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Throwing Away the Ladder

CORA DIAMOND

I

Whether one is reading Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* or his later writings, one must be struck by his insistence that he is not putting forward philosophical doctrines or theses; or by his suggestion that it cannot be done, that it is only through some confusion one is in about what one is doing that one could take oneself to be putting forward philosophical doctrines or theses at all. I think that there is almost nothing in Wittgenstein which is of value and which can be grasped if it is pulled away from that view of philosophy. But that view of philosophy is itself something that has to be seen first in the *Tractatus* if it is to be understood in its later forms, and in the *Tractatus* it is inseparable from what is central there, the distinction between what can be said and what can only be shown.

Now what about that distinction? Peter Geach has written that it has its source in 'the great works of Frege', in Frege's discussion of contrasts like that between function and object. The difference between function and object comes out in language, but Frege, as is well known, held that there are insuperable problems in any attempt to put that difference properly into words. We cannot properly speaking say what the difference is, but it is reflected in features of language; and what holds of the difference between function and object holds too of other distinctions of logical category. Geach is right that we can best understand what the *Tractatus* holds about saying and showing if we go back to Frege and think about what the saying/showing distinction in its origin looks like there. Geach actually makes a stronger claim: he says that 'a great deal of the *Tractatus* is best understood as a refashioning of Frege's function-and-argument analysis in order to remove [from it the] mistaken treatment of sentences as complex names'.[1]

That last point of Geach's, about how to understand the *Tractatus*, splits into two points if you think about it. Wittgenstein is trying to hold on to Frege's insight that there are distinctions of logical category, like that between functions and objects, or between first and second level

[1] P. T. Geach, 'Saying and Showing in Frege and Wittgenstein', *Essays on Wittgenstein in Honour of G. H. von Wright*, Jaakko Hintikka (ed.), *Acta Philosophica Fennica* **28** (1976) (Amsterdam: North-Holland), 54–55, 64.

functions, which cannot be put into words but which are reflected in distinctions between the signs for what is in one category and the signs for what is in the other. He wants to hold on to that, and at the same time to get rid of the assimilation of sentences to proper names. So for Wittgenstein a sentence will count as a wholly different sort of linguistic item from a proper name or any other kind of name. But if you are holding on to Frege's insight that fundamental differences in kinds of linguistic expression are the way fundamental differences in reality show themselves, differences in reality that cannot be put into words—and if you are also saying, against Frege, that sentences are a wholly different linguistic category from any kind of name, that will make sense if you are also saying that there are features of reality that can come out only in sentences, in their being the particular kind of sign they are, in contrast with names.

Here, then, is how Geach's point splits into two:

(1) In the *Tractatus* treatment of Frege's insight, sentences are no longer assimilated to complex names.

(2) Making that break, separating sentences off that way from names, is linked with the possibility of treating the distinctive features of sentences as reflections of features of reality, features that can only be reflected in sentences and that cannot themselves be *said* to be features of reality. Such a treatment of sentences would then be radically different from Frege's, but could nevertheless be said to be deeply Fregean in spirit and inspired by Frege.

Geach himself gives some detail of what is involved in Wittgenstein's getting rid of the assimilation of sentences to names; but he has rather less on what I have just been talking about: the applying of Frege's insight to sentences by taking their distinctive and essential characteristics to be the reflection of something in the nature of things that cannot be put into words.[2] But now to get back to where I was at the beginning: if we want to know why Wittgenstein thinks that there cannot (in some sense) be philosophical doctrines, we need to see the apparent doctrines of the *Tractatus* as they will look if we go further down the road that Geach points out as a road. That is, we need to see what kind of sign Wittgenstein took a sentence to be and how, by being that kind of sign, it can show things that cannot be said. But there is something that has to be done first. And one convenient way of doing it is to go back to Geach.

I have so far followed Geach in his way of putting the Frege insight. As he puts it, various *features of reality* come out in language but it cannot be said in language that reality has those features. Geach is here following both Frege and Wittgenstein in an important respect. Witt-

[2] Hans Sluga also touches briefly on the point; see Sluga, *Gottlob Frege* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980), 144.

genstein, throughout the *Tractatus*, when he speaks about what shows itself but cannot be said, speaks of these things as features of reality. *There is*, he says, what cannot be put into words. Propositions and reality have something in common that cannot be put into words. Even the linguistic form *'what* cannot be put into words', the words *'das Unsagbare', 'das Undenkbare'*—such ways of talking refer, or must seem to, to features of reality that cannot be put in words or captured in thought. Frege, in speaking of the distinction between first and second level functions, describes it as founded deep in the nature of things;[3] and it is evident that he would say exactly the same about the distinction between function and object. There is a question how to take this sort of talk: the use of words like 'reality', 'the nature of things', 'what there is' and so on, in specifying what cannot be put into words. The problem is particularly acute in Wittgenstein, given the passage at the end of the *Tractatus* (6.54): 'whoever understands me eventually recognizes [my propositions] as nonsensical, when he has used them—as steps—to climb up beyond them. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it.)' The problem is how seriously we can take that remark, and in particular whether it can be applied to the point (in whatever way it is put) that some *features of reality* cannot be put into words.

Let me illustrate the problem this way. One thing which according to the *Tractatus* shows itself but cannot be expressed in language is what Wittgenstein speaks of as *the logical form of reality*. So it looks as if there is this whatever-it-is, the logical form of reality, some essential feature of reality, which reality has all right, but which we cannot say or think that it has. What exactly is supposed to be left of that, after we have thrown away the ladder? Are we going to keep the idea that there is something or other in reality that we gesture at, however badly, when we speak of 'the logical form of reality', so that *it, what* we were gesturing at, is there but cannot be expressed in words?

That is what I want to call chickening out. What counts as not chickening out is then this, roughly: to throw the ladder away is, among other things, to throw away in the end the attempt to take seriously the language of 'features of reality'. To read Wittgenstein himself as not chickening out is to say that it is not, not really, his view that there are features of reality that cannot be put into words but show themselves. What *is* his view is that that way of talking may be useful or even for a time essential, but it is in the end to be let go of and honestly taken to be real nonsense, plain nonsense, which we are not in the end to think of as

[3] Gottlob Frege, 'Function and Concept', *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege*, P. T. Geach and Max Black (eds) (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1952), 41.

corresponding to an ineffable truth. To speak of features of reality in connection with what shows itself in language is to use a very odd kind of figurative language. That goes also for '*what* shows itself'.

This last point is extremely important for the issue what it is for there supposedly not to be philosophical doctrines. That is, I am contrasting two ways of taking the idea that there are no philosophical doctrines, as that idea appears in the *Tractatus*. You can read the *Tractatus* as containing numerous doctrines which Wittgenstein holds cannot be put into words, so they do not really count as doctrines: they do not have what counts as sense according to the doctrines in the *Tractatus* about what has sense. If you read the *Tractatus* this way, you think that, after the ladder is thrown away, you are left holding on to some truths about reality, while at the same time denying that you are actually *saying* anything about reality. Or, in contrast, you can say that the notion of something true of reality but not sayably true is to be used only with the awareness that it itself belongs to what has to be thrown away. One is not left with it at the end, after recognizing what the *Tractatus* has aimed at getting one to recognize.

That is very abstract and in need of some kind of illustration. Let me take the case that Geach was concerned with: the distinction between function and object. The case is from Frege but it is useful as an example of the general point. We can indeed say that for Frege it is a fundamental feature of reality that there is that distinction; it is founded in the nature of things. But is there a way of getting beyond that way of talking? Of using it as a ladder and then throwing it away? That distinction between function and object is reflected in language in what Frege speaks of as the *in*completeness of the sign for a function and the completeness of a proper name, which is the sign for an object. A proper name has no gap for an expression for an argument, whereas a sign for a function has gaps for one or more expressions for arguments of one or more kinds, one kind of argument-expression per argument place. It is not up to us to choose whether we shall have a language in which whenever there is a function-expression it will be incomplete. A language may be badly designed from the logical point of view, in which case the distinction between the signs for functions and the proper names will not be marked in a way that is easy to see. Suppose, though, that we become familiar with a well-designed language, in which the distinction between the signs is clearly visible. We may come to say, in grasping the logical point of the general distinction in that language between proper names and (for example) signs for first-level functions of one argument, that there is a distinction between such functions and objects and *it* is what comes out in that difference in the signs; and yet we shall recognize at the same time that we cannot go on thinking of it as a fundamental distinction between functions and objects. Seeing what

it is for that notation to be well designed is seeing what it is to talk about a function or functions; it is to *use* expressions in a certain way. To refer to a function, that is, is to *use* a sign with a characteristic kind of incompleteness, and to predicate something of a function is to use a sign with its own further kind of incompleteness. And when we try to say *that* there is a distinction between functions and objects, we see that we are not *there using* language to talk about functions at all, because we are not there using signs of the distinctive sorts through which functions are spoken about and characterized. 'There is a distinction between functions and objects, and it comes out in the clear difference between signs for functions and those for objects in a well-designed notation': that is what you could call a 'transitional' remark. There is a transition to be made, after which the word 'function' will have no place in the philosophical vocabulary because it is not needed: there is no work it is needed for. Something else does whatever job there genuinely is for a predicate like 'function' to do, the something else being the general logical features of signs standing for functions. A remark like 'There is a fundamental distinction between functions and objects' is thrown out once we get the predicate 'function' out of the cleaned up philosophical vocabulary. We are left after the transition with a logical notation that in a sense has to speak for itself. If we try afterwards to say why it is a good notation, we know that we shall find ourselves saying things which may help our listeners, but which we ourselves cannot regard as the expression of any true thought, speakable or unspeakable. When we say why the notation is a good one, when we explain what logical distinctions and similarities it makes perspicuous, we are in a sense going backwards, back to the stage at which we had been when grasping the point of the transition.

We can then look at some of Frege's logical work as providing replacements for certain parts of the philosophical vocabulary, in particular, predicates like 'function', 'concept', 'relation'. These are replaced by features of a notation designed to make logical similarities and differences clear. For Wittgenstein the provision of replacements for terms in the philosophical vocabulary is not an incidental achievement but a principal aim, and, more important, it is the *whole* philosophical vocabulary which is to be replaced, including that of the *Tractatus* itself.

Let me say more about this difference between Frege and Wittgenstein. Frege thought that a contemporary of his, Benno Kerry, was confused. Kerry had said that there were concepts that can also be objects, and that when, for example, we say that the concept *horse* is a concept easily attained, the concept *horse* is an object, one which falls under the concept *concept easily attained*. On Frege's view, the idea that we can say of a concept that it is a concept easily attained, or that it

is a concept at all, just reflects confusion. The predicate 'concept' cannot be predicated of any concept: we think we want it in order to say things about concepts, but to think that it will enable us to do so is confusion, confusion about what a concept is.[4] Wittgenstein thought that the *whole* philosophical vocabulary reflected confusion. We are all Benno Kerrys through and through. It is not that we are confused about what a concept is and what it is for us to be referring to a concept; it is that we are confused about what saying something is, what thinking something is. We are confused about the relation between logic and what we say and think; we are confused about what it is for some of what we say to be possible and some necessary and some impossible. The very words 'possible' and 'necessary' and 'impossible' themselves are characteristic indications of lack of clarity, in just the way any attempt to use 'concept' seriously as a first order predicate, as Benno Kerry did, is an indication of lack of clarity. What Wittgenstein wants to do is then to describe a way of writing sentences, a way of translating ordinary sentences into a completely perspicuous form. As part of the transition to grasping what is thus made clear, we may say such things as that the possibility of a state of affairs is not something that you can say but that it shows itself in signs with such-and-such general characteristics. But once the transition is made, the analysed sentences must in a sense speak for themselves, and we should not any longer be telling ourselves that *now* we grasp what possibility is, it is *what* shows itself, *what* comes out, in a sentence's having a sense. We are left using ordinary sentences, and we shall genuinely have got past the attempt to represent to ourselves something in reality, the possibility of what a sentence says being so, as not sayable but shown by the sentence. We shall genuinely have thrown the ladder away.

The whole of Wittgenstein's philosophy, from before the *Tractatus* to his later work, contains different workings out of the kind of view of philosophy itself that I have just sketched. I do not want to play down the differences between early and later work. It obviously marks a great change in Wittgenstein's views that he got rid of the idea that you can replace philosophical thinking by carrying out a kind of complete analysis of sentences in which the essential features of sentence sense as such are totally visible. But what does remain intact after that idea goes is the conviction that philosophy involves illusion of a particular kind. Recently, John McDowell, in speaking of the kind of philosophical illusion from which Wittgenstein in his later work tries to free us, has used the phrase 'the view from sideways on', to characterize what we aim for, or think we need to aim for, in philosophy. We have, for

[4] Gottlob Frege, 'On Concept and Object', *Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege,* 42–48.

example, the idea of ourselves as looking, from sideways on, at the human activity of following a rule, and as asking from that position whether there is or is not something *objectively* determined as what the rule requires to be done at the next application. To think of the question in that way is to try to step outside our ordinary saying what a rule requires, our ordinary criticisms of steps taken by others, our ordinary ways of judging whether someone has grasped what a rule requires. We do not want to ask and answer those ordinary questions, but to ask what in reality there is to justify the answers we give when we are unselfconsciously inside the ordinary practice. McDowell takes Wittgenstein to have tried to show us how to come out of the intellectual illusion that we are thus asking anything.[5] My point now is that that image of McDowell's is useful in characterizing Wittgenstein's early view of philosophy as well. And I want to trace it back even further to how Frege leads us to see poor old Benno Kerry, who only wanted to look at concepts sideways on. In the *Tractatus*, the idea of the illusory view from sideways on has a very particular form. When we philosophize we try as it were to occupy a position in which we are outside logic, where logic is that through which we say all the things we ordinarily say, all the things that can be said.

That brings me back to Geach's original point, that we should see a great deal of the *Tractatus* as a refashioning of Frege's insight to avoid Frege's assimilation of sentences to complex names. I said that that point itself splits into two, and I now want to modify it; I shall have to use the 'transitional' vocabulary, the before-you-throw-away-the-ladder mode of speaking, to do so. Wittgenstein departs from Frege not only in treating sentences as a distinct linguistic category from names; he not only applies Frege's insight in an unFregean way by claiming that it is in the distinctive essential features of sentences as signs that certain essential features of reality show themselves; he *also* tries to make clear in his account of the kind of sign a sentence is a characteristic and unFregean view of logic. Logic will belong to the kind of sign ordinary sentences are, and if that can really be made clear, it will be clear also that in speaking philosophically, we are confusedly trying to station ourselves outside our normal practice of saying how things are, trying to station ourselves 'outside the world, outside logic'. So what Wittgenstein is doing in the *Tractatus* should be seen this way: he is holding on to Frege's insight, but, against Frege, taking it that sentence signs as distinct from other signs reflect certain features of reality; he is

[5] John McDowell, 'Non-Cognitivism and Rule-Following', *Wittgenstein: To Follow a Rule*, Steven H. Holtzman and Christoper M. Leich (eds) (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), 141–162 *passim*, but especially 150.

treating an account of the kind of sign ordinary sentences are as including an account of logic very different in important respects from Frege's, deeply critical of Frege's, and capable of being used as a footing for a fundamental criticism of all philosophical thinking.

II

What kind of sign, then, is a sentence? Wittgenstein says that a sentence is a fact, not a name. As it stands, that is a dark saying: dark, because by calling a sentence a fact, Wittgenstein meant that it was logically articulated. But for Frege, too, a sentence, and any complex name, is logically articulated. Since Wittgenstein plainly intends a contrast with Frege's view, what exactly is the contrast?

Let me put that question alongside some others. I have so far given a version of Geach's recipe for understanding the *Tractatus*. Read Frege, and read more Frege. And reflect on Frege. Then take sentences out of the category of complex names, make further changes to accommodate that fundamental shift, and you will thus get a great many of the characteristic *Tractatus* views. Where, it might be asked, does Russell come in? Or is his influence to be regarded as so secondary that the *Tractatus* can be understood without one's having to grasp the relation of any of its main points to Russell's work? Again, the theory of descriptions seems to play a significant role in Wittgenstein's thought. But *what* role? It is hardly as if commentators on Wittgenstein agree on the answer to that.

Here is a separate question. Wittgenstein says that all philosophy is a 'critique of language', and adds that the credit is due to Russell for having shown that the apparent logical form of a sentence need not be its real form. This should seem a slightly odd remark, given that Wittgenstein had a higher opinion of Frege's works than of Russell's, and it would surely seem that Frege should be given the credit for making clear the distinction between apparent logical form and real logical form. Had that not been one main purpose of Frege's *Begriffsschrift*? The question could also be put this way. In his remark giving credit to Russell, Wittgenstein is partially specifying what it means to call philosophy a critique of language. But, given what Frege had accomplished as a critique of language, why does Wittgenstein explain what kind of critique of language he has in mind by appeal to Russell?

My three questions have to be answered together. To see what is meant by calling a sentence a fact and not a name, we have to see what Wittgenstein got from Russell. To answer the question what Wittgenstein got from the theory of descriptions, we have to see how, as

Wittgenstein understood it, it involved a sharp logical distinction between a sentence on the one hand, and a sign that could stand for something in a sentence on the other. And, finally, the reason Wittgenstein gives *Russell* the credit for showing that the apparent logical form of a sentence need not be its real form is that in the theory of descriptions, the revealing of logical form is tied to the logical form of sentences as such, or what Wittgenstein saw as that form. Frege may indeed have shown that ordinary language conceals the logical characteristics of the thoughts expressed in it. But, as Wittgenstein saw Frege's accomplishment in contrast to Russell's, Frege's clarifications of logical form left in the dark the logical features distinctive of the expression of thought as such, the logical features of *sentences*. Putting this last point another way: you can look for the real logical form of a sentence only if you are clear what kind of sign a sentence is. You can look for the real logical form of a particular sentence or group of sentences only by exercising your grasp of what the general form of sentence is. As Wittgenstein read Russell, Russell had an implicit grasp of what was crucial; and Frege, for all his colossal accomplishments, did not.

Wittgenstein said that he, like Frege and Russell, regarded a sentence as a function of the expressions in it—and that point helps me draw my three questions closer still. To see what is meant by calling a sentence a fact and not a name will be to see what *kind* of function a sentence is of the expressions contained in it. But how do you make clear what kind of function it is? You provide a method of analysis of sentences, a way of rewriting them. As Wittgenstein sees it, what it is for Frege and Russell respectively to regard sentences as functions of the expressions in them is shown in the different ways in which they rewrite sentences in logical notation. What Wittgenstein saw in the theory of descriptions, then, was a method of analysis of sentences, a way of rewriting them, which made their kind of functionality clear. And because Frege's logical notation, although it is intended to show the real logical form of the sentences written in it, reflects what Wittgenstein takes to be a wrong view of the kind of function a sentence is, he gives Russell the credit for distinguishing the real from the apparent logical form of sentences. In what follows I shall not discuss so much what it is for a sentence to be a fact as what kind of function it is in contrast with the kind of function it is for Frege. A full account of why Wittgenstein says that sentences are facts would take me too far out of the way. And when I talk about the theory of descriptions, I mean it as looked at by Wittgenstein, not as understood by Russell.

What Russell actually does with sentences containing definite descriptions can be said to be the reverse of what Frege does. Frege looks at such sentences and regards them functionally. The definite description itself has no argument place within it, and is thus suited to

be in the argument place of first order predicates and relation terms. The truth or falsity of the whole sentences in which it occurs must then depend on what holds of the object satisfying the description. The functional analysis of sentences, in Frege's hands, is totally incompatible with allowing truth or falsity, or even some invented third truth value, to sentences which contain an empty definite description.[6] Russell goes in the opposite direction. Instead of moving *from* the functional analysis of the sentence *to* its necessarily not having a truth value if it contains an empty definite description, he goes—or so it seems—*from* the truth value the sentence has in those circumstances *to* a more complex functional analysis in which the definite description itself disappears, does not have the role of standing for an argument, or picking out that thing on whose properties the truth or falsity of the sentence depends. So he treats the question what the right functional analysis of the sentence is as in an important sense secondary. You cannot, if you are Russell, answer the question whether the definite description genuinely has the role of providing an argument, unless you are able to answer the *prior* question whether the sentence has a truth value when the definite description is empty. Russell's procedure is clearest in a striking passage in *Principia Mathematica*. He there claims that the sentence 'The round square does not exist' is true, despite the fact that the grammatical subject does not exist. He goes on: 'Whenever the grammatical subject of a proposition can be supposed not to exist without rendering the proposition meaningless, it is plain that the grammatical subject is not a proper name, i.e. not a name directly representing some object. Thus in all such cases, the proposition must be capable of being so analysed that what was the grammatical subject shall have disappeared.[7]

What I am interested in, then, is the contrast with Frege's procedure. That is, it is true that Frege and Russell have different views about what the right analysis is of sentences with definite descriptions, but I am focusing on a different disagreement: their different mode of arriving at their answers. Thinking about that difference made me see that Part I of this paper contains something misleading. I said there, following Geach, that we should see as the big change Wittgenstein made in what he took over from Frege that he gave up the idea of sentences as complex names. That is an idea of Frege's that you do not get in his

[6] See Gareth Evans, *The Varieties of Reference*, John McDowell (ed.) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 11; also P. T. Geach 'Frege', *Three Philosophers*, G. E. M. Anscombe and P. T. Geach (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1963), 136–139.

[7] Alfred North Whitehead and Bertrand Russell, *Principia Mathematica to *56* (Cambridge University Press, 1962), 66.

early work. You get it after 1890; you do not get it in *The Foundations of Arithmetic*, in 1884. But, and this is what I realized, although Frege's views changed a great deal in that period, they did not change in their fundamental difference from Russell's. The kind of function Frege thought a sentence was does not change in one fundamental respect over that period, and it is *that*, and not whether or not the sentence is explicitly regarded as a complex name, that Wittgenstein rejects. He rejects a kind of functional view of a sentence when he says that sentences are not names, but the kind of functional view in question is present in Frege prior to his idea that sentences are names, and goes deeper down in the Fregean structure of views. The view I mean is present in *The Foundations of Arithmetic*, in Frege's taking it that a complex designation appearing on one side of the equal sign in a mathematical equation has the role of designating an object, an argument, and that therefore we cannot put into such a place a sign which we have not shown *does* stand for something.[8] Here we see the procedure which goes in the opposite direction from Russell's. Frege starts with the equal sign and its argument-places, as determining the logical role of the complex name; Russell argues on other grounds that the complex name has no logical role of its own, and thus concludes that even when it looks as if it must designate an object, it need not do so for the equation or identity in which it appears to have a truth value.

Wittgenstein then sees Russell's treatment of sentences in the theory of descriptions this way: if they are going to say something true or false, their doing so is not dependent on whether any definite description they may contain is satisfied. The sentence's having a truth value at all is not the kind of thing that the satisfaction or emptiness of definite descriptions can affect. That then is putting into words what is better looked at as built into what Russell actually does. He *treats* sentences as having a kind of functionality different from that of complex names. That is, suppose that there is no such person as Beethoven's only half-sister, then there is no one who is the *father* of Beethoven's only half-sister. And that is reflected in language. If the description 'Beethoven's only half-sister' is empty, then complex names in which *it* occurs are also empty and do not denote anyone. So that is the kind of functionality a complex name has. And Russell treats sentences as having a kind of functionality unlike that: their capacity to say what is true or false he treats as unlike the capacity of a complex name to denote something: he treats it as independent of the satisfaction of definite descriptions in it.

I need now to turn to one further feature of Russell's analysis of sentences with definite descriptions. Russell takes a sentence contain-

[8] Gottlob Frege, *The Foundations of Arithmetic*, J. L. Austin (trans.) (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1974), 90.

ing a definite description, say 'the present king of France', and shows us how to rewrite it. The rewritten sentence does two things. Its having a truth value is clearly independent of the truth or falsity of the sentences saying that there is a present king of France and that there is no more than one present king of France. And at the same time the rewritten sentence clarifies the real functional character of the original sentence. The original sentence says whatever it does say in virtue of its functional character, which is shown to us through its logical relation to the analysed sentence. Its functional character can thus be seen to leave it having a truth value independently of the truth value of two other sentences, those saying that there is at least one king of France, and that there is no more than one. What sign the original sentence is—what function of what parts—is inseparable from the capacity it has (shown clearly when it is analysed) to keep its truth-valuedness independently of the truth or falsity of those two sentences.

Further, Wittgenstein accepted a version of Russell's account of the quantifiers.[9] He read it as enabling us to go on with a sort of analysis that shares the essential feature of the Russellian analysis of definite descriptions. In such an analysis we make clear at one and the same time two things: first, how our sentence is constructed, as what function of what expressions, and, secondly, that our sentence is a sign that maintains truth-valuedness over the range of truth *or* falsity of some set of sentences. If we take the sentence 'The present king of France is bald' in its analysed version, including quantifiers, we can go on to analyse it. We shall see it as containing sentences saying of this individual and that one . . . that it is a king of France, and at the same time we shall see that the quantified sentence retains truth-valuedness whatever the truth or falsity may be of any sentence saying of an individual that it is a king of France. This further step then deepens our understanding of the *original* sentence's functionality: it shows us more clearly *what* sentence it is at the same time as it shows us that the sentence maintains truth-valuedness independently of what the truth value is of any of a range (now enlarged) of sentences.

What is coming out here, as seen by Wittgenstein, is that a sentence is a sort of sign such that *which* sign it is of that general sort is tied to its maintaining truth-valuedness throughout any variation in truth values of some range of sentences.

Let me put that slightly differently. Russell's original sort of analysis goes *some way* to letting us see what sign a sentence is, of the general sort to which sentences as such belong, by showing how it maintains truth-valuedness throughout variations in truth value of a particular

[9] Friedrich Waismann, *Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle,* Brian McGuinness (ed.) (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1979), 39.

range of sentences, whose falsity we might have thought deprived it of any truth value. We get still clearer what sign a sentence is, what function of what expressions, if we are able to write it so that its truth-valuedness is shown to be independent of variations in truth value of some enlarged range of sentences. We should make *entirely* clear what sentence a sentence was, what its functionality was, if we were able to write it so that its truth-valuedness could be seen to be independent of the truth or falsity of any other sentence.

But that, as it stands, will not quite do. We need to see Russellian analysis, or its basic principle, extended in a different direction. The principle of Russellian analysis, as seen by Wittgenstein, is that the functional character of a sentence is grasped at the same time as it is seen how it maintains truth-valuedness whatever the truth or falsity is of some sentence or range of sentences. Besides thinking of Russellian analysis as going on and on to some final analysis, we need to think of it as beginning at as it were a zero stage; we need to think of it as using a general principle for reading sentences, which is actually applied at one stage earlier than the one we see in the theory of descriptions itself. Our preliminary grasp of what function of what expressions a sentence is involves seeing how by being that function of those expressions it is truth-valued, regardless of whether it itself is true or false. There will be no such thing as a syntactic characterization of a sentence, such that by fixing the meaning of the sentence's elements, it will turn out that only if the sentence is true does it have any truth value at all; nor will there be such a thing as a syntactic characterization of a sentence, such that it can turn out that, given a certain meaning of some of the sentence's elements, only if the sentence is false does it have a determinate truth value. There will therefore be no such thing as a reading of the syntactic structure of a sentence like 'A is an object' such that, if A were not an object (whatever it may be that 'object' means), the sentence itself would be deprived of truth value. A sentence cannot require its own truth as a condition of its own having a determinate truth value: this is part of a description of the kind of sign sentences are, the kind of functionality they have.[10]

I can now give a revised version of what I said about analysis. We make entirely clear what sentence a sentence is, what its functionality is, if we are able to write it so that its truth-valuedness can be clearly seen to be independent of the truth or falsity of any other sentence *and* of its own truth or falsity: independent of the truth or falsity of *any*

[10] Frege, in *The Foundations of Arithmetic* (see pp. 40 and 62), is sometimes said to hold, like Wittgenstein, a 'contrast' theory of meaning. But I believe that Wittgenstein's view is not Frege's. There is no suggestion that Frege's view is a view about the logical structure of sentences.

sentence. We should thus be clear how by being the particular sign it was, the capacity to be used to say something determinately true or false belongs to it, is internal to it. The kind of sign a sentence is can now be put two ways: if something is a sentence, it is capable of comparison with reality, yielding true or false, regardless of the truth or falsity of any sentence; and sentences in general are capable of comparison with reality regardless of whether *it* is true or false.

This idea of *the body* of sentences can be seen to need more clarification than I have given it, and to run into an immediate problem about logical truths and logical falsehoods. Let me take that problem first. It is overwhelmingly natural to say something like this: that, if we fix the meaning of the sentential connectives, and if we stick to what we have fixed, and do not equivocate, then a sentence of the form 'p and not p' says something which would be true if both p and its negation were true. Because it would be true only in circumstances which cannot be, it is therefore always false, necessarily false. Its truth conditions, which are perfectly determinate, are never met. And we shall want to say something roughly comparable about 'p or not p'. A sentence of that form has truth conditions which are in all possible circumstances fulfilled.

I hope that it is clear why I say that that presents a problem for Wittgenstein. No sentence in the body of sentences would have a single determinate truth value unless the truth value of contradiction is false; no sentence in the body of sentences would have a single determinate truth value if the tautology's truth conditions are not fulfilled. If tautologies and contradictions are genuine sentences, the idea of sentences as, by the signs they are, capable of truth or falsity regardless of the truth or falsity of any sentence—that idea has to go. And yet it seems that the overwhelmingly natural account forces us to say that if the logical signs are to be used consistently, we can form, using them, tautologies and contradictions: sentences with truth conditions fulfilled in all possible or no possible circumstances.

Wittgenstein's solution is that there is no such thing as consistent use of the logical signs: consistent use *of the kind we imagine*. There is no explanation of conjunction, for example, or negation, independent of the character of sentences as such. The fundamental idea is that sentences in the strict sense (signs so formed as to be comparable with reality regardless of the truth or falsity of any sentence) can be formed from other sentences, but that the rules for fixing the comparison with reality of sentences so formed from other sentences *also* fix the construction in the symbolism of sentence-like structures which merely reflect the logical character of their component sentences, and which themselves have *no* comparison with reality.

On this view, then, the rule fixing the place in the language of the logical constants (so called) is a rule determining the logical features of the comparison with reality of sentences, genuine sentences formed from genuine sentences. That fundamental rule will really be the meaning, all rolled up into one, as it were, of all the logical constants. And if we grasp that, we shall not be tempted to think of tautologies and contradictions as saying that something or other is the case. We shall not be tempted really to think of them as sentences.

I can now finish what I need to say about *the body of sentences*. The idea as Wittgenstein works it out requires that there be some sentences which can be seen directly to have the logical characteristic of sentence signs as such: the possibility of comparison to reality, comparison which yields true or false, belongs to the signs themselves and is independent of the truth value of any sentence. The idea of the body of sentences then requires, besides such base sentences, a method of construction of sentences from sentences, such that if the base sentences have seeably got the logical characteristic of sentences, the results will be sentences seeably sharing the characteristic or will seeably be merely sentence-like constructions never comparable with reality.

Let me put this conception slightly differently, using a term I have avoided: 'entail'. I have kept clear of it because its meaning depends on whether you treat logical relations as Frege does or as Wittgenstein does. What entailment is and which sentences entail which depend on whether a sentence is syntactically a sort of sign that cannot lose truth-valuedness by the truth or falsity of any sentence.

Suppose it is said that Wittgenstein and everyone else believes that to understand a sentence, you have to know what sentence it is. If my account is correct, it looks as if we could never know what sentence a sentence was except by carrying out its complete analysis, which of course we in practice never do. So if my account of Wittgenstein is correct, his is a lunatic account.

The reply is that we should think of two things as the same. On the one hand there is the fully analysed sentence, which would lay out clearly in front of us what function of what expressions a sentence really is. To get what is going to be on the other hand we have to think of lifting up an ordinary sentence, and noticing, attached to it, like little wires, all the sentences which entail that it is true or that it is not. The ordinary sentence, together with *all* its little wires, is the same sentence as the fully analysed one. So we can understand the ordinary sentence even though we do not know how to carry out its full analysis. The little wires are all there, all fixed by the logical structure of the language. As Wittgenstein puts it in section 102 of the *Philosophical Investigations*: 'The strict and clear rules of the logical structure of sentences appear to

us as something in the background—hidden in the medium of the understanding. I already see them (even though through the medium of the understanding) for I understand the sign, I use it to say something'.

III

More could be said about what kind of sign a sentence is, and what it means to call a sentence a fact. But I need now to get back to the questions I began with, about Wittgenstein's view of philosophy. I spoke of an interpretation of the *Tractatus*, which I called chickening out. Wittgenstein says, at the end of the book, that anyone who understands him will recognize his sentences as nonsensical after he has used them to get where they take you. He must throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it. To chicken out is to pretend to throw away the ladder while standing firmly, or as firmly as one can, on it.

P. M. S. Hacker is an example. He ascribes to Wittgenstein what you might call a realism of possibility. Each thing has, internal to it and independently of language, fixed possibilities of occurrence in kinds of fact, possibilities shared by all members of the category to which the thing belongs. What we can say, what we can think, is that a thing has (or that it has not) one of the properties that, as a member of its logical category, it can have; or that several things stand (or that they do not stand) in one of the relations that as members of their logical categories they can stand in. What we cannot say or think is that the thing belongs to such-and-such a logical category, that it has this or the other logical properties of possibly being combinable in such-and-such ways. Language mirrors these internal logical characteristics of things. They are represented in language by variables, not by predicates or relational terms. Thus, for example, being an object is such a logical or formal property; and, in English, if we say 'An object fell', the word 'object' is really being used as a variable, and the sentence might be rewritten in logical notation as '$(\exists x)$ (x fell)'. We violate the principles of logical syntax when we use a term like 'object', a term for a formal concept, as a genuine predicate, as when we say 'A is an object'. Here we are trying to put into words something that shows itself in language but cannot be said.[11]

I call that chickening out. It involves holding that the things we speak about are members of this or that logical category, really and truly, only we cannot say so. *That* they are is represented in language in another

[11] P. M. S. Hacker, *Insight and Illusion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 20–24.

way. The sentences of the *Tractatus* itself are taken to convey this form of realism, although the doctrine itself requires that any attempt to state it as a doctrine must fail. There are several characteristic signs of this chickening out. The first is the idea of a realm of necessities underlying our capacity to make sense as we do. Hacker explicitly ascribes to Wittgenstein the view that there are ontological categories, objectively fixed and independent of language, which the logical syntax of language is then required to mirror.[12] The second is the idea of there being such a thing as violating the principles of logical syntax by using a term in what, given its syntax, goes against what can be said with it. The two characteristic features are then combined in the idea that we violate the laws of logical syntax when we try to state those necessary features of reality that properly speaking show themselves in language. There is a very clear conception here of *something* you cannot do. Or rather, perhaps it is not all that clear, since it dissolves into incoherence when pushed slightly. Call it then a seemingly clear picture of something you cannot do: namely put these perfectly genuine logical features of reality into words. There they are, though, underlying our use of words.

Wittgenstein's philosophy, throughout his life, is directed against certain ways of imagining necessity. Throughout his life, his treatment of logic aims at letting us see necessity where it does lie, in the use of ordinary sentences. The trouble with chickening out, or one trouble with it, is that it holds on to exactly the kind of imagination of necessity, necessity imaged as fact, that Wittgenstein aimed to free us from.

Take a sentence like 'A is an object'. If we think of it as stating a necessary condition for ordinary sentences using the name 'A' to have a truth value, we are (it would seem) in immediate trouble. 'A is an object' cannot be a member of the body of sentences—or so it seems, since all members of the body remain truth-valued irrespective of the truth or falsity of any sentence. So there are not, within that body, any sentences giving the necessary conditions of truth-valuedness of sentences within the body. But, now, if we think of this sentence 'A is an object', withdrawn as it were from the body of ordinary sentences, and as stating something underlying the truth-valuedness of some of them (and hence the inferential relations of all of them), we are thinking of it as itself saying what it does on account of the expressions in it. We understand *it* (so we think)—but what sentence *it* is, what expressions how combined, is not separable from its capacity to say something truth-valued irrespective of the truth values of the—which?—body of sentences, standing in logical relations to each other, to which it belongs, and including its own negation. In so far as we take ourselves to understand it, we take its truth and its falsity *both* to be graspable.

[12] Hacker, 23.

Even in thinking of it as true in all possible worlds, in thinking of it as something whose truth underlies ordinary being so and not being so, we think of it as itself *the case*; our thought contrasts it with as it were a different set of necessities. Our ordinary possibilities have the character of possibility, given that these underlying necessities are as they are, not some other way. This way of taking our sentence 'A is an object' has got built into it a way of thinking of what is necessary, where what is necessary has got its own logic distinct from the logic of our ordinary descriptions of what is the case. From the perspective we now seem to ourselves to occupy, the logical rules governing ordinary sentences, the logical 'scaffolding' internal to the original body of sentences, will be thought of as needing to match, to be determined by, which necessities *do* hold.—From the perspective we now seem to occupy; but Wittgenstein's aim is to let us recognize it to be only the illusion of a perspective.

The contrast I want is the contrast between saying that that is the illusion of perspective and saying that it is the correct philosophical perspective, only you cannot put into words what is seen from there. The philosophical perspective is fine, but you just need to shut up. On that second, chickening out, interpretation, Wittgenstein's general account of sentencehood rules out the expression, by any sentence, of the view from the philosophical perspective. What is seen from there is representable only in internal features of *the* body of sentences itself. But if things were different as seen from that perspective, different necessities would thus be represented in internal features of language; the system of possibilities in language would be different. So we have two crucial features of (what I am suggesting is) the wrong interpretation of Wittgenstein. There is still insistence on viewing possibility and necessity as fixed some particular way rather than some other; they are still really being conceived *in* a space. What is possible in the contingent world, what is thinkable, what is sayable, is so because of the way ontological categories are fixed. And with this there is the idea that sentences attempting to express any of these things are illegitimate, count as nonsense by the doctrines of the *Tractatus*.

We need to go back to the apparently innocent way I led us into all this: by showing, or seeming to, that, given Wittgenstein's view of what sentences are, there must be deep trouble with the sentence 'A is an object'. The argument was that no sentence giving necessary conditions for the truth-valuedness of a sentence can belong to the body of sentences. So 'A is an object' was pushed outside, and then we had more trouble.

But what Wittgenstein *says* is that there is nothing wrong with *any* possible combination of signs into a sentence. He says at 5.4733 that *any* possible sentence is, as far as its construction goes, legitimately put together, and, if it has no sense, this can only be because we have failed

to give a meaning to some of its constituents, even if we think that we have done so. Thus the reason why 'Socrates is identical' says nothing is that we have not given any *adjectival* meaning to the word 'identical'. The word 'identical' as it occurs in (e.g.) 'The morning star is identical with the evening star' is, syntactically, a totally different symbol from what we have in 'Socrates is identical'. So the sentence 'Socrates is identical' is legitimately put together, in the sense in which 'Socrates is frabble' is, as far as its structure goes, legitimately put together. Both contain what are syntactically adjectives; all they need is for some adjectival meaning to be fixed for them. What I am emphasizing is that on Wittgenstein's view, the *only* thing wrong with 'Socrates is identical' is the absence of an adjectival meaning for 'identical', where the need for a meaning may be hidden from us by the fact that the *word* 'identical' has other uses in which it is meaningful. A good logical notation would mark syntactical differences by the use of unconfusable signs, signs with visibly different structure. And then there would be no such thing as giving a word like 'identical' a new syntactical role, where its already having a different role, in which it was meaningful, hid its meaninglessness in the new role.

We need to apply this to 'A is an object'. What is wrong with it, on the view of Wittgenstein which I am attacking, is that it is an attempt to put into words what really does underlie the intelligibility of what we say truly or falsely of A in ordinary sentences. That A is an object does underlie the intelligibility of ordinary sentences, but it is a violation of logical syntax to put *that* into words. Against this, here is how I am suggesting we interpret Wittgenstein. The very idea of the philosophical perspective from which we consider as sayable *or* as unsayable necessities that underlie ordinary being so, or possibilities as themselves objective features of reality, sayably *or* unsayably: that very perspective itself is the illusion, created by sentences like 'A is an object', which we do not see to be simply nonsense, plain nonsense. 'A is an object' is no more than an innocently meaningless sentence like 'Socrates is frabble'; it *merely* contains a word to which, in its use as predicate noun, no meaning has been given. But we inflate it, we blow it up into something more, we think of ourselves as meaning by it something which lies beyond what Wittgenstein allows to be sayable. We think it has to be rejected by him because of that. We think of there being a content for it, which according to his doctrines, no sentence can have. But this conception of what we cannot say is an illusion created by our taking the word 'object', which works in meaningful English sentences essentially as a variable, and putting it into other sentences where it has a wholly different grammatical function. When Wittgenstein says that we cannot say 'There are objects', he does not mean 'There are, all right, only *that there are* has to get expressed another

way'. That the sentence means nothing at all, and is not illegitimate for any other reason, we do not see. We are so convinced that we understand what we are trying to say that we see only the two possibilities: *it* is sayable, *it* is not sayable. But Wittgenstein's aim is to allow us to see that there is no 'it'. The philosophical insight he wants to convey will come when you understand that you want to make use of a syntactical construction 'A is a such-and-such', and that you are free to fix the meaning of the predicate noun in any way you choose, but that no assignment of meaning to it will satisfy you. There is not some meaning you cannot give it; but no meaning, of those without limit which you can give it, will do; and so you see that there is no coherent understanding to be reached of what you wanted to say. It dissolves: you are left with the sentence-structure 'A is an object', standing there, as it were, innocently meaning nothing at all, not any longer thought of as illegitimate because of a violation of the principles of what can be put into words and what goes beyond them. Really to grasp that what you were trying to say shows itself in language is to cease to think of it as an inexpressible *content: that which* you were trying to say.

Take Wittgenstein's remark that there is only *logical* necessity (6.375). It is a wonderful remark. Logical necessity is that of tautologies. It is not that they are true because their truth conditions are met in all possible worlds, but because they have none. 'True in all possible worlds' does not describe one special case of truth conditions being met but specifies the logical character of certain sentence-like constructions formulable from sentences. But the remark that there is only logical necessity is itself ironically self-destructive. It has the form, the syntactic form, of 'There is only this sort of thing', i.e. it uses the linguistic forms in which we say that there are only thises rather than thises and thats. It belongs to its syntax that it itself says something the other side of which can be represented too. If there *is* only squiggledy wiggle, the language allows wiggles that are not squiggledy as well. But whatever the sentence aims to do for us, it is not to place the kind of necessity there is as this sort rather than that. It does not convey to us the philosophical but unsayable fact that there is only tautology not genuinely substantial necessity. In so far as we grasp what Wittgenstein aims at, we see that the sentence-form he uses comes apart from his philosophical aim. If he succeeds, we shall not imagine necessities as states of affairs at all. We throw away the sentences about necessity; they really are, at the end, entirely empty. But we shall be aware at the end that when we go in for philosophical thinking, the characteristic form of such thought is precisely that the sentence-forms we use come apart from what we have taken to be our aims. Not because we have chosen the wrong forms.

Back now at last to Wittgenstein's relation to Frege. The analogies could be spelt out in detail, and so could the differences. What I shall do instead is work through one particular analogy to make clear at the same time the deepest difference between them.

For Frege, you refer to a concept by using a term predicatively, that is, by using a term which makes a characteristic kind of contribution to the truth or falsity of the sentences in which it occurs. You cannot first predicate *horse* of Bucephalus, say, and then as it were turn round on yourself and grab hold of *what* you referred to by the predicative use of 'horse' and catch *it* by using a term as a logical subject. It was Benno Kerry's idea that he could do just *that* that Frege criticized him for. Frege's criticism would also apply to Russell,[13] whose confusion (confusion, that is, as we may imagine it seen from Frege's point of view) is of a particularly helpful sort. Russell believes that the logical subject *humanity* is actually one and the same thing as the concept ascribed to Socrates when we say that he is human (they are 'exactly and numerically' the same); and he adds that the difference between humanity when it is spoken of by a term with the logical features of a proper name and when it is predicated of something is in the *external* relations of the concept humanity and not in the intrinsic nature of the thing we are talking about. This idea that the logical character of the expressions you use in talking about something is irrelevant to what kind of thing *it* in itself is is then reflected in that 'rounding on oneself' that I spoke of, that attempt to *catch at* the very thing you had referred to by a predicative use of an expression, and to hold it up in front of you for philosophical consideration. I cannot here try to show what is involved in Frege's rejection of any view like Russell's as incoherent.[14] But it is important to see that Russell's view depends on a notion (or on imagining that he has a notion) of the identity of a thing, a notion of identity untied from the substitutability *salva veritate* of expressions referring to it. There is, he supposes, a position, a perspective, from which to think about things-with-their-intrinsic-nature, outside of the use of proper names and functional terms, with their *different* logical character, in sentences.

Just as, for Frege, you *refer to a concept* by using a term predicatively, and it is confused to think you can round on yourself and grab hold of *what* you thus referred to, so for Wittgenstein, *something that may be the case gets said to be the case* by a sentence, and it is confused to think you can round on yourself and grab hold of *what* you

[13] Bertrand Russell, *Principles of Mathematics* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1937), 46.

[14] I have discussed those arguments of Frege's in 'What does a Concept-script do?', *Philosophical Quarterly* **34** (1984), 343–368.

thus said to be so, and treat *it* as a logical subject. For Frege, the sign for a concept is an expression with the logical character of a predicate, with one or another kind of incompleteness internal to it, carrying with it a particular kind of rule for substitution *salva veritate*, different from the rule for substitution characteristic of proper names. So, for Wittgenstein, the sign for what is the case (*or* is not the case) is the sentence, a sign to whose functional character it belongs that no sentence's truth or falsity can rob it of its capacity for comparison with reality; and that logical character is tied to a particular kind of substitution rule, different from that for any referring sign. Possibility and necessity get expressed in the use of ordinary sentences, in inferences from these sentences to more of these sentences. It is a mistake to think that you can in thought catch hold of, mean, *that possibility* that is reflected in the ordinary sentence you use, and, for example, consider what underlies its being possible, as if that were a characteristic of *something*. The mistake is of the same general character as the attempt to ignore the way a concept is referred to, the attempt to mean *it*, bare of the logical accoutrements with which language covers it—which was what Russell explictly says we can do.

I want now to say where my present argument will wind up, before I get it to go there. There is the Russell confusion, in which you think that you can grasp the identity of a thing abstracted from the use of a term for it in sentences, and against it there is the idea running through Frege's thought, that logical characteristics of the expressions that stand for a thing belong to *what it is* we were talking about. In Frege's hands, that principle is directed against Benno Kerry, and would have been directed against the remarks of Russell's I quoted. From Wittgenstein's point of view, that very confusion (the confusion of thinking that you can grasp what you are talking about, pulled away from the logical features of any expression for it) is present (without Frege's seeing it) in Frege himself, and in anyone who thinks of the laws of logic as true. The turning of the Frege principle against Frege depends on this point: if Russell's confusion is the attempt to think of something, abstracting from the logical features of how we speak about it, then what you will take to be the same confusion as Russell's depends on what logical features you think there are, internal to how we refer to things. For Frege, the distinction between functions and objects, between functions of different logic levels, and between functions with different numbers of arguments: these distinctions all belong to the logical features of the referring expressions, the names, of *every* language. For Wittgenstein as for Frege, the logical characteristics of referring expressions are tied to the role of such expressions in sentences, where a sentence is a function of the expressions it contains. But they disagree very deeply about what kind of function of the expres-

sions in it a sentence is, and how you tell that an expression is one of those that a sentence is a function of. For Wittgenstein but not for Frege, you can tell what the sentence is, what expressions occur in it, only relative to the logical character of the sentence itself as a sign whose capacity for truth or falsity is independent of the truth or falsity of any sentence. The logical relations of sentences to each other enter the way we tell *what* sentence our sentence is, what expressions how combined. The whole of logic is internal to the logical character of every referring expression.

Here is a rough sketch of another way of making the contrast between Frege and Wittgenstein. For Frege the fundamental logical relation is that between concept and object; they are 'made for each other'.[15] That relation is reflected in language in the relation between predicate and proper name. Wittgenstein substitutes for Frege's fundamental logical relation between concept and object that between object and situation: they are made for each other. And that fundamental relation is reflected in language in the relation between two sorts of sign: one, that stands for something, and the other, that *in* which there is *standing for*; where the latter kind of sign, the sentence, has as its characteristic feature its capacity to occur as argument of truth-functional operations. The truth-functional calculus, within which sentences have their identity as signs, is what goes with any referring expression. (Frege and Wittgenstein could not differ about what sort of functions sentences are without differing about what sort of argument expressions in them are, without differing about the logical character of argumenthood.)

If you think that the whole of logic is internal to any referring expression, you will see the Russell confusion wherever anyone treats any part of logic as external to what we are talking about. Anyone who, like Frege, treats logical laws as holding of objects and functions will be imagining a kind of reference to objects and functions which (on your view) is an illusion: such a criticism is analogous to that which Frege could have directed at Russell. Given Wittgenstein's account of the character of sentences, it will appear that anyone who thinks of logical truths as genuinely true, anyone who thinks of logical truths as true because their truth conditions are met, will be in a confusion of the same essential character as Russell's: he will be supposing himself to have access to what he is talking about, even though he is abstracting from the logical character of the signs he uses to say anything. The idea of a science of logic is, on Wittgenstein's account, nothing but illusion.

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[15] Gottlob Frege, *Posthumous Writings*, Hans Hermes *et al.* (eds) (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1979), 118, 178.