. The *Tractatus* does paint an image of *the* language that I speak. But, to repeat, it also paints an image of that language having a great variety of open-ended, evolving expressive complexity—complexity I believe Wittgenstein took Frege and Russell to have masked in their analyses of the basic logical notions.

The most striking difference in problem context involves Wittgenstein's bringing to the fore a question that Frege and Russell had not addressed, namely, what is the nature of the logical? This is a conceptual question requiring the formation of new concepts, not a problem that can be couched in terms that Frege and Russell already had clearly to hand. Given that it had been shown how formally to derive basic arithmetical truths and principles from basic logical principles, in what sense may these principles themselves be held to be "purely logical"? Frege's basic laws seem, it is true, to involve no obvious appeal to intuition or empirical knowledge, and his formal proofs (*Aufbauen*) appear to be fully explicit, gap-free logical deductions. On the surface, his basic principles express laws concerning fundamental notions (such as *concept*, *proposition*, *extension*) that had long been acknowledged to be logical in nature. Yet neither Frege, nor after him Whitehead and Russell, provided a satisfactory account of why their systematized applications of the traditionally mathematical notion of *function* to the logico-grammatical structure of sentences should compel us to regard their analyses as purely logical in anything more than a verbal sense.

The universalist conception seemed to leave no room for any model-theoretical approach to logic. This left insufficient room for the kind of rigorization of the notion of *logical consequence* with which we are now familiar.[58] Neither Frege nor Russell had any means of formally establishing that one truth *fails* to follow from another because they had no rigorous systematization of what in general it *is* for one truth to follow by logic from another. All they had conceptual space for were explicit formulations of the logical laws and rules of inference that they regarded as universally applicable and the display of (positive) proofs in their systems. The *completeness* of the system with respect to logically valid inference could not be assessed except inductively and in general philosophical terms, by pronouncing on the maximal generality of logic in its role of framing the content of all thought.

Enter Wittgenstein, who was operating, as Frege and Russell were not, at a generalized level: he was attempting to depict the logical as such.[59] The unity of the logic demanded no less than that he be able to display the logicality of the notion of *logical consequence* on its face. Yet Wittgenstein was also interested in exploring the variety of possible forms of expression; the unity of language in its diversity (a Romantic, Ernstean idea). Strangely, this led him to emphasize against Frege and Russell the

expressive complexity of our language and also, at the same time, to try to surmount the limitations of any particular syntactic formulations of logic that might be developed in the future. Wittgenstein was striving after a perspective that would be free of any idolatry of a particular notation or *Begriffsschrift*, any particular syntactic analysis, but would set the whole idea of a logical notation into proper conceptual place. The aim was to set forth the logical as such without resting on any particular logical forms or notation at all (compare 5.553–5.5541, echoed in Moore 1932–1933).

Now I think it is worth noting that this is, in a certain sense, precisely what Gödel's completeness theorem of 1930 does for us (see Gödel 1986). This theorem lies in the background of the incompleteness theorem of 1931, and to my mind it is perhaps even more important for our understanding of Wittgenstein's development than his later remarks about the incompleteness of arithmetic. Why is this?

As Dreben and van Heijenoort insisted (1986), it took nearly fifty years after Frege's 1879 *Begriffsschrift* for the (essentially model-theoretic) question of completeness with respect to the notion of *logical validity* to be properly formulated, in part because of the universalist conception that informed their formalization of logic. In his early work, even before he wrote the *Tractatus*, while responding to the internal conceptual tensions within the universalist view, Wittgenstein began to zero in on the project of isolating a notion of *logical consequence*.[60] This is somewhat ironic in light of the fact that Wittgenstein's own later remarks about the notion of *following a rule* appear, at least at first blush, to sit uncomfortably with the idea that we *have* a clear intuitive idea of *one sentence's following with necessity from another*.[61] Nevertheless, oddly enough, the seeds for his appreciation of how difficult and complicated it can be to extensionalize and/or rigorize certain concepts were planted in what he came to see, thanks in good part to Ramsey, were the overly schematic, nebulous gestures he made in the *Tractatus*. The later rule-following remarks may in fact be seen as a meditation on, or reaction to, this failure.[62]

What I want to suggest is that part of the reason for the garbling in the *Tractatus* was that Wittgenstein tried (wrongly and unsuccessfully) to do with the work with simples and objects what must be done, by our present lights, at the metalevel in making sense of the notion of *validity*. What the completeness theorem does is to capture, not merely at the metalevel, but systematically, via a recursively enumerable (i.e., mechanically effective) scheme, the interplay between the quantifiers through their negations in our talk about validity: either *all* instances follow consistently or *there exists* a counterexample. As we now know, there is an intrinsic barrier to forming a decision procedure to determine a general solution to the question of whether a sentential form is logically valid: here is one sense in which we are, if we demand a

systematic resolution, faced with potential inscrutability of a sort.[63] But one reason Quine, for one, thinks that the systematic rigorization of the notion of *following from* that we do have *is* important is that so many philosophers have been misled both by the image of *necessity* as an inevitable companion of our talk about *validity*, and by an overly naive conception of logical truth as a basic datum or distinctive sort of truth (compare Quine 1989, chap. 4; Goldfarb 2001). The completeness theorem extensionalizes the notion of *following from*, if you like, through the production of a search procedure, a procedure rigorizable in a mechanical way. And it is the fact of the procedure, rather than any *one* notation, that rigorizes it.

To allow that theorem to kick in, of course, one must do away with all intensional notions having to do with *relevance*: we assume a rigorization of first-order logic is in place before the terms of the theorem begin to apply—which is to say, we assume that we can treat our logic as itself a mathematical object about which we may reason.[64]

To speak very broadly, I see a kind of tension within the *Tractatus*'s approach to logical analysis between its intensional and its extensional strands. The objects of the *Tractatus* try to ride an intensional and an extensional approach all at once. They express a hope that the rigorization of logic would, at least ideally, keep pace with some sense of relevance in the application of logic to our language, namely, its engagement with our willingness to ascribe truth or falsity (exclusively and universally) to declarative sentential forms. The truth table is an imagined diagram of the constaints that would lay into conceptual place a notion of *logical consequence*. What we may be left with saying is that Wittgenstein vastly underestimated how complicated the idealization and rigorization of the notion of *logical consequence* would turn out to be. He had the idea of, or instinct for, the completeness of logic, but without any of the techniques— in contrast to Skolem, who might be said to have had the techniques without the idea (Wang 1970, esp. 22–23; and Dreben and van Heijenoort 1986). What Wittgenstein never was to underestimate after 1929 was how complicated would be the application of any such rigorization to various kinds of philosophical questions. And so he, unlike Quine, came to emphasize that dispelling philosophical worries about necessity via grammar was an enterprise fraught with the potential to create new forms of confusion and was in some basic way highly relative to context (cf. Floyd 2001b).

Of course, I am fully aware that my remarks are in a way highly anachronistic: there are second-order quantifiers used in the *Tractatus* explicitly (at 5.5261), and we know that second-order logic, in contrast to first-order logic, is not complete. The first-order/second-order distinction was in any case not well understood until some years after the publication of the *Tractatus*. But Wittgenstein cannot be expected to have been omniscient about the need to distinguish second- from first-order logic.[65]

After 1929 Wittgenstein could not go along with Ramsey's effort to generalize his "extensionalism" to the foundations of mathematics by working with propositions in extension: for one thing it pulled too harshly away from the *Tractatus* idea of a proposition as model, which incorporated within it his rejection of identity as a primitive notion and his treatment of generality in arithmetic via formal series (cf. Sullivan 1995, for an account). But what Ramsey picked up on—the aim of *operationalizing* notions like *Sinn* and *Bedeutung*—is part and parcel of what the other, extensionalizing strand of the *Tractatus* is about. To the question, "Why did Wittgenstein propound in the *Tractatus* a 'contrast' theory of meaning or sense?" one might reply that "No, he was trying to eliminate an appeal to notions of *sentence meaning* and *sense* altogether from his account of logic by extensionalizing and if possible operationalizing them." I suggest that one trouble Wittgenstein came to see with the *Tractatus* was that he had, unwittingly, and as he came to see it, wrongly, half-way tangled himself up in mathematical questions to which the book provides no clear answer. He had been too schematic, and thereby not only failed to provide a way out of philosophical problems connected with characterizing the nature of logic, but also appeared to hold his views hostage to the outcomes of particular solutions to certain mathematical problems. When he writes in the *Investigations* that there are no leading problems of mathematical logic, he is of course explicitly alluding to Ramsey and to Ramsey's paper solving a part of the decision problem (Ramsey 1928), but we must consider that there is a side of the remark that is self-directed. For it was Ramsey who had made Wittgenstein see, in 1929–1930, just why it was important to emphasize that his conception of logic, of grammar, should not allow itself to be held hostage to any particular answer to any particular mathematical problem. This is part of why two of the most important themes in his subsequent writings on the philosophy of logic and mathematics are (1) the nature of infinity, and (2) the nature and limits of rigorization, mathematization, and extensionalization of certain notions.

6   Wittgenstein's Evolution

Of course Wittgenstein evolved, came to see mistakes in the *Tractatus*. He did come to think, and rightly, that he had been myopic, vague, and naive—if you like, metaphysical—about the image of a "final" or "complete" analysis that would display the logical as logical and prevent misunderstandings for all possible contexts. In trying to set Russell and Frege straight about logical constants by showing that they had been far too uncritical about applying their logical advances to the basic logical notions themselves, he had granted too much sense to the fiction of analysis as a quest for

logical simples and indefinables. In some way he thought he had a general scheme or model (I would *not* call it a method or a substantive independent requirement or an a priori condition or a semantics) that would be able to accommodate future developments and show at one blow how to carry this self-criticism through, once and for all.

What altered over time, with much help from the pressure of others' work, was his understanding of how misleading and partial that general scheme was: how little it allowed in the way of coming to an understanding of the essence of the logical. What was an error by his later lights were his nebulous gestures involving the notion of *analysis*, coupled with the insistence that it *must* terminate somewhere, even if the termination point lies infinitely in the complex distance, and his sketch of the sort of expressive structures it would terminate in. He did not simply say, "analysis ends in that which is not defined, and we don't know its precise form yet, nor do we need to." He treated it as ending in that which is intrinsically somehow indefinable, if properly viewed or seen. And the indefinability was to be understood partly in virtue of the idea that the path from sentence to sentence in the process of analysis is itself formal, that is, sense-preserving in *his* sense of this notion.

That the *Tractatus* created new forms of confusion of its own, precisely in the effort to unmask older ones, is perhaps in the end not surprising. Progress always looks greater than it is. The author of the *Tractatus* came to see that philosophical problems did not have as unified a source, or as unified a means of escape, as he had once suggested—indeed his suggestion of this had generated yet more problems and difficulties. But one of his major philosophical contributions, at least for me, is incipient in the *Tractatus* and survives some of its more glaring problems—in fact, it is an insight whose importance was brought home to Wittgenstein precisely because of what he saw had happened with some of the *Tractatus*'s most glaring errors—and that prescient insight is that the successes and glories of Frege and Russell in logical analysis would give rise to new forms of philosophical confusion, deeper and more difficult to extricate ourselves from than that of earlier philosophies, precisely because in their hands genuine scientific advance masquerades as metaphysics rather than the other way around. After Frege and Russell, we have to struggle with more subtlety to free ourselves from mythological ideas about what formalized languages can show us.

In closing, let me remark that I have only made a pass at one way we might look at Wittgenstein's development through the Ernstean perspective of evolving *Fragestellungen* or *Sprachlogike*. There were other sins of the *Tractatus* besides those it committed in connection with the notion of logical analysis that I have mentioned. Other sins of "nebulousness," were connected to Wittgenstein's treatment of number and its

connection with the general form of a proposition (Cf. Wittgenstein 1975, 127ff.). As Russell and Ramsey helped Wittgenstein to see, problems about the cardinality of all objects made a mess of his Tractarian effort to integrate numbers directly into the form of elementary propositions while at the same time leaving open whether the resulting complexity in their forms would be infinite or finite in nature. Here again, the trouble was vagueness, not definiteness of doctrine.[66]

In many of the passages in which he talks about his errors and mistakes in the *Tractatus*, he makes it clear that the book contains tensions within itself that he had not faced or thought through sufficiently, ways of sinning against its own better strands and lines of thoughts (one of which is the idea that "in philosophy you cannot discover anything").[67] But some of those sins were a matter of tone and style rather than positive metaphysical commitment—sins that concerned the form and literary structure of the text. In certain stylistic respects, the *Tractatus* was a poor first draft. The articulated numbering of propositions has a far too aprioristic, "arrogant," and "dogmatic" tone, by his later lights, inviting an image of *the* way of getting to clarity about logic and the structure of the proposition as such, for all contexts and purposes (Wittgenstein 1973a, 182–183). Philosophy, as he remarked in his Cambridge lectures of 1930, is like an organism, it has neither beginning nor end—and the *Tractatus* style has a clear endpoint, literarily speaking. Moreover, as he also remarked, though philosophy was traditionally viewed as eternal and necessary, it was supposed to have results that could help one in life, without waiting years to see what the endpoint might be of a particular scientific program (Moore 1932–1933, 2a, Mich. Term 1930, p. 10).

We can contrast the *Tractatus*'s form with the numbering of remarks in the *Investigations*, and Wittgenstein's explicit emphasis in the later work upon the idea of an album of pictures that cross a landscape from multiple points of view. Anscombe (1969) suggests at one point, reflecting on a comment of Wittgenstein's, that the *Tractatus* might have been a superior work of art to the *Investigations*. This suggests that perhaps its literary ambitions, its interest in giving "pleasure" (among other things) to a reader, may have stood partly in its philosophical way. The important point is that the contrast we then draw between early and later Wittgenstein is not best reduced to one of assertion and negation, mistake and correction.

Wittgenstein's summoning up of traditional, medieval, theological terminology in the opening lines of the *Tractatus* was a brilliant way of getting the reader to cast the scope of the discussion broadly, across a larger philosophical tradition, to wonder what it signifies to lump Russell's discussion of "atomic facts" in with such a tradition of "the old logic," and to indicate that, as it were, the reader is not in Kansas anymore

with any of the notions at work on the page. This summoning is ironic in the best and most serious sense—which does not mean that we exclude here its airing substantial intellectual aims, commitments, and ambitions, any more than we do with irony in other contexts. It is a kind of strategy of beginning, one he would pursue (though differently) in the *Investigations* by quoting from a particular, admired source, Augustine. Again, in his diary from the mid-1930s we read:

My book the Log.Phil. Abhandlung contains alongside good and genuine also Kitsch, that is, passages with which I filled up holes and so to speak in my own style. How much of the book consists of such passages I do not know and it is difficult now rightly to evaluate. (Wittgenstein 2003, 39; my translation)

I am sure we will never be able to say precisely wherein the Kitsch begins and ends. But we ought to be open to the idea that there are such holes to be wary of.

In a manuscript of 1943, drafting what was to become the preface to the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein (2000, Item 128, pp. 46ff. at p. 51) wrote

Philosophische Untersuchungen,
der Logisch-philosophischen Abhandlung contrasted

—a conception of the juxtaposition of the two titles suggesting that his own relation to the evolution of his thought was a matter to be *investigated* rather than something either settled in his own mind or understandable in terms of concepts, doctrines, or principles that could be made clear in advance.[68] We might set beside this Wittgenstein's remark to Drury that every sentence of the *Tractatus* is "syncopated" and must really be read as the title of a whole chapter (Rhees 1984, 159). If that is so, we ought not to expect that individual propositions of the *Tractatus* can simply be negated, giving us truth about Wittgenstein's later position and falsity about his earlier one. Although we cannot ignore his subsequent attempts to summarize the evolution of his thought, we cannot ignore the fact that he had not thought through certain issues, that he was himself in a position of great unclarity when he wrote the *Tractatus*, and for more than one reason.

Appendix

Excerpt from "Nachwort," Ernst 1900

Page 272:
The fairy tales, sayings and short stories of all peoples display a quality of conspicuousness. This can explain itself either through the borrowing and alteration of

motives, or, if one considers a spontaneous coming into being in the hands of a single people, through a self-development of the motives according to general laws of logic and of association with intuitions, which are found generally in any grounds or reasons.

Probably both explanations are right.

The first exhibits throughout especially many existences [*Bestehendes*], because in it certain scientific gatherings are made possible, in which one can trace the wanderings of stories up to a certain degree through translations and works on books, which lie before us. Now most remarkable is that by following such traces one always comes to India, to the first Buddhist centuries. . . .

One can however discover by one or another path that which will be comprehensible to us. And in any event it is for the final ground of the being of stories equal, whether they find themselves said in one place or everywhere in the whole world. The two origins, which will be set forth in what follows, find themselves in any event everywhere possible: whether from them something comes into being everywhere, that is a question of the second kind.

Pages 307–308:
Whoever compares, without prior fixed opinions, modern poesy with that of the middle ages will find, among many distinctions, one that is especially remarkable: the nearer we come to the present the smaller becomes the number of subjects and motives—we shall say: materials.—Indeed, it seems as if recent materials will not be found, and only an ever more narrow, shrinking circle of old materials can be newly treated.

At least one must reflect for a very long time before one finds material in a new poet that wholly belongs to our time. Perhaps one could say: the finding or invention of new materials was always something that happened seldom; in the course of four thousand years, however, the material has amassed itself, and what can the approximately four hundred years of modernity mean against this long time before? But with this objection the narrowing of the circle of materials is not explained. An artist of today no longer risks himself with a collection of materials, because one generally assumes that it will not stand up to the critique of reality. One can observe real deposits of the objection against certain kinds of materials.

Periodically literary strivings come to power, which represent themselves as a turning back to nature; each such period among other things clears away determinate kinds of material which one then in the subsequent time of the so-called artistic style are not ventured upon again.

By far the predominant part of the motives and styles applicable up to today in no way originate from reality. It is often very old qualities [*Gute*] of the peoples, in mysterious and always as yet unexplained ways occurring through the progress and differentiation of the peoples, accruing, beyond the detailed representations of these two ways, through the alterations of language, in which a later time fails any longer to understand the logic of language [*Sprachlogik*] of the past and interprets it through inventions; through changes of the intuitions of the inner connectedness of the world, of death, the soul, eternity, God, and so on, in which one interprets the misunderstood remains of earlier faith rationalistically; through the wandering of the materials to other peoples, through further recounting in altered circumstances of the people and, inappropriately, to modernity. The process is in essence always this: something which is through the experience of reality an insoluble problem is solved through an invented rationalizing history. In the progress of time is set forth in this history once again insoluble problems, and a new invention comes closer again to reality. In the subsequent age the critique of reality will be still sharper and a new rationalization will arrive, until one at last lets the whole fall as insignificant or foolish.

Notes

1. Thanks to Wolfgang Kienzler for supplying me with this pair of quotations, a pair that reminds us both of Frege's words to Wittgenstein (in Frege's letter of September 16, 1919, quoted below). Thanks also to Kenneth Haynes, who had pointed me toward the Heidegger quote some years ago, in mind of Wittgenstein (a translation of this quote by Haynes [with J. Young] may be found in Heidegger 2002, 255). Heidegger is said to have copied the Lessing quote into the copy of *Sein und Zeit* that he gave to Edmund Husserl in 1927; thanks to Daniel Dahlstrom for the reference, which is in Husserl 1997, 21ff., and for the suggestion that Heidegger might have learned of the Lessing source from Lorentz 1909, 98.

2. Versions of this talk were read at the Wittgenstein Workshop at the University of Stirling, Scotland, the Boston Colloquium for the Philosophy and History of Science, Macalaster College, and the University of Chicago Wittgenstein Workshop and the university of Perugia. I am grateful to my audiences, for their helpful feedback, especially to Janet Folina and Thomas Ricketts. To Enzo De Pellegrin I owe thanks for very useful discussion of my translations.

3. Goldfarb (1997, 73 n. 10; 2000) notes that Ricketts first concocted the label of "resolute" for Diamond's idea that we should not "chicken out" in reading the *Tractatus* by attributing to it an ineffable metaphysics or contentful form of nonsense; Diamond picked the term up, favorably impressed with its moral connotations. (Sullivan 2002a, 46 erroneously credits Goldfarb with introducing the term.)

4. As I have put it in Floyd 2002, philosophy was for Wittgenstein "a way to expose the places where vanity, received authority, unclarity and lack of resolve blunted his powers of expression,

making him dishonest with others and himself. His difficulties were thus the kind of difficulties we all face one by one as we inherit a language, and it is one of his great intellectual contributions to have made this struggle worthy of the name of philosophy." Compare Floyd 1998, 102ff., on what I call the "private" side of solipsism for the early Wittgenstein. My remarks in no way are intended to reduce interpretation of the *Tractatus* on ethics, in principle, to biography or psychology as opposed to philosophy. For a relevant discussion, see Friedlander 2001, especially at pp. 195ff. Sullivan 2002, 63 says that the first person "I" "doesn't figure much in 'the resolute reading,'" but it did figure centrally, alongside solipsism, in Floyd 1998.

5. See Floyd 1995, 1997, 1998, 2001a, 2001b; Floyd and Putnam 2000; Floyd 2005b; Floyd and Putnam 2006.

6. Diamond criticizes the idea of such a "general account" here in relation to Wittgenstein alone (early and later); compare to Floyd 1997 and 1998, p. 100. That a preoccupation with overcoming the need for general accounts of meaning also may be said to characterize the philosophies of others in the analytic tradition after Frege (among them Austin, Quine, and Putnam) is emphasized in Floyd 2003 and 2005a; the latter contrasts this image of the development of early analytic philosophy with one offered by Dummett, according to which the theory of meaning is central to the analytic tradition. Much of Diamond 1991a is devoted to questioning Dummett's perspective on early analytic philosophy, and on Frege and Wittgenstein in particular.

7. Diamond 1991a (especially chap. 9, "The Face of Necessity") offers telling criticisms of Dummett's influential idea that for Wittgenstein mathematics and philosophy have "nothing to say to one another" because language divides itself up into isolated islands of language-games with no possible communication between them (see Dummett 1978, 167–168). What Diamond's work has shown is that the interplay between mathematics and philosophy in Wittgenstein's hands is extraordinarily subtle and open ended, forming a crucial part of his larger investigation of human claims to self-evidence, clarity, intuitiveness, and truth. Compare Diamond 1996 on connections between Wittgenstein's remarks on mathematics and on ethics and see also Floyd 2000.

8. Goldfarb (2005) distinguishes at least three different ways Wittgenstein invokes showing in the *Tractatus* (leaving aside what he calls the "informal" uses of "show" that are more or less equivalent, as he understands them, to "x gives us reason to believe y," or "x proves y"): those drawing categorical distinctions, those that maintain that the logical form of sentences is not represented in sentences, but may be read off from them, and those having to do with limits of language. As Goldfarb sees it, none of the passages seems likely to be able to support a metaphysical reading of the *Tractatus* that countenances a domain or realm of necessary, yet ineffable things, properties, or truths.

9. See Sullivan 2002a, especially 49–52. He mentions Conant 2000 and Kremer 2001; a similar "spread" may be seen in Ricketts 1996, 94.

10. The image of this line is criticized in Diamond 1991b.

11. This was the view laid out in Floyd 1997; it was influenced by conversations with Dreben and Goldfarb (cf. Goldfarb 1979, 1997, 70–71 and, later, 2002). I have thus always advocated

what Diamond now calls, with Conant (following Goldfarb 1997), a "piecemeal" approach to examples of meaningfulness in the *Tractatus* (Conant and Diamond 2004, 71). What, for example, Diamond says in her 2004 and 2005 about the notion of a formal use of a concept (such as "number") not serving as a touchstone of legitimacy for all possible uses of number words in the *Tractatus* is an idea I explicitly stressed both in Floyd 1997 and in Floyd 2001a (especially at p. 174, n. 50.) Diamond says (2004, 219) that she did not appreciate the importance of this "piecemeal" approach until after 1995. My guess is that she was then still too much in the grip of the idea that "resolution's" primary task was to get clear about how to resist interpretations of nonsense of the ineffabilist variety.

12. Floyd 1997 contains the basic interpretive proposal, which I shall discuss below in sections 3–5. This manuscript was never published, though it was circulated and read at the first conference at which resolute and nonresolute readers confronted one another, a meeting of the Boston Colloquium for the Philosophy and History of Science, April 17, 1997. (Present were Diamond, Hacker, Pears, Goldfarb, Ricketts, Hintikka, Hylton, and myself, urged on by our immoderate moderator, Burton Dreben.) At the conference Thomas Ricketts dubbed my proposals for interpreting the *Tractatus* "Jacobin," an epithet I accepted (in partial homage to Dreben 1992, which sees Quine-to-Putnam as Jacobin-to-Girondiste, especially on the topic of meaning). I was arguing that Diamond's reading ought to be developed in a direction beyond where it had been articulated at that point, especially on the issue of the role of logical notation—what Goldfarb (1997, 72) called "the deep difficulty facing the resolute reading." (cf. Diamond 1997). My view was that if Diamond held back from confronting this difficulty, she would fail to carry through her program in relation to the *ancien regime* of Pears, Hacker, and Hintikka. For an account of the conference, see Hofman 1998 and Biletzki 2003, 10.

13. On the background to Russell's struggles overcoming the original theory of judgment to which he had subscribed, see Pears 1977; Hylton 1990, 2005; Ricketts 1996b; and Carey 1999.

14. While I do not have a reading of these passages that satisfies me, it seems to me eminently desirable that we have one, if only because such various suggestions about reading these passages have been made over the years. I have profited here from a talk by Sullivan at Cambridge University in the summer of 2003.

15. The perceptual locutions Wittgenstein always associated with mathematical practice are discussed in Narboux 2005 and Narboux forthcoming, as well as in Floyd forthcoming.

16. Compare note 11.

17. Sullivan 1996, 2000, 2002a, 2004a, 2004b express particular concern with developing a unified, overarching view of the *Tractatus* , as does Potter 2000, chap. 6. Unifying threads have also been discerned in more explicitly "resolute" readers, for example, Ricketts 1996b, Floyd 1997, Kremer 2001, and, in book-length form, Friedlander 2001, Diamond 1991a and Ostrow 2002.

18. The importance of the context principle of Frege as background to the *Tractatus* is stressed throughout Diamond 1991a. Compare Kremer 1997 for a further articulation of this theme of a kind of holism in the *Tractatus*.

19. Here Floyd 2001a and Kremer 2002a go beyond appeals to resolution and Frege's context principle (Conant and Diamond 2004 adapt some of Kremer's ideas at pp. 73ff.).

20. This is so even if one takes it that the general form of the proposition is—as Wittgenstein explicitly writes that it is (4.53)—a variable. Remark 6 of the *Tractatus*, where Wittgenstein sets forth the general form of proposition with a piece of bracket notation, is notoriously vexed to interpret, and it remains unclear to me how to read it as a variable. (Some doubt might be garnered from 4.5 that says that it "*appears to be possible* to give the general form of proposition" [my emphasis].) For some doubts about whether it can be read as anything more than an operational schema, as opposed to an object-language piece figuring in a unified formalized language, see Floyd 2000, 2001a; Sullivan 2004a; and Ricketts 2005.

21. See, for discussions of generality, Kremer 1992; Floyd 2001a, 2005b; and Ricketts 2004. Diamond (2000a) uses Wittgenstein's conception of generality against Russell's idea of private acquaintance with sensations.

22. For more on the historical evolution and transposition of the notion of logical necessity, see Dreben and Floyd 1991 and Floyd 2005b, especially 84ff.

23. Detailed consideration of why the analogy between pictures and propositions need not be viewed as a theory of representation may be found in Ricketts 1996b, Friedlander 2001, McGinn 2001, and Ostrow 2002.

24. I discuss this passage in relation to Feyerabend's appropriation of Wittgenstein in Floyd 2006b.

25. Friedlander 2001 launches from this idea of a confrontation with language in the *Tractatus's* opening lines into a larger discussion of the themes of finitude and meaning as they are raised in the *Tractatus* as a whole. He notes (22n) that we find no draft of the opening lines of the *Tractatus* in the pre-*Tractatus* writings, suggesting a calculated ambition for these lines in tone, allusion, and style.

26. As Friedlander 2001, 23n notes, he and I have a more "circular" view of the progress of the *Tractatus*. As he (ibid., 22) puts it well,

The relation between beginning and end [of the *Tractatus*] must indeed be conceived in the context of the ontological tone of the opening, but not necessarily in order to reject the ontological perspective. . . . In a circular structure, the book starts with the world as such, a world as if beyond language, only to return to it at the end through an understanding of the limits of language. Overemphasis on the figure of the ladder as the key to understanding the structure of the [*Tractatus*] distracts attention from this circle.

27. As Goldfarb (2000) stated. This kind of reading has been pursued by Nordmann 2005.

28. This is in contrast to what Read and Deans (2003, 264ff.) characterize as a "strong" version of resolution. They speak (as I did not) of "the say/show distinction" having "a purpose" (ibid., 264, 266). Incidentally, though I am named in this essay (267), and several passages (264, 266) appear to lift phrases directly from Floyd 1998, that essay is not cited—an oversight, as Read has said to me in conversation. The question, raised by Read and Deans, of whether my form of "resolution" is or is not "stronger" than that of Conant and Diamond must await further discussion.

I haven't a clear concept of the scale on which we are to measure strength (though see in this connection Biletzki 2003, 101).

29. As Goldfarb once pointed out, Pears and McGuinness had been tendentious, at least in my view, in translating *Tractatus* 6.54 using the verb "transcend."

30. On "transitional," see Diamond 1991b. The term can invite the idea of transitioning *somewhere*, which is why I prefer her idea, broached in the same essay, of "imaginative" activity, though I think this idea requires embedding within the context of what she had already written about riddle talk and conceptual investigation in her "Riddles and Anselm's Riddle" (in 1991a).

31. Example: the motto of the *Tractatus* from Kürnberger poses a riddle that is nominally answered at 4.5: the three words for "all that one knows" are, roughly translated, "so it goes," or "thus matters stand," or "that's the way it is." It takes a very long time to get to the point where one understands how to take the general propositional form as a solution to this riddle. Moreover, it is a constraint for me in understanding the *Tractatus* that this solution, like the solution to Anselm's riddle, will have an ethical, as well as a logical significance. I hope in future work to explain how this might be connected with issues discussed in Wiggins 2004 and in Floyd 2006a.

32. For more on Ernst and Wittgenstein, see McGuinness 1988, Baker and Hacker 1980, 535–537, Hübscher 1985, and Majetschak 2005. For Wittgenstien's own references, see Wittgenstein 1993, 3:266 (item 110, p. 184), Wittgenstein 2000, items 115, 155 (p. 30v), 183 (p. 182), 212 (p. 1203), 213 (p. 433, translated in Wittgenstein 2005), and Wittgenstein 2004, Hermine to Wittgenstein (1920er) and Wittgenstein to Jean Rhees, 8.4.1945.

33. Incidentally, I wasn't born knowing how to do this. My father could do it. I asked him how. He said that he learned from watching his dog as a boy. I watched my horse.

34. According to Michael Potter (correspondence), Wittgenstein asked to be sent a copy of Whitehead 1911 during the war. In the book we find this:

by the aid of symbolism, we can make transitions in reasoning almost mechanically by the eye, which otherwise would call into play the higher faculties of the brain.

It is a profoundly erroneous truism, repeated by all copy-books and by eminent people when they are making speeches, that we should cultivate the habit of thinking of what we are doing. The precise opposite is the case. Civilization advances by extending the number of important operations which we can perform without thinking about them.

For more on the *Tractatus* and Whitehead, see Floyd 2001a, 2005b, and forthcoming b.

35. Compare Wittgenstein to Engelmann, 16.1.1918 (in Wittgenstein 2004, 1967, p. 11):

If you tell me now that I have no faith, you are *perfectly right*, only I did not have it before either. It is plain, isn't it, that when a man wants, as it were, to invent a machine for becoming decent, such a man has no faith.

36. See Conant and Diamond 2004, 71, as well as Diamond 2004 and 2005. The terms "wholesale" and "retail" are used in a parallel way by Ricketts 1996b, 62. See note 11 above.

37. I thus agree with the statement of P. Simons (2003, 383) that "logical atomism is a complex doctrine . . . *associated with* Russell and Wittgenstein" (my italics) and that "there are significant differences between [Russell's and Wittgenstein's] versions" of it; compare Proops 2004.

38. Floyd 1998, 2001a; Ostrow 2002; Friedlander 2001; and Kremer 2002a are all relevant as anti-dotes to this tendency.

39. Diamond (forthcoming) explicitly holds that in the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein develops and gen-eralizes Frege's notion that "differences in logical kind can be made clear in a good notation." It is only later, as she puts it, that Wittgenstein came to see that "differences in logical kind cannot in general be made perspicuous by a conceptual notation" (ibid.) These views, though only in draft form, express a reading of the *Tractatus* that periodically surfaces in Diamond's other work (cf. especially 1991a).

40. See Conant and Diamond 2004, 93 n. 45 for an acknowledgment of the difficulty. They don't recognize Sullivan's worry as a version of Goldfarb's and my earlier expressed concern, but it seems to me that it is.

41. So in Floyd 1997:

[Given what he writes at 3.325], is Wittgenstein aiming to devise a *Begriffsschrift* to preclude all such gram-matical errors? I think not. In particular circumstances a concept-script *can* be used to show that certain signs haven't been given meaning. But a concept-script can *equally well* serve as a source of superstition and illu-sion. This happens if and when—as in Frege and in Russell—it is taken to yield a complete or correct analy-sis of the logical structure of thought, an uncovering of logical objects and genuine logical distinctions. One aim of the *Tractatus* is to fully think through the idea that there could be such a notation, fully think through a conception of objects and facts perfectly mirrored in the structure of such a canonical notation, in order to unmask Frege's and Russell's philosophical claims. Nevertheless, I take every remark in the *Tractatus* about a *correct logical notation* (*eine richtige Begriffsschrift*) to be an attack on the very notion.

42. Calls for more specific textual analysis were put out in Goldfarb 1997 and Floyd 1997, as well as in Sullivan 2002, 43–44. That "resolution" is really a program and not a "key" to reading the whole of the *Tractatus* was quite explicit in Conant and Diamond 2004, 78.

43. As I wrote in Floyd 1998, 85, following Goldfarb 1997, in the *Tractatus*, unlike in Frege's and Russell's writings, no appeal is ever made to the fully explicit or definite rules of a formalized language (such as Frege's *Begriffsschrift* or the system of *Principia*), if only because no such lan-guage is written down. Hacker (2001, 118 n. 32) finds it "surprising" that I hold this, but it seemed (and still seems) obvious to me that this is so. As I discuss in Floyd 2001a, Hintikka (1956), R. Fogelin (1982), P. T. Geach (1981), S. Soames (1983), G. Sundholm (1990), and K. F. Wehmeier have raised and addressed fundamental questions about the expressive adequacy of Wittgenstein's notational proposals, which leave interpreters a lot of leeway in writing down a "*Tractatus* formalism" (see also Weihmeier 2004).

44. Like Marie McGinn (1999) and Matthew Ostrow (2002), I include in this the discussion of the proposition as a logical picture in the 2s.

45. As I put it in Floyd 2001a, his remarks "undercut the possibility of his formulating a formal system in either Russell's or Frege's sense," indicating that he "did not share either Frege's or Russell's (or for that matter the logical positivists') conception(s) of what an ideal or formalized language could do for us in philosophy. Unlike these philosophers, he does not think any nota-tion can depict *the* grammar of language, or make clear *the* limits of sense, *the* logical order."

46. For a discussion of this Kerry anomalousness for Frege, see Diamond 1991a and also Weiner 1990, 2004. For a discussion of the anomalousness of the *Tractatus*'s opening lines, see Floyd 1998 and Sullivan 2000.

47. "Everything" is not an answer, for it is not a sentence. So Quine (1980):

A curious thing about the ontological problem is its simplicity. It can be put in three Anglo-Saxon monosyl-lables: 'What is there?' It can be answered, moreover, in a word—'Everything'—and everyone will accept this answer as true. However, this is merely to say that there is what there is. There remains room for disagreement over cases; and so the issue has stayed alive down the centuries.

48. For the record, I tried to notify them of their mischaracterization of my views by e-mail, sug-gesting a rewording of this footnote. The rewording, whether by design of the authors or the printer, did not make it in. So I'll reiterate my note to Diamond here:

I do think there is a notion of "complete analysis" at work in the *Tractatus*; I just think it is a kind of expres-sive ideal that isn't the same as Frege's and/or Russell's *even* under the most sophisticated readings of them we might, after Wittgenstein, try to offer.

49. For discussion of these passages, see Floyd 1998 and Sullivan 2002. Compare Ostrow 2002.

50. For an account of these more usual ways of treating Wittgenstein's atomism, see Proops 2004.

51. The limits of the proposal Conant and Diamond (2004) make, following Kremer, for replac-ing "p entails q" with an equation conceived as a "record of a calculation" are obvious if the number of names in the language is infinite. The completeness theorem of Gödel may be seen as a way of overcoming this limitation while keeping the idea of fashioning a mechanical pro-cedure. On Wittgenstein's having underestimated the complexity of fashioning a formal system for the infinite case, see note 66 below.

52. Proops 2004, Sullivan 2002, and (though they don't use the phrase "logical atomism") Conant and Diamond 2004.

53. J. P. Griffin (1997) holds the objects are space-time points; Hintikka and Hintikka (1986) that they are phenomenological objects. The Vienna Circle, of course, tended to think of the con-stituents of facts as elementary experiences.

54. Proops (2001, 396) speaks of doctrine and of "methical procedures" in connection with analysis.

55. Although Proops does not disagree with what I say positively here about the formality of Wittgenstein's conception of analysis, he seems to think that it does not contrast with the latter idea of the project of deducing given forms, an idea I see at work in Frege and Russell, but not in the *Tractatus*. For Proops (2002) assimilates Wittgenstein's attitude toward logical entailment to a "proof-theoretic" conception he takes to be implicit in Frege (*via* the deduction theorem). My suggestion below, about the relevance of the concept of completeness in the sense of Gödel 1930 to the *Fragestellung*, sets out a very different point of view on the conceptual pressures that faced, not only Wittgenstein, but Frege and Russell as well. There is some textual justification for this in the texts from Moore 1932–1933, for Wittgenstein is clearly concerned to explore (e.g., 11/25/1932, pp. 33ff.) the difference between "p entails q" or "p therefore q" and "p ⊃ q."

56. Conant and Diamond 2004, as well as Diamond 2004 and especially 2005 broach the idea that Wittgenstein may have had room to distinguish between clarification by means of a logically perspicuous language and that by means of ordinary language. That would be to admit just the kind of distinction between Frege's and Russell's attitudes toward notation and Wittgenstein's that I have been trying to articulate.

57. Indeed, in 1932 (as Hintikka has himself emphasized), Wittgenstein invited the assimilation of at least some of his views to Carnap's when he alleged in his outraged letter to Schlick that "Carnap is not taking any step beyond me when he is in favor of the formal and against the "material mode of speech" [*inhaltliche* Redeweise]".

58. For an account of Frege's conception of logic that is highly relevant to this point, see Goldfarb 2001.

59. Schlick took this to be the "turning point" in philosophy to which the *Tractatus* had contributed. Later on Wittgenstein gently tried, in a letter, to wean Schlick from the idea that this was as much of an advance or kind of advance that would further the aims of the Vienna Circle. See Wittgenstein 2004.

60. Kang 2004 analyzes the "class theory" of inference in Wittgenstein's wartime notebooks; the evolution of Wittgenstein's thoughts on logic from the *Prototractatus* to the *Tractatus* is discussed in Dreben and Floyd 1991, Kremer 1997, and Kang 2005.

61. It is not certain that Wittgenstein ever read Gödel's completeness theorem (of 1930; in Gödel 1986), and quite certain that he did not appreciate its mathematical significance, given that he died in 1951, before which time the theorem's significance and fertility were not yet well understood. No explicit discussions of the theorem are so far known in Wittgenstein's works, though it is not impossible they might be found in the future. It would be nice if they were, for it is the completeness theorem, much more than Gödel's incompleteness theorems, that would seem to be most difficult for Wittgenstein to interpret philosophically, given his later rule-following discussions. For further discussion, see Floyd 2005b.

62. This suggestion would fit with the reading I give (Floyd 1991) of the passages forming *Investigations* 186ff. as they occur in the opening of *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics* 1.

63. If, that is, a schema is *not* first-order valid (if there is an invalidating interpretation of premise and conclusion), then the search (proof) procedure may *run forever*.

64. Compare the very important passages in Wittgenstein 1973a, 37 on Weyl on the decision problem: Wittgenstein here insists that the word "relevant" ought to be eliminated from Weyl's presentation of the mathematical decision problem (Weyl, according to Wittgenstein, stated the problem as whether every "relevant" sentence can be decided according to a single rule.) Much later Wittgenstein states explicitly that "the notions of *consequent* and *inconsequent* are not mathematically analyzable" (Wittgenstein 2000, 162b, p. 68r, 8/14/1940).

65. Besides, one may reasonably doubt that the *Tractatus* is committed to anything beyond a restricted predicative fragment of full second-order logic that would be formulatable in a complete theory.

66. Unlike Proops (2002, 391) I do not think these problems, or the associated difficulty of Wittgenstein's having confused dots of laziness with infinite conjunctions and disjunctions of truth functions in his treatment of quantification, resulted from an "unfounded bet" (much less an "unwitting" one) on Wittgenstein's part about the finitude of the universe, but instead resulted from an underestimation of how complicated and misleading it was to speak about all possible cardinalities and kinds of complexity at once while granting the idea of a final analysis. (This is one reason he so emphasizes the distinction among the grammars of different cardinalities in the early 1930s, and the analogy with limit notations in the calculus [in Moore 1932–1933.] The *Tractatus* explicitly remarks that its discussion of atomic facts and elementary propositions applies even if every atomic fact is composed of an infinite number of objects (4.2211). According to M. Marion (1998, 34), Wittgenstein later told Kreisel that in the *Tractatus* he had used the finite as his primary field for thinking about examples and assumed that the basic scheme would apply, without significant alteration, to the infinite case. This is not the same as embracing finitism, and it is (to quote Wittgenstein in Moore 1932–1933 3b:34–35), "not as absurd as it looks." On confusing dots of laziness with infinite sums, compare the criticisms brought to Wittgenstein's attention by Ramsey (1960, 7) in "The Foundations of Mathematics." Note also that one way to look at the completeness theorem is its showing us how to reduce consequence from an infinite system of sentences to consequence from a finite subcollection of those sentences (cf. Gödel [1930] in his 1986, especially p. 119).

67. Compare Wittgenstein 1973a, 182–183. Proops (2001, 387) takes himself to disagree with me on how to read the passage, but I do not see a fundamental difference between our readings on this point.

68. In the handwritten image of this remark one can see that Wittgenstein substituted the softer "contrast" ("*entgegengestellt*": contrast, set beside, compare) for the initially written "in opposition to" (*entgegengesetz*), which he crossed out (thanks to Enzo de Pellegrin for pointing me toward this fact). For more on what is known about the history of the title, see von Wright's "The Origin and Composition of the *Philosophical Investigations*" (in his 1983), Baker and Hacker 1983, Malcolm 1984, 58, and Monk 1990, 457. In Item 128 the remark follows discussion of the individuality of human suffering and incompleteness—the private side, so to speak, of the *Tractatus*. Recall too Ramsey's remark to his mother in writing from Puchberg: "Some of his sentences [in the *Tractatus*] are intentionally ambiguous having an ordinary meaning and a more difficult meaning which he also believes" (Wittgenstein 1973b, 78, 9/20/1923).

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