Durham E-Theses

The Other Side of the Limit: Nonsense and Therapy from Hume and Kant to Wittgenstein

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Ruby Main

"What is nonsense?" is one of the most fundamental questions in philosophy and has been implicit since the subject's origins. This thesis explores the role of nonsense in the work of Wittgenstein, the philosopher perhaps most critical of philosophy itself. Wittgenstein's work, alongside that of Hume and Kant, is emblematic of the critical impulse in philosophy. This approach does not build philosophical systems or offer answers to philosophical questions. Rather, it interrogates whether the very questions asked are valid, useful, or clear. Though most philosophers are critical to an extent, some make especially broad critiques and distance themselves from other philosophical practices. Broad philosophical critiques, such as those found in Hume, Kant or Wittgenstein require a notion of nonsense with which to frame other philosophy. Through critical comparison, I argue that Wittgenstein's notion of nonsense is more concrete than Hume's or Kant's, as is his method for addressing philosophical nonsense as it emerges.

I argue that Wittgenstein's understanding of nonsense emerges in response to his biggest influences: Russell and Frege. Wittgenstein's approach emerges from a reply to Russell's language-adjacent philosophy and incorporates Frege's understanding of sense. I argue that the early and later Wittgenstein have distinct methods but share a conception of nonsense as something which cannot have meaning. The later Wittgenstein's therapeutic approach emerges from his dissatisfaction with the *Tractatus'* response to nonsense. Understanding the later work requires engagement with the earlier. Finally, taking seriously Wittgenstein's comparisons between psychotherapy, particularly psychoanalysis, I argue that Wittgenstein's therapeutic approach uses arguments to dissolve philosophical problems. Further, appropriately incorporating Freud into my interpretation shows that Wittgenstein's method does not put an end to philosophy – rather it creates a productive, reflective role for philosophical nonsense.

The Other Side of the Limit: Nonsense and Therapy from Hume and Kant to Wittgenstein

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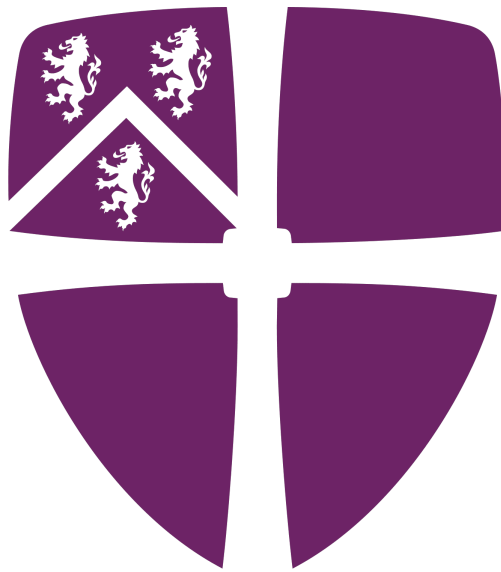
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Declaration

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. No quotation from it should be published without the author's prior written consent and information derived from it should be acknowledged.

Dedication

For my grandmother, who taught me to see the magic in the ordinary long before Wittgenstein.

Acknowledgements

Introduction

Something for Philosophical Treatment

'No, I shouldn't,' said Alice, surprised into contradicting her at last: 'a hill can't be a valley, you know. That would be nonsense—'

The Red Queen shook her head, 'You may call it "nonsense" if you like,' she said, 'but I've heard nonsense, compared with which that would be as sensible as a dictionary!'

Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking Glass and What Alice Found There*, 1871.

When one thinks of "nonsense" one might think of the verse of Edward Lear, or the poems scattered through Carroll's *Alice* stories. One might also think of the babbling of a toddler or the evasive, empty answers of a politician. "Nonsense" might be related to the incompatible, the disorganised, or the outright silly. When we speak of nonsense, we might often be speaking of that which is empty of content, undefined or meaningless. This broad and disparate set of associations makes a philosophical and historical study of the concept of nonsense fraught but also interesting.

The definition or understanding of the notion of nonsense is largely neglected and unappreciated in the history of philosophy. Yet the questions, "What is nonsense?" and "What isn't nonsense?" are fundamental and enduring. These questions set the scope of discussion for philosophy and their answers determine which other questions can be asked and answered without failing to so much as "make sense". Many philosophers, in their clarificatory and critical roles, seek to eliminate nonsense, and the misunderstandings resulting, from their discussions, and they should aim to avoid speaking it themselves. Others, arguably, are too ready to talk nonsense and to endorse it. Wittgenstein is perhaps the philosopher most critical of the discipline of philosophy itself; maintaining that many of its questions and findings are ultimately nonsensical. Very broadly, this attitude is consistent across his early and later work.

He writes in the introduction to the *Tractatus*:

Thus the aim of this book is to draw a limit to thought, or rather – not to thought, but to the expression of thoughts: for in order to be able to draw a limit to thought, we should

have to find both sides of the limit thinkable (i.e. we should have to be able to think what cannot be thought).

It will therefore be in language that the limit can be drawn and what lies on the other side of the limit will simply be nonsense.[1]

This dissertation takes Wittgenstein's conception of nonsense as its object of study. In doing this, it must also engage with its companion concept: therapy. For Wittgenstein, to develop ways of avoiding or eliminating nonsense is to engage in a kind of philosophical therapy. Thus, in investigating his ideas about nonsense, it will also be relevant to explore how therapy is supposed to treat it.

In the following investigation, my main thesis is that Wittgenstein's fully realised conception of nonsense, and of therapy which responds to it, is fundamental to his philosophical achievements. It is his mode of applying the term which sets him apart from other philosophers, even other philosophers with similar broad critiques of the practice of philosophy. Beyond this thesis, I will also argue that the role of nonsense is underexplored in the history of philosophy, and additional attention to it will allow for fruitful comparative and contextualising work. I also argue that a notion of nonsense is vital to all profoundly critical philosophy as it allows for critiques which question the most fundamental assumptions at the base of problems. Wittgenstein's understanding of nonsense is fundamentally distinct from the obviously wrong. This understanding, though not unique, is employed in such a way as to set his work apart from other critical projects. The development of his therapeutic method in philosophy thus affords a parallel to psychotherapy. It addresses philosophical problems with respect and curiosity without treating them as anything but nonsense.

To contextualise and fully explore the Wittgensteinian achievement, this project critically compares his understanding of philosophical nonsense and his programme for a philosophical treatment to that of two other critical philosophers – Hume and Kant. In Chapter One, I will fully elaborate on my rationale for grouping these three as critical philosophers, especially Hume, who might at first glance seem to stand apart. In short however, both Hume and Kant diagnose major domains of philosophy as having gone astray. They both describe philosophical impulses which result in questions and assumptions which can range from confusing and unhelpful to mentally distressing. In this project, I suggest that the ways Hume and Kant highlight such philosophical impulses map onto the later Wittgenstein's project of pointing out the nonsensical

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[1] References to the *Tractatus* are to the Pears and McGuinness Translation unless otherwise stated.

underpinnings of philosophical discussion. In doing so I argue that all three philosophers are interested in making previously unnoticed philosophical nonsense into "obvious nonsense." (PI, 463)[2] These projects are critical but also clarificatory, they engage closely with errors of thought.

Beyond this, all three philosophers have specific programmes for how to find, minimise, and avoid philosophical error. These are the aspects of their work that I shall call philosophical therapy. Though Hume and Kant predate the psychoanalytic revolution which gave Wittgenstein the language of psychotherapy used in the *Philosophical Investigations*, they detail procedures for ensuring a philosophical practice which uncovers rather than creates further nonsense.

My reading of Hume is something of a minority reading in the scholarship, largely influenced by Anette Baier and Donald Livingston's interpretations of Hume's philosophical project and Benedict Smith's recent explorations of a more humanistic and social interpretation of Hume's naturalism. I find in Hume, as can be found in Wittgenstein, the diagnosis that philosophy goes astray when it is removed from ordinary practices. I argue based on Hume's emphasis on the necessity of philosophical practice requiring custom to avoid "false philosophy" runs parallel to the Wittgensteinian project.

In Kant, I find features of philosophical nonsense which are held and developed by Wittgenstein. In Kant, nonsense or absurdity are the result of the over-extension of a faculty and striving beyond the limits of faculties. In this way, one of Kant's contributions is naturalising philosophical nonsense and locating its origins in the operation of reason. In elaborating on his notion of the Transcendental Illusion as a source of nonsensical philosophical ideas, I show that in both Kant and Wittgenstein nonsense easily arises, is largely inevitable, and is a persistent possibility. Wittgenstein shares with Hume the idea that some return to the ordinary will dissolve philosophical problems and with Kant the idea that philosophical nonsense is inevitable and in its own way ordinary.

0.1. Definitions for discussion

To put it in a Wittgensteinian way, one cannot avoid the multitude of language games in which the word "nonsense" can play a part. "(Even a nonsense-poem is not nonsense in the same way as the babbling of a child.)" (PI, 282) Naturally, there are also other words which might or might not be synonymous with nonsense. This complexity introduces difficulty for discussing thinkers who do not use the term, but very much seem to be using the concept. Thus, for this project, I will be

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[2] References to *Philosophical Investigations* are to the revised 4th Edition by Hacker and Schulte.

setting parameters or at least identifying the cluster concepts that are of interest. The same holds for the term "therapy," which though used for drug and surgical treatments, is primarily associated with psychotherapy. As Hume and Kant were writing well before any notion of modern psychotherapy, it is worth setting parameters to enable me to identify aspects of their work which can correctly be called therapeutic.

In scholarship about the definition of nonsense, Anette Baier's entry in the *Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* is often used as a starting point. Baier categorises broad notions of nonsense. To paraphrase, these are:

1) Nonsense as the obviously false, such as exclaiming "That's a cat!" while pointing at a fox.
2) Nonsense as in a completely contextless remark, such as exclaiming "That's a cat!" in the middle of performing a cat-free marriage ceremony.
3) Nonsense where the sentence has a familiar structure but contains a category error, such as "Cats are prime numbers."
4) Strings of words without syntax: such as "cats passport please claxon and"
5) Nonsense wherein a sentence has a familiar structure, but one or some of its constituent parts are meaningless words "Cats are runcibles"!
6) Nonsense as in a random string of letters or pure gibberish. [3]

Type 1 excepted each of these categories has something to do with a lack of defined meaning in either the word, syntax, or combination. Unlike a sentence with sense, in these examples, there is no clear means of interpreting them, no meaning to parse. In type 2, a listener cannot grasp the meaning of such a random expression because it does not map onto anything within its context of utterance. In type 3, the listener cannot discern what the speaker is saying about cats, because there is no way "is a prime number" can be a description of them. Similarly for type 5, without assigning a meaning to "runcibles" the utterance says nothing about cats. In types 5 and 6, there is no meaning to grasp in the sentence, and in 6 no meaning even in the isolated words. Though the category distinctions in the concept that Baier draws are not accepted by all scholars interested in nonsense, they provide something of a blueprint for seeking a notion of nonsense even when the word is not used.

In everyday language it is common to use "nonsense" to describe something which is obviously false as in line with Baier's first definition. Similarly, it might be used when encountering an

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[3] Anette Baier, "Nonsense" in *Encyclopaedia of Philosophy,* eds. Paul Edwards. (New York: Macmillan, 1967).

unexpected fact that seems it must be obviously false – "that's nonsense, surely?" For this thesis, I wish to parse a distinction between the nonsensical and the obviously wrong, to use understandings of nonsense as a comparative lens between the three philosophers in question. However, as I want to endorse a later Wittgensteinian view of language, such a distinction risks engaging in a philosophical project which ignores the language games in which a word the word appears. As I will elaborate, Wittgenstein's later philosophical project surveys the use of language, and in doing so finds that when philosopher's use language they do so in a way that is removed from the ordinary use. If I draw a harsh line between any of the main uses of the term "nonsense" it is possible that I am creating a new metaphysical use for this term. Doing so is antithetical to the later Wittgenstein's philosophical project. As he writes, "What *we* do is to bring the words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use." (PI, 116)

This project therefore is going to separate out the nonsensical and the obviously wrong for the purposes of philosophical critique in line with Wittgenstein, acknowledging that this is a particular use case. Wittgenstein maintains this separation in his philosophical critique in the *Tractatus,* "Most of the propositions and questions to be found in philosophical works are not false but nonsensical." (TLP 4.003). The distinction remains relevant into the *Investigations* where he offers comments such as "In what sense are my sensations private? —Well, only I can know whether I am really in pain; another person can only surmise it.—In one way this is wrong, and in another nonsense." (PI 246)

Furthermore, in defence of setting aside Baier's first definition, even in ordinary exclamations there is a distinction between "that's false!" and "that's nonsense!" The latter lends much more emphasis to the disbelief. The cases where we say "that's nonsense" tend to be cases where the falsity of the statement was so undoubtable that it is silly, confusing, or jarring to entertain the possibility of it being true. There is a sense that we reserve "nonsense" for falsities or assumed falsities that are the most incongruous with known truths. These are falsities which stand apart from others. The emphasis in such exclamations is gained perhaps because of the other meaning for nonsense – expressing that the situation is so unbelievable the words may as well fail to make meaning.

Not all the philosophers with whom I compare Wittgenstein use "nonsense" as their term of choice. For the purposes of my research, I will be looking for nonsense in two places.

1) Where a notion is contrasted with the simply false
2) Where the ability for something to have or convey meaning is in question

This will allow me to investigate Kant's use of "absurd" (*ungereimt*) or Hume's framing of illusions and fictions in the history of philosophy.

The German terms of note when discussing nonsense and Wittgenstein are *Unsinn, unsinnig,* and *sinnlos.* These terms share a route in the noun *Sinn* (sense). How these words appear in English translations of Wittgenstein's work varies. The major English translations of *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* are C.K Ogden's 1922 translation (produced with input from Wittgenstein himself, G.E Moore, and F.P Ramsey) and Pears and McGuinness' 1961 update. These translations agree that *Unsinn* should always be "nonsense". However, they differ on *unsinnig.* Ogden uses "senseless" apart from in one instance where it is "nonsensical. Pears and McGuinness use "nonsensical" consistently. *Sinnlos* appears as "without sense" and "senseless" in Ogden and variations of "without sense" or "lack sense" in Pears and McGuinness.

I will be using "nonsensical" consistently as the translation of *unsinnig,* following how Pears and McGuinness. This choice is advantageous because it allows the distinction between *unsinnig* and *sinnlos* in the *Tractatus* to be consistent. Wittgenstein states that tautologies and contradictions are without sense (*sinnlos*) but not nonsensical (*aber nicht unsinnig).* It is in these propositions that Ogden's sole use of "nonsensical" for *unsinnig* appears, showing the importance of keeping the distinction clear. I will also be using "senseless" for *sinnlos,* as it is the most literal English translation of both components and can applied more readily in most situations than variations of "lack sense" in phrases. This translation choice is also consistent with that of Anscombe, Hacker, and Schulte's translation of *Philosophical Investigations*.

"Therapy" will be used in a similarly broad manner until Wittgenstein's specific understanding of this concept is discussed. I use the Oxford Languages definition of "treatment intended to relieve or heal a disorder."[4] Though I will argue that Wittgenstein discusses therapy with an analogy to psychotherapy, the breadth of this definition allows me to discuss the idea of therapy as it appears in earlier philosophers before the development of psychology. The term "therapy" saw a massive spike in use in the early 20th Century with the rise of psychotherapy.[5] In both Hume and Kant, there is a characterisation of certain modes of philosophical thinking as a sort of pathology which requires treatment. Using this broad definition allows me to investigate their treatment methods as earlier philosophical therapies.

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[4] Oxford Languages "Therapy."
[5] Google NGram shows a 550% increase in usage between 1890 to 1920. https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=therapy&year_start=1800&year_end=2019&corpus=en-2019&smoothing=7 [accessed 05/03/2024]

0.2. Structure

This project is a work in philosophy and its history, which should be understood together. I hold that Wittgenstein, especially by the end of his career, develops the most coherent conception of nonsense, and the most useful conception of philosophical therapy. Therefore, comparative and exploratory work on the themes of nonsense and therapy in other critical philosophies makes Wittgenstein's innovations more apparent. My project also forwards the thesis that strong critical philosophy requires a conception of nonsense and a therapeutic method.

The thesis is set out chronologically for the first three chapters. It begins by exploring Hume, then Kant, and then examines the influence of Frege and Russell on Wittgenstein's approach to nonsense and therapy. Chapter Four moves from the early Wittgenstein to the later, and Chapter Five explores the influence of Freud on Wittgenstein, which only applies to his later work. The first two chapters deal with Hume and Kant's conceptions of nonsense and therapy, making arguments as to why these terms are relevant in the analysis of their philosophy. These chapters also include comparative reflections between these critical philosophers and Wittgenstein.

Chapter One begins by laying out my rationale for selecting Hume and Kant as subjects of comparison with Wittgenstein. I hold that all three philosophers are emblematic of critical philosophy, and many parallels can be located in their critical projects. I address concerns that Hume might be considered an odd one out of the trio, as he is not as widely considered a great critical philosopher. The chapter also briefly touches on the legacy of Hume in the early analytic tradition and presents recently uncovered evidence that Wittgenstein had read him. Then, I explore Hume's commentary on other philosophy. He describes the creation of substance for ancient philosophers as "a fiction." He also describes what he calls "the Modern Philosophy" as falling into a sceptical trap because of the over-extension of the principle of causal reasoning. I lay out Hume's warning against reflective impulses in philosophy which lack the grounding of what he calls "the vulgar". Vulgar understandings are understandings which are derived from custom, and they are the kinds of understandings which emerge in common life He warns against False Philosophy of the kind that relies too much on reflection, arguing that a balance is required. I compare this characterisation of bad philosophy as philosophical impulses which have stretched too far to Wittgenstein's sympathetic approach to philosophical confusion. I then briefly examine Hume's critiques of traditional philosophical paradigms as critiques which identify the nonsensicality of the projects – arguing that his characterisation of ideas as "lacking content" fits Baier's definitions of nonsense. Finally, I compare Hume, and Wittgenstein on therapy. I agree with Henry Alison that Hume's historical investigations into other philosophies

constitute a kind of philosophical therapy which builds defences against falling into similar modes of nonsense thinking.[6] The chapter also presents Hume's characterisation of *philosophical heroism* and argues that this concept is best understood as a pathology which can only be treated with engagement with common life and a project of keeping the customary nature of much of our understanding in mind. Hume also famously advocates the effect of spending time away from sceptical problems, engaging with everyday pleasures, such that the problems, "appear so cold, and strain'd, and ridiculous." I compare this approach to Wittgenstein's philosophical therapy, arguing that they share a profound sense that philosophy can only be practised in relation to the ordinary.

Chapter Two Presents a comparative study of the role of nonsense, and the therapy which responds to nonsense in Kant and Wittgenstein. It begins to offer further justifications for the inclusion of Kant in this project, tracing his influence in the early analytic tradition, and Wittgenstein's better-documented engagement with the first Critique. Then, it locates nonsense in Kant's work. "Nonsense" (*Unsinn*) appears as an identifying term in Kant's aesthetics, wherein the ugly work which is created by attempts at genius is "nothing but nonsense." Kant's use of nonsense in the third Critique is laid out, and comparisons are drawn with his use of the term "absurd" (*ungereimt)* in the first Critique. I argue, through structural similarities that these terms function similarly and can be understood as interchangeable. I lay out the features of Kantian nonsense and show that Kant's notion of the transcendental illusion is the route of much philosophical nonsense. Using the results of the transcendental illusion as Kant's paradigm examples of philosophical nonsense, I compare their features to Wittgenstein's ideas about nonsense. The pull of the transcendental illusion shares with Wittgenstein's nonsense the features of temptation, inevitability, and persistence. I argue that the plurality of causes of nonsense outlined in Wittgenstein's later work is a major point of departure despite these similarities. Kantian therapy, I argue can be found in his notion of *Discipline,* and the checks that Discipline performs on pure Reason. This is a major development on Humean therapy, as it is not content to simply walk away from a philosophical problem but finds a means to dissolve it. The major distinction between Kantian Discipline and Wittgenstein's therapeutic method is found in Wittgenstein's influence from Freud and his reference to forms of life, which requires a more pluralistic approach than Kantian Discipline delivers against the transcendental illusion.

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[6] Henry Allison, *Custom and Reason in Hume: A Kantian Reading of the First Treatise* (Oxford: OUP, 2008). 259 – 260.

Chapter Three traces the influences of Russell and Frege on the development of Wittgenstein's thought, including areas in which he completely rejected them. Wittgenstein's specific fascination with nonsense emerges out of a profound interest in language, and what can be done with language. Thus, tracking the origins of interest in the philosophy of language in his immediate influences is important to understanding Wittgenstein's project. I detail the major timeline of Wittgenstein's relationship to his first philosophical hero (Frege) and mentor (Russell), including his eventual falling out, and distancing from each of them. For both figures, I focus on the work which they conducted prior to meeting and around the time of their relationship with Wittgenstein as it is this work that he was reading and responding to. In Russell's case, I outline his theory of descriptions in *On Denoting* as an early foray into language-adjacent philosophy and then lay out his multiple relations theory of judgement as a dissatisfaction with descriptions. From here, I explore Wittgenstein's critiques of the multiple relations theory, arguing that his critique that it allows nonsense is more significant than a version of the direction problem. I also address Wittgenstein's concerns with Russell's version of the multiple relations theory, including his refutations of Russell's formulation including logical form. I take this to be emblematic of the early Wittgenstein's view that it is nonsensical to attempt to represent logical form in language. I conclude that Russell's philosophy from this time was not a "philosophy of language" in the way that Wittgenstein would develop, it was an ontology of concepts and objects.

In exploring the influence of Frege on Wittgenstein, I credit his postulation of the sense-reference distinction and description of the features of sense as a motivating reason that Wittgenstein was so interested in sense and nonsense. The chapter lays out Frege's theory of sense and investigates possible Fregean conceptions of nonsense. Cora Diamond's conception of Wittgenstein-Fregean nonsense is derived from Frege's *Grundlagen* principles, but this working conception of nonsense does not have much to do with Frege's conception of sense. I draw upon Anscombe's work on the *Tractatus* and Dummett's exegesis on Frege to demonstrate the ties between Frege's theory of sense, and his context-principle from *Grundlagen.* I explore a set of theories of sense and how they apply to the early Wittgenstein, concluding that he inherits Frege's commitment to the proposition as the only possible unit of meaning. However, I reject that this means one cannot use the lack of bipolarity of a pseudo-proposition as a sense test. Chapter Three ends by exploring the influence of Frege in Wittgenstein's later work, particularly his apparent continued commitment to the context principle and the strict separation of the logical and psychological. I argue that commitment to the context principle is a defining feature of his later approach to

nonsense and the development of philosophical therapy. I use the *Investigations'* treatment of the problem of intentionality to support my position.

Chapter Four addresses debates in Wittgenstein scholarship which primarily centre on what he meant by "nonsense" in his early and later work. In doing this it also aims to settle the question, "How many Wittgensteins are there?" as he is often split quite definitively into the author of the *Tractatus* and the author of the *Philosophical Investigations.* The chapter begins by detailing some history of scholarship on the "two Wittgensteins" versus "mono-Wittgensteinianism" interpretation, including institutional division along the early versus later fault line. Following this, I present the resolute interpretation of the early Wittgenstein which is attributed to Cora Diamond and James Conant. Though I am sympathetic to their reading taking seriously Wittgenstein's attribution of "nonsense" to the content of the *Tractatus* I do not think there is sufficient evidence for an *Investigations* style therapeutic process in the text. I draw upon P. M. S. Hacker's historical research and forward that Wittgenstein did think there was an underlying logico-syntactical structure hinted at by his Tractarian nonsense. I also argue that the *Tractatus* does not have the structure necessary to deliver the satisfying therapeutic process described by Conant. In line with Peter Geach, I argue in favour of nonsense being a valuable teaching tool for Wittgenstein in the same way that Frege would often use propositions which broke the rule of his *Begriffsschrift*. I defend a version of the teaching tool hypothesis that acknowledges Wittgenstein's reflective thoughts on the *Tractatus* in his later work. I finish this chapter by briefly exploring the resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein, arguing that though its central premises are agreeable, the contention that we cannot meaningfully talk about stable grammatical rules is neither textually supported nor workable as a method. It is my position that a misunderstanding of the methods of philosophical therapy informs "the resolute later Wittgenstein" reading. I also briefly touch on the Pyrrhonian reading which finds a strong parallel between Wittgenstein's dissolution of problems in philosophy with the anti-philosophical motivations of Pyrrhonian sceptics. I reject the premise that Wittgenstein wanted to put an end to all philosophy and think that Wittgenstein's therapy's aim to put an end to any one philosophical problem does not endorse the possibility of an end to philosophical work.

Chapter Five addresses the later Wittgenstein's concept of therapy and my reading that therapy is both highly inspired by psychoanalysis and involves argument and discovery. The chapter begins by presenting an overview of the state of psychoanalysis and other psychotherapy in Wittgenstein's lifetime and details how psychoanalysis would have been an unavoidable force in his life. I present evidence that Wittgenstein took seriously the parallels between psychoanalysis and his own therapeutic method and counter the critique that this parallel is overstated. I then

lay out the therapeutic process of psychoanalysis, dividing it into four stages. I then map these four stages onto the therapeutic process outlined by Wittgenstein in the *Investigations.* I use Wittgenstein's treatment of the problem of doubting that another is in pain, which is his treatment of the problem of other minds, to detail the steps of the process.

Wittgenstein makes scathing critiques of Freud, the chapter argues that he draws a hard distinction between the theoretical commitments of psychoanalysis which are mythical, and Freud's development of the therapeutic method. It is only the latter with which we should draw parallels. The parallels to psychoanalysis raise further interpretative questions about Wittgenstein's method. The first is "who is the patient and who is the analyst?" I argue that Wittgenstein is non-prescriptive about this because philosophical therapy can be performed by the self, or in dialogue, or in something like the classroom. When offering therapy in the larger group setting though, there is the caveat that philosophical therapy is individualised and an approach that dissolves philosophical nonsense for one person might not in another. The other major question I address is how ordinary uses in philosophical therapy can have a similar function to repressed personal history in psychoanalysis. I argue against Phil Hutchinson that it is possible to refer to ordinary uses if one narrows their focus to their immediate linguistic community and never strives to develop a universal ordinary use. With this settled, the chapter presents a defence of my thesis that philosophical therapy involves an argument. Using definitions of argument from informal logic, and an understanding that psychoanalysis also fits these definitions, I argue it is best to consider Wittgenstein's investigations, and the investigations he encourages others to conduct, to be arguments.

The closing chapter concludes by arguing that Wittgenstein never intended for his philosophical therapy to put an end to philosophy. The traps of ordinary language can manifest similarly across time and linguistic communities. Furthermore, engaging in the reactive piecemeal practice of philosophical therapy brings the unique features of language and its ties to ordinary forms of life to the forefront into sharp focus. Philosophical therapy is a positive exercise, and by extension, it would not be better to have avoided philosophical nonsense entirely.

Chapter One

Fictions, Illusion, Delirium: Hume and the History of Projects About Nonsense

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Two of the core theses of this project are that nonsense is of vital importance in the history of philosophy and that it is a neglected topic of study. In the following two chapters, I discuss the role of nonsense in the critical philosophy of Hume and Kant and compare their motivations and methods to Wittgenstein. In studying their understandings of nonsense, I also uncover similarities in how all three philosophers think nonsense should be dealt with. It is my view that Hume and Kant, with similar motivations to Wittgenstein, developed philosophical therapies.

To clarify the term "critical philosophy: all philosophy is critical of other philosophy to some extent, but some projects target Philosophy or "philosophical thinking" in an especially broad manner. *Critical philosophy* can be contrasted with *constructive philosophy* which always involves the building of philosophical systems, often in metaphysics. This is not to say that philosophers in the critical category do not ever engage in the construction of systems – but that their projects involve broad strokes critique of the practice of philosophy. These projects often seek to articulate why a [misguided] practice is appealing. I argue that one of the uniting features of the critical philosophers is that they do not merely correct bad ideas but target that which generates them. In other words, critical philosophers are interested in philosophical nonsense and how it is produced. Setting Wittgenstein in this history allows for the exploration of influences, direct and indirect, upon his approach to philosophical nonsense and offers a discussion of the shared motivations and methods used by critical philosophers more generally. Furthermore, contrasting Wittgenstein with his predecessors also highlights the areas in which he is most innovative.

The first of these chapters will primarily consist of a comparison between Wittgenstein and Hume. Firstly, I will present my reasons for the comparative work between Wittgenstein and this set of philosophers. I also elaborate on why I set Hume in the same tradition of critical philosophy as Kant and Wittgenstein. Next, I offer a brief overview of Wittgenstein's direct engagements with Hume's work – which as recent evidence suggests was more significant than previously considered. This allows me to consider some of their overlapping and contrasting ideas within the context that Wittgenstein was somewhat familiar with Hume's contributions.

Next, I engage in a direct study of Hume's attitudes towards the practice of philosophy and the notion of nonsense. I argue that though nonsense is of vital importance to Hume's critiques of other philosophies and their assumptions, he has a different understanding of the term from that of Wittgenstein, because of a differing philosophy about concepts. Finally, discussing Hume also allows me to introduce the antithesis concept to nonsense, therapy. There is literature which describes Hume's critical philosophy as therapeutic in nature, and I compare this to Wittgenstein's therapeutic method evident in his later works.

1.1. Why Hume and Kant? The History of Critical Philosophy

> Our age is the genuine age of criticism, to which everything must submit.
>
> Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*. A xi[7]

It may appear out of place to begin a discussion of nonsense from a Wittgensteinian perspective by examining two earlier philosophers. However, there are several important reasons that I have opted for this structure. The most obvious is that this study offers insight into some of the direct and indirect influences upon Wittgenstein's project of uncovering and minimising philosophical nonsense. Wittgenstein, at least in as far as he wanted people to know, was not an avid reader of the philosophical canon. He had read Schopenhauer's *The World of Will and Idea,* around the age of sixteen, well before considering a philosophical career.[8] Of course, he also deeply engaged with his mentor, Russell, and idol, Frege's works before the completion of the *Tractatus*.[9] Otherwise, his personal engagement with the history of philosophy was either minimal or kept very private. However, Wittgenstein did read Kant's *Critique of Pure* whilst imprisoned in Italy towards the end of 1918 with friend Ludwig Hänsel.[10] Further, there is evidence that though he never read Hume extensively he had got access to the *Abstract to the Treatise* as his friend Pierro Sraffa was publishing it. He also references Hume several times in transcribed lectures. Beyond this, Kant, and to a lesser extent Hume would have been unavoidable at Cambridge as they directly influenced his colleagues and students.

Beyond influence, there is a more pressing reason for beginning with Kant and Hume. This reason is the centrality of a notion of nonsense to projects of critical philosophy. My argument

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[7] References to the *Critique of Pure Reason* are to the translation by. P. Guyer and A. W Wood (Cambridge: CUP, 1998) unless otherwise stated.

[8] G.E.M Anscombe, *An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus* (London: Hutchison University Library, 1959): 12.

[9] A. Kenny, *Wittgenstein* (London: Penguin, 1973): 2.

[10] R Monk, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius* (New York: Penguin, 1991): 158.

rests upon the notion that there are at least two core approaches or attitudes in philosophy which most philosophers can be divided between– constructive and critical. Kant and Hume, whilst incorporating both approaches in their works are central to the history of the latter. In elaborating on the motivations and methods that they share with Wittgenstein, I can demonstrate the place of nonsense in the history of critical philosophy. Furthermore, in exploring those areas in which Wittgenstein dramatically diverges from them I can show how both a transformation in the concept of nonsense and a more direct centring of the concept can result in a more complete critical project. Wittgenstein is largely successful in being critical whilst being minimally constructive – setting him apart from his predecessors.

To elaborate further on the rough sketch of a critical-constructive distinction. I am drawing upon an idea that is often used casually in the history of philosophy. Andy Hamilton writes, "One can divide the history of Western philosophy into "grand theorists" opposed to "critics" of whom Wittgenstein is the leading twentieth-century representative.[11] Almost all philosophers demonstrate both impulses, but certain philosophers rely more on criticism. Kant's articulation of what he calls "the sceptical method" (not to be confused with scepticism) offers a concise understanding of the critical impulse:

> For the sceptical method aims at certainty, seeking to discover the point of misunderstanding in disputes that are honestly intended and conducted with intelligence by both sides, in order to do as wise legislators do when from the embarrassment of judges in cases of litigation they draw instruction concerning that which is defective and imprecisely determined in their laws.[12]

Kant is often called the founder of Critical philosophy and this term is often used to refer explicitly to Kantian method.[13] To separate this notion from a more general understanding of critical impulses and methods, I will only use capitalised Critical when referring to Kant's *Critiques*.

The central feature is the starting point for a critical investigation. When examining a debate or problem in philosophy – the critical approach is disinterested in defending or critiquing the existing responses and arguments surrounding it. Rather, it works from the basis that the question itself may not have a stable foundation. The critical approach is willing to undermine

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[11] A. Hamilton, *The Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Wittgenstein and On Certainty* (London: Routledge, 2014): 13.
[12] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B452
[13] J G Shurman calls Kant "the founder of critical philosophy." J. G. Schurman, "The Genesis of the Critical Philosophy," *The Philosophical Review* 7, no. 1 (1898): 2.

the assumptions upon which the debate rests rather than engaging in it as presented. In Wittgensteinian terms, this is the uncovering of the elements in a debate that are nonsensical.[14]

Hume's arguments against core principles in metaphysics share a very similar viewpoint to Kant's sceptical method. In the *Treatise* he writes, "Principles taken upon trust, consequences lamely deduced from them, want of coherence in the parts, and of evidence in the whole, these are everywhere to be met with in the systems of the most eminent philosophers, and seem to have drawn disgrace upon philosophy itself."[15] (T, xvii) He further explores that he is not merely entering debates, but questioning the assumptions that underpin them in the *Abstract to the Treatise*:

> Accordingly, wherever an idea is ambiguous he has recourse to the impression that must render it clear and precise. And when he suspects that any philosophical term has no idea annexed to it (as is too common) he always asks from what impression that pretended idea is derived? If none can be produced he concludes that the term is wholly meaningless. This is how he examines our ideas of 'substance' and 'essence'; and it would be good if this rigorous method were more practised in all philosophical debates.[16]

Though all philosophy is to an extent critical of other philosophy – there is a shared motivation to show where other philosophy, in a general sense has gone wrong. Notably, also, it is the critical elements of Hume and Kant's work which represent some of their most influential contributions to philosophy.

Wittgenstein's wholesale criticisms of philosophy as a practice look extremely familiar to someone who has read Hume and Kant. Consider his distinction between his method and the work of prior philosophers:

> Roughly speaking in //according to// the old conception – for instance that of the (great) western philosophers – there have been two kinds of problems in fields of knowledge //twofold kinds of philosophical problems...// essential, great, universal, and inessential, quasi-accidental problems. And against this stands our conception, that

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[14] As in, PI, 115 – 119. References to the *Philosophical Investigations* are to the Anscombe, Hacker, and Schulte translation, 4th edition. (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2009) unless otherwise stated.

[15] D. Hume *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896)

[16] D. Hume, *Abstract of A Treatise of Human,* ed, Jonathan Bennet for Some Texts from Early Modern Philosophy, 2017. (Originally 1740) [Available at https://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/hume1740.pdf]

there is no such thing as a great, essential problem in the sense of "problem" in the field of knowledge.[17]

Though his language here targets *problems* rather than *principles* as in Hume – they share an attitude of critiquing underlying assumptions from a standpoint that none of them are inherently correct. Wittgenstein's abandoning of assumptions is radical, and he describes that his critical philosophy can only "destroy idols. And that means not creating a new one – for instance as in "absence of an idol"."[18] The argument I present is that Kant and Hume, like Wittgenstein critique Philosophy thoroughly because they work from a standpoint that some philosophy might be nonsense. Offering comparisons between Wittgenstein, Hume, and Kant allows me to bring the notion of "nonsense" into sharp focus**.** Though they are not inclined to use the word "nonsense" as Wittgenstein is, by examining their critical method, it is possible to draw out that they both had an understanding of this concept, and it was essential to their philosophy. Wittgenstein's innovations include his more defined delineation between the nonsensical from the obviously wrong and the affirmation that nonsense, even the philosophical kind was the result of confusion in the use of language. Though he shares motivations with Hume and Kant, Wittgenstein frames the causes of confused philosophical concepts and methods as a misapplication or misunderstanding of the language one speaks and writes with. This shift into language, and the later Wittgenstein's view of language as a practice, and form of life, offers more robust tools for tackling the constructive impulse than were available to Kant and Hume.

Lastly, beginning with Hume and Kant also allows me to introduce the companion concept to nonsense: therapy. Loosely, therapy in this discussion consists in the methods used to diminish and demystify nonsense. Hume and Kant's framing of philosophical problems is often likened to medical and psychological maladies (even without the 19th-century language of psychotherapy, there is great emphasis on the emotional and mental impacts of problems). Their methods of diminishing philosophical problems are similar in form and intention to Wittgenstein's philosophical therapy. By elaborating on Kant and Hume's therapeutic attitude towards philosophical nonsense, I can better elaborate on Wittgenstein's innovations in philosophical therapy. It also enables me to frame his developments historically alongside innovations in psychotherapy.

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[17] L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Occasions, 1912-1951,* eds. A Nordmand and J Klagge (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1993) 409.
[18] Ibid., 415.

1.2. Wittgenstein's Direct Engagement with Hume

It is illuminating to begin a comparative study of Hume and Wittgenstein on nonsense by examining the possibility and evidence of direct influence. Frustratingly for the scholar interested in influence, Wittgenstein did not make significant use of citations and often deliberately avoided them. Whilst Kant is mentioned a handful of times in the published written works, Hume's name appears only in transcribed lectures. Through the content of some of his lectures at Cambridge and his friendship with economist and avocational historian of philosophy Piero Sraffa, it becomes apparent that he had read at least a little of Hume's writings and directly responded to them.

In a conversation with Karl Britton, Wittgenstein described himself as too familiar with the subjects of Hume's works and would thus find the exercise of reading them gruelling.[19] However, this attitude appears to have been arrived at after some exposure to Hume's writings. In one of his "Lectures on the Language of Sense Data and Private Experience" given in 1936, Wittgenstein is reported to have said,

> We can use the word "past" where nothing has "passed". This is not a peculiarity of memory. We also use the words "clearly" and "unclearly" –which have been used in such and such a fashion –and speak of remembering clearly or unclearly. This is a peculiar character of memory.
>
> Remember Hume's description of "ideas" as "faint copies". If he had said "When I drink beer, I see things fainter", he would have described an experience. Whereas he didn't.[20]

In these lectures, Wittgenstein works through a number of examples that appear to be building to the Private Language Argument of Philosophical Investigations. The "faint copies" example is used to show the difficulty in conveying what an idea, or a memory, is, particularly if we account for them in terms of feeling. He concluded this lecture by stating "You can't point to a sensation – it means nothing. When I say the sensation of pastness is: (gesture) 'long, long ago', this is not a way of pointing to something.".[21]

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[19] In a conversation with Karl Britton. See B. Britton 'Portrait of a Philosopher', in *Ludwig Wittgenstein, The Man and his Philosophy*, ed. K. T. Fann, (New York: Dell Pub. Co., 1967) 61.
[20] Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Occasions*, 344.
[21] Ibid. 345.

Then, four years later, he mentioned Hume several times in the "Lectures on Belief" series, including in the following extract:

> Lecture 1 [14.4.1940]
>
> First of all, isn't it queer that Hume should have told us that belief is a feeling, which can only mean that, if anyone says, 'I believe', he is saying, 'I have this feeling', etc.? The question is: 'Why are we inclined at all to say that 'to believe' means "to feel something"?
>
> […]That there are experiences characteristic of expectation doesn't mean there is any element in common to all the experiences we call characteristic of expectation. To say, 'I expect so and so' doesn't say anything at all of what I feel when I say it. –In some cases, where you have an extremely strong belief, you won't have any feeling of conviction.
>
> You could say, in a very deep sense, that these feelings are as different as these tones of voice (correlates of the feeling). There are an infinite number of ways of uttering belief, corresponding to an enormous number of feelings going along with belief. It is very queer that Hume should have written that, because, on second thoughts, you'd see that we don't know for our lives one feeling of belief.[22]

The earlier 1936 discussion seems not to have been informed by directly reading Hume. Morra argues that the use of the adjective "faint" in this context is not Humean, but rather has likely been adopted from Russell's commentary on Hume in *Analysis of Mind*. Whilst Russell did not use the term "faint copies" for ideas, there is the fact that in *Analysis* "...just before the section on memory, Hume's statement "by ideas I mean the faint images of [impressions]" is quoted twice."[23]

Mora argues that the content of the "Lectures on Belief" mentions of Hume, along with the timeline of Sraffa coming into possession and preparing the Abstract of the Treatise for publication hint that Wittgenstein had read it himself. For evidence, the lectures' phrasing resembles only the parts of the *Treatise*, "that resume almost verbatim sentences of the *Abstract*, for instance "belief consists merely in a peculiar feeling or sentiment", and "whatever name we may give to this feeling, that constitutes belief […]."[24] Sraffa's economic theory had a

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[22] L. Wittgenstein, *Wittgenstein's Whewell's Court Lectures, Cambridge, 1938-1941: from the notes of Yorick Smythies* eds. Y. Smythies, V. A. Munz & B. Ritter. (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2017) 204 – 205.
[23] L. Mora, "Sraffa, Hume, and Wittgenstein's Lectures on Belief," *Nordic Wittgenstein Review* 8 no. 1 -2 (2019): 159 – 160.
[24] Ibid., 163. Citing Hume's *Abstract*.

distinctly Humean perspective on causation, and he was well-versed in Hume's work.[25] Because of their friendship, there is a line of influence from Hume to Sraffa to Wittgenstein, even if Wittgenstein did not spend much effort on the *Abstract*.

Wittgenstein referenced Hume in 1936 in a critique of the idea of private feelings of memory. He then referenced him again when discussing the misapplication of the "feeling" in 1940. This theme seems to have irked Wittgenstein. Hume in these lectures represents just the kind of philosophical nonsense that Wittgenstein hoped to work through in the *Investigations.* When Anscombe writes, "he [Wittgenstein] never read more than a few pages of Hume" it is possible, considering the Sraffa connection, she was referring only to the short *Abstract*.[26] This connection, alongside Hume's growing reputation in the 1930s, would have ensured Wittgenstein could not avoid him entirely.

It is only speculative as to why Wittgenstein may not have been receptive to Hume, but I propose one possibility. Though his attitude towards Hume is a critical one, it is not one that he re-iterated often. Most of Wittgenstein's recorded mentions of Hume are discussed here. This hardly consists of a truly great dislike. On one hand, Wittgenstein was always doubtful of "professional philosophers" and on the other, his initial exposure to Hume would have been mediated by Russell and other colleagues. So though, as I will show in the proceeding, he may have been sympathetic to some ideas from the *Abstract,* his pre-conception of Hume was as a classic philosopher.

1.3. Hume and Wittgenstein on Philosophy, Nonsense, and Therapy

Does Hume have a conception of nonsense? Or, more importantly, is nonsense relevant to his critiques of philosophical practice? Hume does not use the term "nonsense" but rather phrases such as "fiction," "sophistry and illusion," and "spectres in the dark" when describing the objects of study and results of different philosophies. I argue that Hume does have a conception of nonsense such that he considers some of philosophy's questions and results to be nonsensical. This aspect of Hume's thought is exemplified in the *Treatise* where he critiques what he calls the *Ancient* and the *Modern* philosophies. Hume's critiques involve the charge that the practices of these philosophers result in nonsense because he thinks that their results lack meaning. Indeed, I argue that Hume thinks that nonsense emerges when philosophy is

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[25] A. Sinha, "Sraffa and the Later Wittgenstein." *Contributions to Political Economy* 28 (2009): 63.
[26] Anscombe, *Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus*, 11.

disengaged from, to use Hume's term "common life". This idea, that philosophy goes astray when it is abstracted from everyday practice, is the closest similarity in project between he and Wittgenstein. He even, shares with Wittgenstein the idea that philosophical language is often empty of content, but through repetition, similarity to language with sense, and mistaken weight placed upon it, can disguise itself as meaningful.

Despite these similarities on my reading of Hume, he, unlike Wittgenstein is unable to reliably banish individual instances of philosophical confusion. Though they share in their methods of treating philosophical affliction – a call to return to everyday life, Hume's method has to accept that sceptical doubts are always a background threat. This is because Hume is able to treat particular philosophical terms as lacking idea content and dismiss them, he is left with doubts and contradictions that such terms were created to soothe. Though Hume, on my view does develop several therapeutic methods for overcoming philosophical concerns, he accepts that sceptical doubts emerge out of legitimate uses of causal reasoning. His method for avoiding philosophical problems of this kind is a psycho-social practice of retreat. Wittgenstein on the other hand offers a method for confronting individual philosophical problems, such that any one of them can be put to rest with the application of therapy. Hume having to be content to sometimes flee rather than dissolve philosophical questions is, in my view, a result of him not fully committing to locating meaning in use. There are aspects of his conception of meaning, and thus of nonsense which are familiar to a Wittgensteinian but due to other commitments, which I will elaborate on, he cannot entirely quell sceptical doubt.

In the following, I present a brief overview of some of Hume and Wittgenstein's descriptions of the problems of philosophy – especially their descriptions of how these problems emerge. From there, I elaborate on why I consider Hume's critiques of philosophy to constitute nonsense critiques, and how his test for meaning shows several affinities with Wittgenstein. Finally, for this section, I examine their conceptions of how one frees oneself from philosophical nonsense and what benefits this brings to the philosopher. I am content to call Hume's turn to historical analysis to dissolve certain philosophical pseudo-ideas and his advocacy of retreating to everyday life *therapeutic* because he shares with Wittgenstein a framing of philosophical problems as maladies. Further, both of these methods result in psychological as well as intellectual relief.

1.3.1.   *On Philosophy*

Many of Hume's thoughts on philosophy as a practice and tradition can be found in the *Treatise on Human Nature.* He distinguishes between *The Ancient philosophy* and *The Modern philosophy*. When writing on the Ancient philosophy, Hume is referring to those ancient philosophies which refer to substance – Aristotle and his successors. When he writes of modern philosophy, he is primarily referring to rationalist systems and mentions Cartesians by name.[27] (T, 160) In addition to discussing the problems of different philosophical paradigms, Hume also offers some depictions of the mental or emotional state of being for a philosopher. Wittgenstein does little in the way of pointing to particular philosophical frameworks but like Hume offers a broad critique of the general attitude of the philosopher.

HUME

Hume describes substance, as it appears in ancient philosophies, as a fiction arising from necessity. It is this necessity which makes it a valuable fiction to study. Substance arises because there are contradictions in commonplace understandings about objects and perceptions. Objects are assumed to only exist as the combinations of various sensory perceptual inputs. An apple is a combination of colour, texture, shape, smell, and taste. At the same time, objects are assumed to exist with their own simplicity and independence. Substance arises to enable both of these assumptions to hold true. To quote Maria Adamos on this point, "They [Hume's Ancient philosophers] merely wanted to provide a philosophical system that would salvage us, the vulgar, from our contradictions."[28] "Vulgar" for Hume is not a pejorative. It is used here in the same sense as "vernacular" or "everyday."

Hume writes, "They need only say, that any phenomenon, which puzzles them [such as that of composites of perceptions and independent unity], arises from a faculty or an occult quality, and there is an end of all dispute and enquiry upon the matter." This is his most pressing concern with the Ancient philosophers, they create something which offers a pleasing and simple explanation for a contradiction and incorporate it into their systems. This style of philosophy leads to inventions, which for Hume, lack both an empirical basis in experience and one from legitimate reasoning.

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[27] Although, this might be more controversial see P. J. E Kail, "Hume, Malebranche, and 'Rationalism,'" *Philosophy* 83 no. 325 (2008).
[28] M. Adamos, "The Ancients, The Vulgar, and Hume's Scepticism," *Athens Journal of Humanities & Arts* 1 no.1 (2014): 69.

Hume's criticisms of what he calls "The Modern Philosophy" are more involved and complex than those directed at the Ancients. He seems more sympathetic to the projects of rationalists, at least in their motivations to be free from the necessity of creating fictions. His argument in the brief section on this style of philosophising in the *Treatise* is as follows.

- One of the tenets of "Modern Philosophy" is that certain observed attributes are mere impressions in the mind. These are qualities such as colour, sounds, tastes, smells, heat, or coldness. (T, 226) This is not so much a theoretical commitment, but rather a common observation arising when ancient fictions are abandoned.
- One of the more convincing arguments for this position is that impressions derived from the senses can be changeable despite being caused by the same object. There is the example of fire: the heat of fire can be experienced pleasurably or painfully depending on the distance from it. (T, 226)
- The conclusion drawn from this is that there is no resembling quality in the object to that of the impression. The impression is too changeable to track a consistent property.
- Removing these "impression qualities" in theory leaves only the primary qualities. These are supposed to be the qualities of solidity and extension and those which rely on these: motion, cohesion, gravity. (T, 227)
- Solidity is, in very simple terms the inherent inability of two objects, upon being forced together, do not penetrate and conjoin with one another. Solid bodies are distinct. (T, 228)
- How can we know solidity if we exclude colour, sound, and even the feeling of solidity in our hands?
- We only know of solidity through impressions, and without reference to these, we cannot give a satisfactory account of solidity nor identify examples of it. (T, 229)
- Without solidity we also lack motion, cohesion, and gravity.
- Without the impression qualities we cannot give an account of the independent existence and continuous properties of objects.

The Modern project, as Hume describes it, fails to provide a foundation allowing for the independence and property unity of objects. The Ancients, having no distinction between primary and secondary qualities, were cornered into the idea of substance. The Modern

philosophers begin by avoiding this, focusing only on qualities which appear unchangeable. They are then pushed into scepticism about even the existence of objects because of causal reasoning. The reasoning is entwined with the principle that like causes cause like effects. Consequently, the qualities like colour or perceived temperature are taken as secondary, as the effects from the same object can be different depending on minor changes, their cause is not taken to be a stable, extant property. He writes, "This principle being once admitted, all the other doctrines of that philosophy seem to follow by an easy consequence." (T, 227) The Pyrrhonian situation described is reached through a consistent and reasoned application of this causal principle.

As Allison writes, the trap in which the Modern philosophers find themselves results from their propensity "to extend causal reasoning beyond its appropriate sphere of application."[29] Hume's thoughts on causation are often repeated, however, for our purposes, it is worth restating them. Empirically, Hume observes that events are said to cause other events when 1) the motion of cause is prior to the motion of effect 2) there is no delay or distance between cause and effect (contiguity of time and space) 3) the same cause in a different time/place would cause the same effect (constant conjunction).[30] There are no other elements to causation and "It's custom alone that always determines the mind to suppose the future to conform with the past."[31]. Custom is the habitual association which arises between one thing and another as a result of their constant convergence. The association gains "new force from each instance, that falls under our observation." (T, 130)

The Modern philosophers, on Hume's critique, miss that their beginning principle is a customary one. Whilst applied effectively in the everyday, it should be used cautiously when used as the basis for creating metaphysical principles. The result is a contradiction "betwixt those conclusions we form from cause and effect, and those that persuade us of the continu'd and independent existence of body." (T, 231) Such philosophers are working under the assumption that there is something more to cause and effect than the force of habit which emerges out of their constant convergence.

What unites the Ancient and Modern philosophers for Hume? In the specific philosophical practices he lays out, they are both unable to adequately account for objects having their properties independently of impressions, despite a desperate desire to do so. More broadly,

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[29]Allison, *Custom and Reason in Hume,* 270.
[30] Hume, *Abstract,* 4.
[31] Ibid., 5.

both are engaging in what Hume terms "false philosophy." Hume describes three distinct but sometimes intertwined modes of thought. These "are that of the vulgar, that of a false philosophy, and that of the true; where we will find upon enquiry, that the true philosophy approaches nearer to the sentiments of the vulgar, done to those over mistaken knowledge." (T, 222 – 223) Vulgar thoughts are first thoughts, surface-level understandings of the world which are often informed purely by custom. False philosophy abstracts itself so far from the world that it has no reference to it, and true philosophy incorporates an understanding that its concepts are informed by custom.[32]

The core component of false philosophy is abstraction. The Modern philosophers abstract the mental connection between cause and effect beyond its sphere of normal application and find a metaphysical void. Hume is also able to characterise the feeling or mood of the false philosopher as one of heroic alienation. On this, Donald Livingston introduces the concept of *philosophical heroism*. He writes, "This first moment of philosophical reflection is experienced therefore as "heroic" and sublime, for it takes a certain courage to alienate the totality of custom and with it one's former self."[33] Here he is describing perhaps a moment of reflection leading to radical scepticism such as Descartes' first meditation. Hume appears to view the move of alienation as tinged with a certain arrogance, writing, "It is certain, were a superior being thrust into a human body, that the whole of life would to him appear so mean, contemptible, and puerile, that he never could be induced to take part in anything, and would scarcely give attention to what passes around him."[34] Becoming alienated can feel grand and important; it appears more daring than swimming in everyday thoughts and impressions. However, the work of building upon this alienation is gruelling and unsatisfactory. He described the never-ending, and self-undermining questions of philosophy as "melancholy and delirium" (T, 268) Further, the constant dissatisfaction with the systems one builds he describes as being like "the punishments of *Sisyphus* and *Tantulus.*" (T, 223)

WITTGENSTEIN

Let us compare some of these critiques of philosophy and the "character" of philosophers to Wittgenstein's approach. In the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein asserts an enduring opinion that philosophy often deals in nonsense. He writes, "Most of the propositions and questions to be

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[32] Such as Hume's proposal of a just inference regarding cause and effect "concluding, that we have no idea of power or agency, separate from the mind, and belonging to causes;"
[33] D. Livingston *Philosophical Melancholy and Delirium: Hume's Pathology of Philosophy.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998) 23 – 24.
[34] Hume, Essays: Moral, Political, and Literary, I. XVIII.47.

found in philosophical works are not false but nonsensical. Consequently, we cannot give any answers to questions of this kind but can only point out that they are nonsensical." (TLP, 4.003) This conclusion is reached with an apparent sympathy for the difficult work of philosophers. The Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus* writes of how everyday language can obscure the underlying propositions and lead to confusion. It does this in quite obvious ways, such as by using the same sign (word) for different symbols (meanings) (TLP, 3.323, 3.324) and by virtue of its complexity. Wittgenstein writes, "Everyday language is part of the human organism and is no less complicated than it... It is not humanly possible to gather immediately from it what the logic of language is." (TLP, 4.002) This remark echoes Hume in that it acknowledges the everyday, or vulgar roots of initial philosophical questions. Furthermore, the early Wittgenstein writes, "When we do philosophy, we are like savages, primitive people, who hear the way in which civilised people talk, put a false interpretation on it, and then draw the oddest conclusions from this." (TLP, 194) Here, there is a distinct comparison to be drawn to Hume. The Modern philosophers take the like cause and like effect principle from one context in which it works, embody this principle with powers beyond customary ones, and begin to build their systems from it.

A core component of Hume's critique of tthe Modern Philosophy is its propensity to undermine itself. For Hume, this results in abyssal scepticism when causal reasoning is applied too broadly. Wittgenstein shares this concern about self-undermining, writing in the *Investigations,* that a "real discovery will be one, "...that gives philosophy peace, so that it is no longer tormented by questions which bring itself in question." (PI, 133) His worry is that philosophy generally asks questions that can never be satisfactorily answered. In the context of the *Investigations,* this is because the philosophers engage in something akin to Hume's concerns about abstraction.

Wittgenstein writes,

> When philosophers use a word—"knowledge", "being", "object", "I", "proposition", "name"—and try to grasp the essence of the thing, one must always ask oneself: is the word ever actually used in this way in the language-game which is its original home?— What *we* do is to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use. (PI, 116)

Here, we see the main concern the later Wittgenstein has for the practice of philosophy. It is too easy to use a term or a common sentence structure in a nonsensical way. The philosopher might transpose a term from an everyday context and apply it in another where its meaning is neither set nor understood. An example can be found in the *Blue Book*, "Now the case of his toothache,

of which I say that I am not able to see feel it because it is in his mouth, is not analogous to the case of the gold tooth. It is the apparent analogy, and again the lack of analogy, between these cases which causes our trouble."(BB, 49) Here Wittgenstein is discussing the disanalogy between case sentences like, "I cannot see A's gold tooth because it is his mouth" and "I cannot feel A's toothache because it is in his mouth" "I cannot" is doing particular work in the first sentence – conveying that the location of the gold tooth, has so far made it impossible for the subject to have seen it. Without completely exploring Wittgenstein's discussion of the privacy of pain, the second sentence, looking a lot like the first, can spurn some strange questions "what is it for pain to have a location?" "How can I know the location of another's pain?" and so on.

It is not my interpretation that there is a definitive everyday use of a term that the philosophically inclined will diverge from. Rather, it is such that the philosopher uses a term without considering the meaning she wishes to give it. As A. George describes, "They are doubts about whether an individual has lost his way in the use of some parts of his language. The problem he finds is that the speaker has become estranged from a stretch of his language and does not realize it."[36]

We can see at least a shared theme in Hume's neutrality and even praise of the vulgar understandings, and Wittgenstein's championing of meaning from everyday use. Wittgenstein writes of philosophical questions, "The confusions which occupy us arise when language is, as it were, idling." (PI, 132) "Idling" is particularly apt, as it captures that the sentences forming questions and answers of philosophy do not do the work of visually similar ordinary questions and sentence. This is not identical to Hume's pointing out that sound principles are the product of custom and should be applied with this in mind. However, there is a shared motivation to keep philosophical questioning within an appropriate sphere. Hanfling describes this motivation thus:

> the maxim 'look and see', which plays a central role in Wittgenstein's
> philosophy, has obvious affinities with the programme of classical
> empiricism. It is, moreover, a maxim that Hume took to heart in his
> discussion of causality; in his repeated examinations of what is actually
> there in a case in which one thing is regarded as the cause of the other.[37]

[36] A. George, "Anatomy of a Muddle: Wittgenstein and Philosophy," *Wittgenstein on Philosophy, Objectivity, and Meaning,* eds. James Conant and Sebastian Sunday (Cambridge: CUP, 2019) 11.
[37] O. Hanfling, "Hume and Wittgenstein." *Royal Institute of Philosophy Lectures* 9 (1975): 60.

A core component of Wittgenstein's investigations is that "One cannot guess how a word functions. One has to *look* at its application and learn from that." (PI, 340) As with the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein has sympathy for those who fall into philosophising. His solution, as will be further explored in discussing his therapeutic philosophy, involves the careful consideration of what one is saying. In brief, the difference between Hume and Wittgenstein's descriptions of the deficits of philosophy regards what they are "looking" at. Wittgenstein's investigations are always directed at language and reveal how speaking in certain ways can lead to confusion. This is true of the early and later work. Hume's project is broadly, more psychological – concerning the over-extension of faculties and to critique the philosophical ideas which are used to soothe in the face of his "spectres in the dark". Nevertheless, as I argue in the next section, enough of Hume's project involves setting boundaries for meaningful discussion to offer a direct comparison with Wittgenstein.

1.3.2   *On the Concept of Nonsense*

Hume does not use the term "nonsense" readily. It appears once in the *Treatise* without much elaboration, wherein he writes, "'Tis however observable, that notwithstanding this imperfection we may avoid talking nonsense on these subjects, and may perceive any repugnance among the ideas, as well as if we had a full comprehension of them." (T, 23). This sentence appears within a brief discussion of how we can discuss abstract ideas without necessarily grasping, in the instant, all the simple ones of which they are composed. Wittgenstein, conversely, uses the term regularly in his early and later works and lectures.

HUME

Despite the dearth of uses of "nonsense" itself however, I argue that Hume's critiques of philosophy are indeed critiques which label much of philosophy as nonsense. I am inclined towards this view for several reasons. Early in the *Treatise,* Hume sets up a guiding principle that "*all* our *simple ideas in their first appearance are deriv'd from simple impressions, which are correspondent to them and which they exactly, represent.*" (T, 4) In the *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding,* he articulates how this principle underpins a theory of meaning, and thus a test for when something is meaningless. Impressions for Hume are "all our more lively perceptions, when we hear, or see, or feel, or love, or hate, or desire, or will."[39] (E, 12) Developing on this base principle and understanding of impressions, he writes:

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[39] References to the *Enquiry* are to D. Hume, *An Enquiry Considering Human Understanding*, eds L. A. Selby-Bigge (Project Gutenberg, 2003)

When we entertain, therefore, any suspicion that a philosophical term is employed without any meaning or idea (as is but too frequent), we need but enquire, from what impression is that supposed idea derived? And if it be impossible to assign any, this will serve to confirm our suspicion. By bringing ideas into so clear a light we may reasonably hope to remove all dispute, which may arise, concerning their nature and reality. (E, 20)

Hume explicitly labels philosophical *jargon* as potentially meaningless. (E, 10) This understanding, that some terms can be nonsensical, is necessary for his anti-metaphysical critique. Let us take that broadly metaphysics for Hume is the "attempt to discover principles that purport to give us a deeper or a more certain knowledge of the ultimate nature of reality."[40] As well as attempts it will also include the resulting theories or systems. Take, for example, the classic metaphysical concept of *substance*. As Dicker puts it, substance cannot be derived from impressions from the senses because "substance cannot possibly be a colour or a sound, or a taste, since these are supposed to be qualities *of* substances."[41] Further, it cannot be derived from the introspection of mental states as "they [introspectable conscious states] are supposed to be properties of a (mental) substance."[42] Substance cannot merely be a property because it is supposed to underly properties. Any impression gained from introspection could not be substance. On this understanding of ideas, substance does not count.

Despite an emphasis on sense experiences as paradigm examples of impressions from which ideas are derived, it is not my understanding that Hume considered only personal sensory experience as a valid basis for ideas. Such an epistemological commitment would make reflections on the social, historical or political sphere largely meaningless. Hume admits in the *Treatise* that we "seldom regulate entirely" by our own experiences. (T, 113) Saul Traiger argues that even in the *Treatise* Hume considered the testimony of others to be a kind of experience, if not the most common of all kinds of experience.[44] He draws upon Hume's insistence that our natural urge to believe testimony, is "from the very same origin as our inferences from causes to effects, and from effects to causes; nor is there anything but our experience of the governing principles of human nature, which can give us any assurance of the veracity of men." (T, 113). The Hume of the *Treatise* is happy, for example that we know about the death of Caesar through the "unanimous testimony of historians." (T, 83) Though he does insist on a direct

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[40] Definition taken from Brown and Morris. *Starting With Hume,* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012): 20.
[41] G. Dicker, *Hume's Epistemology and Metaphysics: An Introduction* (Oxford: Taylor and Francis, 1998), 19.
[42] Ibid.
[44] S. Traiger, "Beyond Our Senses: Recasting Book I, Part 3 of Hume's *Treatise*." *Hume Studies* 20, no. 2 (1994): 253.

memory of Caesar's death at the start of a chain of testimony, that it is possible to take impressions from the chain supports the thesis that ideas can be derived from other people. This continues into Hume's later work as Benedict Smith points out, the Hume of the *Enquiry* requires an acceptance of testimony, as well as other manners of idea sharing so that "a person's experience can be expanded through interaction with others."[45] The investigative project in the *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, which includes social and historical reflections, relies on an understanding of experience which encompasses more than personal sensory impressions.

That experience can be understood, using Traiger's words "beyond our senses," does not diminish Hume's use of his principle to show that many philosophical terms are meaningless. Livingston argues that this critique is possible firstly because not all ideas are under scrutiny in Hume's project. In Livingston's reading, the scrutiny is directed only at *philosophical* terms, "many of which are pre-systematically known to be semantically dubious and which are contrasted in terms used in the relatively non-controversial language of common life."[46] Hume is far harsher towards philosophy which is abstracted from common life than he is to vulgar understandings. His *true philosophy* has more in common with the vulgar than with the heroic philosophical mode. Livingston's interpretation that Hume's meaning principle should not be applied to everyday language is supported by the assertion in *Enquiry* that, "philosophical decisions are nothing but the reflections of common life, methodized and corrected." (E, 130) Philosophy emerges out of pre-philosophical understandings and will always be reliant upon them. For example, it is clear that causal reasoning emerges pre-philosophically and it is carried into philosophical practice. As Livingston argues correctly practised philosophy must, "preserve in its meanings as much as possible the primordial language it is a reflection on."[47] It must preserve in its ideas the solid foundation afforded to the ideas of common life. Common life, on Hume's view is overwhelmingly social. He writes, "The mutual dependence of men is so great in all societies that scarce any human action is entirely complete in itself, or is performed without some reference to the actions of others...." (E,89) As will be established in the following section, Hume's therapeutic approach to philosophical neurosis will involve a return to the social sphere.

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[45] B. Smith, "Naturalism, Experience, and Hume's 'Science of Human Nature," *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 24 no. 3, 313.
[46] D, Livingston, "Hume's Historical Theory of Meaning." *Hume: A Re-evaluation,* eds, D. Livingston and J. T. King.(New York: Fordham University Press, 1976) 214 – 215.
[47] Ibid., 219.

These two aspects of Hume's thought 1) that experience is expansive, including interactions with others, and 2) that philosophy is based in the reflections of common life, inform a Humean understanding of philosophical meaning and nonsense. These aspects show that his test for meaning is a means to ground philosophical vocabulary with the same solid, undoubted foundation as can be found in the language of common life. The test allows philosophical terms that do not meet such criteria to be excised. The everyday, pre-philosophical domain should never be forgotten in philosophical endeavours. For Hume, the meaningless utterances of philosophers emerge when their utterances drift away from the context of common life, and from the recognition that we are creatures of habit and custom.

To reiterate, Annette Baier's entry in the *Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* provides some key definitions of nonsense used and understood by philosophers. Of her descriptions of different types of nonsense three stand out as relevant for discussion of Hume and Wittgenstein. These are:

3. Nonsense which has the syntax of an ordinary sentence but contains a category error. "The water is now toiling."
5. What Baier calls "vocabulary nonsense." Nonsense which keeps familiar syntax but contains undefined words. "The runcible is boiling."[48][49]
6. Nonsense of the pure gibberish variety.

The Hume of the *Enquiry* argues that much "metaphysical jargon" lacks idea content. There he can be seen to argue that sentences containing the jargon fit into the vocabulary nonsense type. Utterances including a piece of metaphysical jargon ".... are apt to be confounded with other resembling ideas; and when we have often employed any term, though without a distinct meaning, we are apt to imagine it has a determinate idea, annexed to it." (E,9) In Baier's definitions therefore, he is giving a test for the finding of vocabulary nonsense. Through confident use, we are in Hume's view, inclined to accept vocabulary nonsense without second thought.

Hume's understanding of philosophical nonsense as being the result of empty terms is evidenced in his critiques of the Ancient philosophers in the *Treatise.* To reiterate, the problem with the Ancients, for Hume, is that they conclude "any phaenomenon, which puzzles them,

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[48] Runcible is a deliberately undefined nonsense word from the poetry of Edward Lear.
[49] A. Baier, "Nonsense" in *The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy,* ed. Paul Edwards (New York: Macmillan, 1967). 520 – 521.

arises from a faculty or an occult quality, and there is an end of all dispute and enquiry upon the matter." (T, 224) He directly mentions the *terms* of the Ancients, writing:

> For it being usual, after the frequent use of terms, which are really significant and intelligible, to omit the idea, which we wou'd express by them, and to -preserve only the custom, by which we recall the idea at pleasure; so it naturally happens, that after the frequent use of terms, which are wholly insignificant and unintelligible, we fancy them to be on the same footing with the precedent, and to have a secret meaning, which we might discover by reflection. (T, 224)

Hume here shows how meaningless terms are, despite their lack of idea content, often taken seriously. In repetition, and in holding such terms alongside those which do have meaning, these words take on the appearance of the meaningful. There is no idea of substance, because there is no impression of substance, direct or from a chain of testimony, yet an Ancient philosopher can use, and discuss and develop upon the nonsensical term "substance" as if it were an idea. Repetition and resemblance disguise meaninglessness.

Hume's discussion of the Modern philosophy is not directly linked to the meaninglessness of any of their terms specifically. Indeed, he stresses that the Modern philosophers are using causal reasoning, as it emerges as a habit in all people in a legitimate fashion.[50] Nevertheless, the notion of meaninglessness is relevant to the weaknesses of the Modern philosophy. His critique is something of *reductio ad absurdum.* He is showing that if we accept the Modern philosopher's premise that there are reasons for separating out secondary qualities from primary qualities, we end in a scenario where we cannot establish any qualities at all, and thus no firm understanding of objects in the universe. The argument is broadly that using causal reasoning in this fashion, no matter how legitimate, ends in a scenario no philosopher would be content with.

One way in which the work of the Modern philosopher pushes up against the bounds of meaning, is that they are operating in a fashion in which the social components of meaning, and the basis of philosophical reflection in the language and ideas of the everyday are minimised. Baier argues for this point in her social reading of Hume's project. She writes:

> The scepticism is unstable, as it should be, if any system-popular, philosophical or sceptical-will in fact be "our system," and yet the sceptic ignores the rest of us, and pretends to limit his data to his own private observations, unaided by either other

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[50] See Allison, *Custom and Reason,* 269.

observers or by the other observers or by the guidance in interpreting it that comes from the language others have taught him.[51]

Baier is perhaps attributing some later developments in Hume's thought to his critique of the Modern philosophers. Much of his discussion of the experiential status of testimony appears in the *Enquiry.* Her emphasis that there is, in the *Treatise,* a view a "pooling" of experiences to disregard scepticism is not well supported by the text.[52] Nevertheless, she is right that the sceptical situation which emerges out of the Modern philosopher's bracketing of the primary qualities of impressions is inherently unstable. As I shall discuss in the following section regarding Hume's therapeutic methods, it is not particularly difficult to shake the feeling of all-encompassing scepticism, even if intellectually one is convinced there is a problem. The moment that someone who has come to doubt the existence of any single body in the universe retreats into the language and vulgar understandings of common life, the doubt fades from view. It is not so much that the Modern philosopher fail the test for meaning or use any terms in a way which can conceivably be called nonsensical, but rather that nothing with meaning (either from personal impressions or from the expanded experience achieved with from others' testimony) can emerge from such a project. To borrow a term from Allison, such an enquiry reaches, "an explanatory abyss."[53] If we understand Hume's conception of the ideal philosophical practice as only formalising and correcting understandings that emerge in common life, then the Modern philosophers work in such a way as to undermine all such understanding. They are gripped by philosophical heroism.

Nonsense is a feature of Hume's characterisation of the Ancient and Modern philosophers, because their errors result in situations which have a dearth of meaning. Hume's theory of meaning and test to check that philosophical jargon is meaningful should be understood in the context that it is only philosophical terms that are under scrutiny. The test is to check that the language of philosophy has the same solid foundation for its meaning as the language of common life. Further, it should be noted that impressions can be gained from experience understood expansively. Testimony is a source of ideas at least as often direct sensorial experience. Hume's major critique of the Ancient philosophers is that they have invented a meaningless term in order to quell anxiety. Further, Hume's idea of nonsense includes that it can be disguised when an empty idea is used alongside ideas properly derived from impressions

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[51] A. Baier, *A Progress of the Sentiment: Reflections on Hume's Treatise* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991) 120.
[52] See L.E Loeb's review for an articulation of this issue. Loeb, L E. Review Essays: A Progress of Sentiments, Reflections on Hume's Treatise. Philosophy and Phenomenological Research 54 no. 2 (1994): 467.
[53] Illustrative term borrowed from Allison, *Custom and Reason,* 269.

and oft repeated. Hume's critique of the Modern philosophers is not that they fail his test for meaning by creating a meaningless word – but rather that their very project has drifted from the domain of meaning at all. The Modern philosopher us causal reasoning correctly, but their project of extending causal reasoning into the metaphysical realm, results in a situation which undermines all that their enquiry rests upon. The project of the Modern philosophers results in a situation where they can say nothing with meaning at all. If philosophical enquiry is dependent on the language of common life, and popular understandings, it should not strive for answers which ultimately undermine them.

WITTGENSTEIN

Wittgenstein explicitly, frequently, and consistently across his works, calls the questions and results of philosophical enquiry nonsensical. There is much scholarship on Wittgenstein's understanding of nonsense, particularly in regard the *Tractatus* as he ends the text by calling the steps of his own process nonsensical. The lesson of the text therefore is deeply impacted by how the reader understands the move. In the *Investigations* and other later writing – the status of nonsense informs how we should consider grammatical propositions, and the sets the targets of philosophical therapy. For discussion in this chapter, I will elaborate on how the Wittgenstein uses the term nonsense in his critiques of philosophy and briefly describe his particular characterisation of sense and nonsense in the *Tractatus.* From here, I will discuss how certain elements of Wittgenstein's earlier understanding of nonsense carry into his later philosophy and development of his philosophical therapy. This will offer me an opportunity to compare both the earlier and later Wittgenstein's notions of sense and nonsense to Hume's theory of meaning, and critique of self-undermining philosophical projects.

To establish the early Wittgenstein's understanding of nonsense, it should be contrasted with his understanding of sense. In Wittgenstein's picture theory of language, propositions represent, or picture states of affairs. Propositions, through having the same logical structure as the states of affairs they represent, picture them in the same way that an architectural diagram represents a building, or as Wittgenstein noted in a 1914 diary entry, "a motor-car accident is represented by means of dolls, etc."[54] In the *Tractatus* he writes, "What a picture represents is its sense." (TLP, 2.221) In the case of a model of a road accident, what is represented is a situation, that the presenter is asserting occurred. Wittgenstein further clarifies that:

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[54] L. Wittgenstein, *Notebooks*, eds, G. E, M Anscombe and G. H von Wright. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press) 7.

> A proposition *shows* its sense.

> A proposition *shows* how things stand *if* it is true. And it *says that* they do so stand. (TLP, 4.022)

Therefore, the sense constitutes the truth conditions for a given sentence.[55] If one knows what it is for a sentence to be true or false, one has the sense of the sentence. In necessarily having truth-conditions, a proposition with sense is therefore bipolar, either true or false. This explanation for the features of a sentence having sense explains Wittgenstein's statement that "Tautologies and contradictions lack sense" (TLP, 4.461) but that "are not, however, nonsensical." (TLP, 4.4611) Tautologies and contradictions do not have truth-conditions, and as Thomas Ricketts puts it "[represent] no possibility of the obtaining or not of states of affairs."[56] Wittgenstein uses the adjective *sinnlos,* only when referring to the features of tautologies and contradictions – which is translated as either "lacking sense" or "senseless."

In contrast to the *sinnlos* for contradictions and tautologies, *Unsinn* and the adjective *unsinnig* are used when describing linguistic errors and futile philosophical projects (which Wittgenstein asserts are caused by linguistic errors). Though the Ogden translation often uses "senseless" for *unsinnig,* I will be using "nonsensical" to distinguish it from *sinnlos.*[57]

Wittgenstein uses the following as an example and analysis of a nonsensical utterance,:

> The reason why 'Socrates is identical' means nothing is that there is no property called 'identical'. The proposition is nonsensical because we have failed to make an arbitrary determination, and not because the symbol, in itself, would be illegitimate. (TLP, 5.473)

The Socrates example would in the *Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* definitions be an example of a category error. However, Wittgenstein appears to be saying that it is nonsensical in a subtly different way. That identical cannot be a property because of a failure to make an "arbitrary determination" suggests that when used in this nonsense sentence, the word itself has no meaning at all (unless it is to be artificially made a synonym with another adjective). This aspect of Wittgenstein's thought is of particular interest to those who read the early Wittgenstein as having an *austere* conception of nonsense – the view that there are not different categories of nonsense. In an austere conception – category error nonsense and the inclusion of a nonsense

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[55] See C. Johnston, "The Picture Theory" in *A Companion to Wittgenstein.* eds H.-J. Glock and J. Hyman (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2016)

[56] T. Ricketts, "Pictures, logic, and the limits of sense in Wittgenstein's Tractatus," *Cambridge Companion to Wittgenstein*. Eds. H. Sluga and D. G Stern. (Cambridge: CUP, 2006) 83.

[57] See both translations of 4.461 and 4.4611.

word in an otherwise comprehensible sentence are the same as an utterance composed entirely of gibberish. Cora Diamond, attributes austere nonsense to Wittgenstein and Frege, "On the Frege-Wittgenstein view, if a sentence makes no sense, no part of it can be said to mean what it does in some other sentence which does make sense – any more than a word can be said to mean something in isolation."[60] Whether austerity is the correct conception of nonsense for the early Wittgenstein is one of the most controversial elements in scholarship. Evidence in support of the austere conception includes TLP, 3.3, "Only propositions have sense; only in the nexus of a proposition does a name have a meaning." This remark, in combination with Wittgenstein's understanding of sense as inherently bipolar, can be taken as evidence that no part of a nonsensical sentence has the meaning or does the work it is doing in a sentence with sense. Readers who hold this austere interpretation of nonsense in the *Tractatus* draw upon two principles from Frege's *Grundlagen der Arithmetik*, that they think are also evidenced in Wittgenstein.[61] Diamond outlines the two relevant principles:

1. always to separate sharply the psychological from the logical, the subjective from the objective
2. never to ask for the meaning of a word in isolation, but only in the context of a proposition.[62]

In this reading of Wittgenstein's idea of nonsense, though "Socrates is identical" and "Socrates is a man" share the word "Socrates" they do not share the same logical units. "Socrates" is not doing the same work in the nonsensical sentence as the one with sense and neither is "identical" the same unit as the same word in "the twins are identical." A psychological association emerging that links "Socrates" in the nonsense case to "Socrates" in a sentence with sense should be treated as fully separate from the meaning of any terms.

For Diamond, and her allies such as James Conant, Edmund Dain, and Michael Kremer, the austere conception of nonsense if fundamental to their overall reading of the *Tractatus*. They take Wittgenstein's remarks at the end of the text *resolutely*. They understand the majority of the text to be nonsensical in this austere way.[63] A resolute reading of the text involves holding that no lessons or insights about language or logic are derived from the nonsense pseudo-propositions of the text. To think that the nonsense of the *Tractatus* gives ineffable insight, on

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[60] C. Diamond, *The Realistic Spirit* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1991) 100.
[61] C. Diamond, "What Nonsense Might Be," *Philosophy* 56 no. 215 (1981): 14 – 15.
[62] Frege, *Foundations of Arithmetic, xxii.*
[63] Some remarks in the *Tractatus* have to be taken as instructional about what to do with the rest of it. This is referred to as the *frame* and the rest of the text as the *body* in scholarship around the resolute view.

Diamond's view, "...holds on to exactly the kind of imagination of necessity, necessity imaged as fact, that Wittgenstein aimed to free us from."[64] The resolute position is that moving through the nonsense propositions of the *Tractatus* is a therapeutic exercise which in revealing the nonsensicality of the endeavour, allows one to finally free themselves from it. James Conant characterises the result of the process as "...the dissolution of the appearance that we are so much as able to frame such thoughts."[65] In the resolute view, such teachings as the aforementioned senseless/nonsense distinction are also part of the ladder to be thrown away.

The austere conception of nonsense is fundamental to the resolute view of the *Tractatus,* and resolute readers will characterise other readings as having a substantial conception of nonsense. A substantial view of nonsense consists, according to resolute readers in the idea that there are different kinds of nonsense and as Krystian Bogucki writes, involves the view that, "sentences involving category mistakes can be used in a philosophically useful way to convey some insights."[66] Nevertheless, one need not look far outside of strictly resolute readings to find interpreters who will agree that nonsense is nonsense. Marie McGinn is a notable example, and frequently praises the resolute view as it, "... ..."[67] McGinn characterises her own position as a middle way between those who consider the *Tractatus* to communicate ineffable truths and the resolute view. Peter Sullivan also accepts that "nonsense is just nonsense"[68] but thinks the *Tractatus* aims to and succeeds in showing, "that transcendental idealism is untenable."[69] Both of these interpretations accept the austere definition of nonsense but preserve from more traditional readings of the *Tractatus* versions of a showing and saying distinction. This allows the text to show something, even it does not say anything with its nonsense propositions.

I will fully elaborate on my position on the resolute interpretation in Chapter Four, but for this chapter, I will say, that in line with McGinn and Sullivan, I share the resolute reader's conception of austere nonsense – both as a Wittgenstein's view and as a useful way to think about many language games involving the word. I do not share, however, their conclusions that the *Tractatus* is an entirely therapeutic work – devoid of purpose beyond a breaking of philosophical compulsion.

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[64] Diamond, *Realistic Spirit,* 81.
[65] J. Conant, "Elucidation and Nonsense in Frege and the Early Wittgenstein," *The New Wittgenstein,* eds. A. Crary and R. Read (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000) 197.
[66] K. Bogucki, Krystian (2023). A Defence of the Austere View of Nonsense," Synthese 201 no. 55): 3.
[67] M. McGinn, "Between Metaphysics and Nonsense: Elucidation in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus.*" *Philosophical Investigations* 49 no. 197 (1999): 496.
[68] P. Sullivan, "What is the *Tractatus* about?" *Wittgenstein's lasting Significance* eds M. Kölbel , and B. Weiss (London: Routledge, 2004) 31.
[69] Ibid., 39.

This austere conception of nonsense shares with Hume, the idea that a philosophical idea can be empty; there is no idea content in a nonsense proposition. However, in Hume's test for meaning, a sentence containing the word "substance" would not altogether be nonsensical. The other terms would still have their idea content. Wittgenstein's view that only propositions have sense, and only in the context of propositions do words have meanings sets him apart. His commitment to propositions as the unit of meaning sets him apart from Hume in this regard.

There are, however, elements related to philosophical nonsense in the early Wittgenstein which resonate strongly with Hume. Though the austere conception characterises what nonsense is, Wittgenstein also writes about where nonsense occurs, and what accompanies it. The first of these accompanying features is that the pervasiveness of nonsense in philosophy is a result of a purely psychological process. Hume stressed that repeated, confident use of meaningless metaphysical jargon could produce a situation in which it seems the term has the firm foundation of an idea but is empty. The use of a meaningless term in a way that resembles the use of a meaningful term can result in the confusion continuing. We can see a similar thought in the *Tractatus.* At 3.323 Wittgenstein discusses how an apparently identical term is actually completely different in use and meaning. He uses the colour "green" and the proper name "Green" to demonstrate, and writes, "In this way the most fundamental confusions are easily produced (the whole of philosophy is full of them)." (TLP, 3.324) As stressed in the outline of the austere view of nonsense, resemblance only results in confusion because of a psychological connection, that if properly understood would not allow such a confusion to occur.

Another accompanying feature to nonsense in the *Tractatus* which resonates with Hume's critiques of the Ancient and Modern Philosophers, is the idea that nonsense emerges more often in and becomes more long-lived in philosophical practice than it does in the practice of daily life.

Initially, Wittgenstein seems to have a conflicted view of everyday language. In addition to his commentary on everyday language having the feature of the same word often having radically different meanings in different contexts, he also comments:

> Everyday language is a part of the human organism and is no less complicated than it. It is not humanly possible to gather immediately from it what the logic of language is. Language disguises thought. (TLP, 4.002)

Despite this comment, he affirms later in the text that:

In fact, all the propositions of our everyday language, just as they stand, are in perfect logical order. (TLP, 5.5563).

One way to make sense of the apparent conflict between these remarks is as Paul Livingston points is to understand that the *Tractatus* does not seek to denigrate everyday language in favour of a logically complete one. Rather, the project is an exegesis on "ordinarily implicit patterns of use."[70] Wittgenstein remarks towards the end of the *Tractatus,* "In philosophy the question, 'What do we actually use this word or this proposition for?' repeatedly leads to valuable insights." (TLP, 6.211) The project, at least on most traditional and middle-ground readings, starts in ordinary language and makes its patterns of use explicit. Hume holds that philosophical enquiry is the clarification and correction of the reflection of everyday human life – the *Tractatus* also sets its scope of enquiry to language as one finds it in practice. The early Wittgenstein limits the correct philosophical practice to saying "...nothing but what can be said i.e the proposition of natural science...." and thus "...whenever someone else wanted to say something metaphysical, to demonstrate to him that he had failed to give a meaning to certain signs in his propositions." (TLP, 6.53) Though he does not have Hume's test for meaningless terms, Wittgenstein finds the same emptiness in the terms used in careless philosophy. They share a desire to snap philosophy out an endless task.

Both of these shared similarities continue well beyond the *Tractatus.* Wittgenstein's position that the nonsensicality of philosophy is disguised by the apparent appearance of meaning is especially prevalent in *Philosophical Investigations*. For example, Wittgenstein holds that a goal of the *Investigations* is to teach his reader "...to pass from unobvious nonsense to obvious nonsense." (PI, 464). Further, early in the text he remarks, "Of course, what confuses us is the uniform appearance of words when we hear them in speech, or see them written or in print. For their use is not that obvious. Especially when we are doing philosophy!" (PI, 11) Language on Wittgenstein's view is usually used without reflection, and the actual use of it is not considered. The thrust of Wittgenstein's point on the superficial resemblance of philosophical language to meaningful language is perhaps best captured by the following metaphor used to characterise his philosophical aims, "...what we are destroying is only houses of cards, and we are clearing up the ground of language on which they stood." (PI, 118) Houses of cards is a rather loose translation – Wittgenstein uses *Luftgebäude* which is literally "houses of air". As neatly observed by Ciro Porcaro, this image of philosophers as builders of these air houses fits neatly into Wittgenstein's early metaphor of language as "...an ancient city: a maze of little streets and

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[70] P. Livingston, "'Meaning is Use' in the *Tractatus,"* Philosophical Investigations 27 no. 1(2004): 44.

squares, of old and new houses, of houses with extensions from various periods, and all this surrounded by a multitude of new suburbs with straight and regular streets and uniform houses." (PI, 18)[71] In this linguistic city, air houses have only the appearance of their surrounding buildings – they have none of their history or function.

The later Wittgenstein like Hume characterises philosophy as a frequently and uniquely nonsense-producing activity. To revisit his remark about how philosophers use words, "one must always ask oneself: is the word ever actually used in this way in the language-game which is its original home?—". (PI, 116) This idea is explored in his analysis of the notion of "names"

> —And you really get such a queer connexion when the philosopher tries to bring out the relation between name and thing by staring at an object in front of him and repeating a name or even the word "this" innumerable times. For philosophical problems arise when language goes on holiday... And we can also say the word "this" to the object, as it were address the object as "this"—a queer use of this word, which doubtless only occurs in doing philosophy. (PI, 38)

Like Hume, Wittgenstein sees philosophers as having abstracted their language away from the uncontroversial sphere of everyday life, in a way that is unique to philosophers. Everyday language is in a sense *prior* to philosophical language, and philosophy must be aware of non-philosophical meanings in order to proceed. Hume's test for meaning was to ensure that metaphysical language had the same solid foundation as the language of common life. The later Wittgenstein similarly finds philosophical language lacking. In both of their work, the language of the everyday is in generally good order.

1.3.3.   *On Therapy*

Hume and Wittgenstein would agree that engaging in the creation of philosophical nonsense is not only futile and unsatisfactory but can also damage the well-being of the philosopher. In the following, I elaborate on how Hume and Wittgenstein conceptualise of escaping the pull of a nonsense philosophical problem. I also elaborate on how their different frameworks of nonsense result in differences regarding how one practices a better therapeutic philosophy. As Hanfling puts it, "They [Hume and Wittgenstein] saw and described the bizarre mental states which lay in wait for anyone who engaged in philosophical reflection along certain very

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[71] C. Porcaro, "Von den "Luftgebäuden" der Philosophie in der Stadt der Sprache: An Analysis of the Metaphors in the First Part of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations,*" *Academic Journal of Modern Philology* 19 (2023): 264 – 265.

tempting lines. And they saw that what was needed was not (as G.E. Moore sometimes thought) the refutation of a wrong conclusion, but rather some kind of therapy."[78] Despite "therapy" being a term which Wittgenstein derives from developments in psychological therapies, I argue it is a reasonable term to apply to a number of Hume's strategies.

HUME

In his discussion of the Ancient philosophers, Hume describes the fictions of philosophers as "a consolation amid all their disappointments and afflictions." "Affliction," while not necessarily having connotations of disease, does always denote ongoing pain and suffering. The idea of suffering due to philosophy is also alluded to in the *Abstract.* He writes, "It is certainly to be wished that some way would be found to reconcile philosophy with common sense, which with regard to the question of infinite divisibility have waged most cruel wars against each other."[79](Abstract, 9) The description here is of the fraught relationship between everyday [vulgar] understanding and that of philosophy. It also alludes to the alienation of engaging too eagerly in philosophy without a mediating dose of common sense. Hume also describes the path of scepticism, when unmediated by custom as leading to "philosophical melancholy and delirium." (T, 269)

For Hume, the method to resolve such melancholy and delirium involves recognising the root of philosophical traps. To reach this recognition, he advocates both for attention to the history of philosophy and practising what can be called *philosophical humility* and *piety.* Importantly, Hume does not necessarily think that there is a definitive cure for abyssal sceptical doubt, but that there is value in trying to alleviate it. He writes, "This sceptical doubt, both with respect to reason and the senses, is a malady, which can never be radically cur'd, but must return upon us every moment, however we may chase it away, and sometimes may seem entirely free from it." (T, 218)

Hume writes, on his brief examination of the history of philosophy in the *Treatise,* "I am persuaded, there might be several useful discoveries made from a criticism of the fictions of the antient philosophy... which, however unreasonable and capricious, have a very intimate connexion with the principles of human nature." (T, 219). A historical study enables Hume to discuss the ways in which [unhelpful] lines of philosophical thinking are tempting and feel natural for human beings. Allison argues that Hume's discussion of Ancient and Modern philosophy is itself a therapeutic exercise. He evidences this through a comparison to Hume's

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[78] Hanfling, "Hume and Wittgenstein," 48.
[79] Hume, *Abstract to the Treatise,* 9.

studies of the history of religion which set out to defend against religious neurosis in a similar manner to the philosophical kind. [80] To evidence this, we might look at the closing passage of *The Natural History of Religion* in which Hume writes, echoing much of the language used in his short history of philosophy:

> But such is the frailty of human reason, and such the irresistible contagion of opinion, that even this deliberate doubt could scarcely be upheld if we didn't enlarge our view, oppose one species of superstition to another, and set them quarrelling, while we happily make our escape, into the calm though obscure regions of philosophy.[81]

Hume compares philosophy and religion in a notable passage from the *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*:

> If we take in our hand any volume; of divinity or school metaphysics, for instance; let us ask; does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning quantity or number? No. Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence? No. Commit it then to the flames: for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion. (E, 132)

Philosophy of the fictitious or self-undermining kinds can be compared to religious compulsion in that they are an answer to an all-encompassing feeling of baselessness and doubt. They are the result of the over-extension of philosophy and the pasting over of the abyss with comforting fictions. By recognising the neurotic impulse in the history of philosophy, the reader of Hume, may be able to recognise and address their own compulsions.

In addition to therapeutic historical study, Hume also offers further advice for freeing oneself of both the abyss and the fictions that mask it. As discussed, *philosophical heroism* is the feeling experienced when one alienates oneself from the world of custom. It is initially experienced when something allows doubt to creep in regarding the ordinary. Livingston gives the example of seeing double when pressure is exerted on an eye, resulting in doubting that the objects of perception are the objects of reality as perception is subject to such radical change.[83] Reflecting on an experience of this kind can result in one feeling severed from all of the ordinary given truths they are familiar. Becoming alienated feels grand and important, better than the ordinary.

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[80] Allison, *Custom and Reason in Hume,* 259.
[81] D. Hume, *The Natural History of Religion,* eds. Jonathon Bennet. Some Texts from Early Modern Philosophy. (2018), originally 1757, 30.
[83] Livingston, *Philosophical Melancholy and Delirium,* 23.

To escape false philosophy requires understanding that the pure reflection which enables one to become alienated, can only itself exist within the bounds of custom. That is, it requires philosophical humility. When one practices humility, "The world of custom is no longer viewed with contempt as a "deformity" with which one "cannot bear to mix" for it is now seen as the domain of one's own participation."[85] Livingston argues that philosophical humility can be reached only after recognising that philosophical reasoning divorced from custom is baseless.[86] Philosophical piety is the attitude that custom is, in its own way, sacred. That is, though one can question elements of custom in relation to other elements, custom itself cannot be questioned as it is the fundamental base of all enquiries.[87]

Writing on his own experiences of banishing, for the moment, his philosophical melancholy and delirium Hume reflects, "I dine, I play a game of backgammon, I converse, and am merry with my friends; and when after three or 'four hours' amusement, I wou'd return to these speculations, they appear so cold, and strain'd, and ridiculous, that I canndt find in my heart to enter into them an' farther." (T, 269) It is not uncommon in Hume scholarship to consider his position a relatively quietist one. Laursen writes, "In his account, it is not a sad thing or bad thing that we live largely by habit. And in fact, it is a way of living with a deep scepticism about knowledge. No, we may not often know what is really and positively true."[88] It is not so much that the spectres in the dark are defeated, but that they can be lived with, and made a background thought to the realm of common life.

WITTGENSTEIN

Wittgenstein uses the imagery of illness to describe the preoccupations of philosophers. Famously, he characterised his method, a better method for philosophy as a kind of therapy: "The philosopher's treatment of a question is like the treatment of an illness." (PI, 255) In the *Blue Book,* he describes a desire to cure philosophers:

> There is no common sense answer to a philosophical problem. One can only defend common sense against the attacks of philosophers by solving their puzzles, i.e., by curing them of the temptation to attack common sense; not by restating the views of common sense. (BB, 58 – 59)

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[85] Ibid, 37.
[86] Ibid., 36.
[87] Ibid., 38 – 39.
[88] J. C. Laursen, "Hume on custom, habit, and living with scepticism," *Revista Internacional de Filosofia* 52 (2011): 99.

Like Hume, there is always in Wittgenstein's therapy a call to return to the solid foundations of ordinary understandings. The philosophical mode or attitude is uniquely placed to produce nonsense questions. Also, in the *Blue Book* he gives a preliminary version of the treatment in the *Investigations* regarding the epistemological question, "Can I know if another is in pain?". Wittgenstein writes,

> *Can't* I believe that someone else has pains? Is it not quite easy to believe this? – Is it an answer to say that things are as they appear to common sense? – Again, needless to say, we don't feel these difficulties in ordinary life. (BB, 46)

I will fully elaborate on Wittgenstein's therapeutic process for handling individual instances of philosophical nonsense in chapter five wherein I explore its parallels to psychological therapy. For the purposes of this discussion, it is most relevant that Wittgenstein's method draws attention away from attempting to answer a philosophical question to the language used to ask it. The process will involve testing if philosophical language has meaning at all by comparison and reflection on language which is uncontroversially understood. As discussed, nonsense can be disguised by a superficial resemblance to an utterance with sense. In the *Investigations* specifically, this is resemblance which makes it seem as if the language is performing the function it would in a meaningful utterance. Characteristically philosophical problems are, "The confusions which occupy us arise when language is like an engine idling, not when it is doing work." (PI, 132) A philosophical investigation, properly practised, seeks to uncover idling language, in turn showing that the confusion rested on something meaningless.

Differentiating idling language from the working language involves a use of language as a way of living, interwoven with other "forms of life." The necessity of this understanding is evidenced throughout the *Investigations.* In defining language games, he writes, "Here the term "*language-game*" is meant to bring into prominence the fact that the speaking of language is part of an activity, or of a *form of life.*" (PI, 23) "Forms of life", (*Lebensform)* in the simplest seems to refer to the activities in which people engage. However, there is debate as to whether forms of life are best understood as shared cultural practices, or broadly as the activities partaken by the human animal.[89] Related to this question is whether human beings share the same forms of life, or at least the same potential forms of life, or whether forms of life are culture or even small-community-specific.

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[89] See Anna Boncompagni's overview of the key points of debate regarding "forms of life". "Elucidating Forms of Life: The Evolution of a Philosophical Tool" *Nordic Wittgenstein Review.* Special Issue: Wittgenstein and Forms of Life (2015): 155 – 175.

A point in favour of the idea that there can be many different forms of life and that these constitute cultural practices is that Wittgenstein has us imagine different languages:

> It is easy to imagine a language consisting only of orders and reports in battle.—Or a language consisting only of questions and expressions for answering yes and no. And innumerable others.—— And to imagine a language means to imagine a form of life. (PI, 19)

As Boncompagni presents in her study of the appearance of *Lebensform* in Wittgenstein's work, before he settled on this word for the *Philosophical Investigations,* he used "culture" in the *Brown Book* to do the same kind of work.[90] In a note on colour language he writes, "We could also easily imagine a language (and that means again a culture) in which there existed no common expression for light blue and dark blue." (BB, 135) That "culture" was the original accompaniment to language in Wittgenstein's thought suggests that the kinds of activity he is interested in grounding language in are shared practices. However, In the fragmentary Philosophy of Psychology[91] there is an instance where Wittgenstein separates human forms of life from animal forms of life – which suggests a more biological and individualistic idea of the kinds of things in question:

> One can imagine an animal angry, frightened, unhappy, happy, startled. But hopeful? And why not? A dog believes his master is at the door. But can he also believe his master will come the day after to-morrow?—And what can he not do here?—How do I do it?—How am I supposed to answer this? Can only those hope who can talk? (Only those who have mastered the use of a language. That is to say, the phenomena of hope are modes of this complicated form of life..) (PPF, i.)

The point Wittgenstein is interested in here is that there are certain feelings which are articulated through language, and only have their character because of how they are articulated in the language. Any articulation of hope will have an articulation of time – one does not hope without reference to the future. Thus hope is an emotion that only occurs in beings with language that can articulate a possible future event. Interestingly in this example, hoping is only a mode of the broader form of life which is speaking a language. Wittgenstein seems able to shift the definition of "form of life" from the specific to the extremely general depending on the

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[90] A. Boncompagni, *Wittgenstein on Forms of Life* (Cambridge: CUP, 2022) 12.
[91] This section is called *Philosophy of Psychology – A Fragment* in Hacker and Schulte's revised 4th edition, but has formerly been called *Philosophical Investigations: Part II.*

context. The animal comparison, and again a different level of specificity arises in how he uses the term in *On Certainty*:

> 357. One might say: " 'I know' expresses comfortable certainty, not the certainty that is still struggling."

> 358. Now I would like to regard this certainty, not as something akin to hastiness or superficiality, but as a form of life. (That is very badly expressed and probably badly thought as well.)

> 359. But that means I want to conceive it as something that lies beyond being justified or unjustified; as it were, as something animal

So here "form of life" seems to refer to something that the human animal is capable of doing, without reference to external sources. Nevertheless, also in *On Certainty*, he characterises another linguistic expression of certainty as inherently communal: 'We are quite sure of it' does not mean just that every single person is certain of it, but that we belong to a community which is bound together by science and education." (OC, 298) The resolution of these multitude might be to accept that for Wittgenstein, forms of life are, numerous, varied in scope, and often complicated by the interconnectedness of other forms of life. On several occasions, the idea of forms of life is used in discussions of widespread agreement. For example, it appears in the following remarks in the *Investigations*:

> What is true or false is what human beings say; and it is in their language that human beings agree. This is agreement not in opinions, but rather in form of life." (PI, 241)

> It is not only agreement in definitions, but also (odd as it may sound) agreement in judgements that is required for communication by means of language. This seems to abolish logic, but does not do so. a It is one thing to describe methods of measurement, and another to obtain and state results of measurement. But what we call "measuring" is in part determined by a certain constancy in results of measurement. (PI, 242)

Wittgenstein's point on measurement makes sense of the idea that agreement is fundamental to a large number of activities. Humans do not just agree that there is a particular tool, they agree with what it means to use a particular tool and what it means to use a tool wrongly. Thus, it is not that it is impossible for someone to measure incorrectly, but the concept of measurement requires that there is a checking mechanism, provided by the consistency of correct measurements. It is not just that ordinary language is uncontroversially understood, but

that agreement about it is constitutive of its meaning. In many cases, philosophical therapy, which brings us back from metaphysical uses of language to ordinary uses of language will involve checking for this kind of agreement. This interpretation of language is more radical than Hume's idea that non-philosophical language is in good order and philosophy should preserve the solid foundation of meaning found in it. Here, the good order of everyday language is precisely that it is everyday language and it is understood in the contexts in which it is spoken.

Wittgenstein's later method is such that, without manipulating language in any way, without finding a fault in language games, even if they have structures which might encourage confusion, he is able to put an end to philosophical problems.:

> We don't want to refine or complete the system of rules for the use of words
> in unheard-of ways.
>
> For the clarity we are aiming at is indeed a *complete* clarity. But that simply
> means that the philosophical problems should *completely* disappear. (PI,
> 133)

Wittgenstein's role for his therapeutic practice then is both ambitious and modest. It can put any philosophical problem to rest, but each problem should be worked on as it arises. As I shall argue later in this project, no full map of all interconnected language games is possible, nor desirable, but this is only a strength of this method.

Wittgenstein shares with Hume the position that philosophical problems are alleviated by turning attention back to the world of everyday life and language. They share the idea that the aim is to overcome the compulsion to keep doing philosophy. As Baier writes on Hume's philosophical method: "If this philosophy is successful, its adherents will have that "power to take or leave it" (T. 314) which Wittgenstein, two centuries later, saw to be the highest achievement of any philosophical enterprise, the gaining of the ability to stop doing philosophy."[92] Though one of Hume's therapeutic methods is characterised by a kind of mere flight away from philosophical problems, his other methods are directed at certain modes of philosophical thought characterised by a lack of concern for common life. The practice of a therapeutic history of philosophy offers Hume respite from the "spectres in the dark" of ancient philosophy. He is able to banish some of the enduring monsters. Nevertheless, the practices of temperance and piety which were identified as means to keep sceptical doubts at bay must be

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[92] Baier, *A Progress of the Sentiments,* 2.

continuously practiced. Wittgenstein holds that he can put an end to any one philosophical problem through careful attention to language and forms of life.

Hume's test for meaning required that it be possible to pinpoint the origin of idea content in an impression. I argued that Hume's emphasis on impressions should not be limited to individualistic experience, and including testimony and thus the capacity to learn ideas from others made his test all the more plausible as an exercise. The social emphasis of my reading of Hume makes him much more of an ally to Wittgenstein in aims than might be understood otherwise, but I would be incomplete to overstate their similarities on the status of the social world of common life. Whilst Hume's countering of traditional philosophical discourse with an emphasis on custom as a habit, and a respect for testimony and understandings for everyday life – he has commitments which limit his practice.

One of these commitments is the idea that ideas and the faculty of drawing causal ideas out of custom are located in human minds. He writes, regarding the nature of causation, "This is the case, when we transfer the determination of the thought [of *power and efficacy*] to external objects, and suppose any real intelligible connexion betwixt them; that being a quality, which can only belong to the mind that considers them." (T, 168) Though he finds no metaphysical connection between the objects of cause and effect, he does find causation to be a mental impression. This is why he cannot completely dismiss the concerns of the modern philosophers, though he insists that their project will not be of any use. Hanfling comments:

> Why must Hume say this? Why can he not be content with his account in
> terms of the use of causal words? The answer, and the other side, as I called
> it, of Hume's account, lies in the fact that he is not altogether emancipated
> from the one-to-one correspondence view of the relation between concepts
> and reality.[93]

This does not mean that he finds causal connections out in the world, but that the ideas of causal connections are, like all ideas, derived from impressions; in these cases, mental impressions. Though Hume has a profound interest in bringing philosophy onto the same foundation as common life, he lacks Wittgenstein's innovation in holding that the practices of common life are constitutive of meaning. Hume shares Wittgenstein the motivation of emphasising the grounding importance of the ordinary world, and the ordinary or vulgar things

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[93] Hanfling, "Hume and Wittgenstein." 58.

we say about it. However, he lacks Wittgenstein's understanding of meaning as use, and the capacity to analyse language as a form of life. This background commitment of Hume's prevents him from fully closing down the sceptical abyss. Wittgenstein's developments allow him to mount a more thorough critique of what we can call false philosophy. It offers a more effective treatment for philosophical delirium. Wittgenstein might hold that a philosopher will find peace in the description of common life – but he never has to flee to it. There is nothing to flee from.

I hope to have both illuminated some previously understated links between Hume and Wittgenstein and begun to illuminate the role of nonsense in projects with explicitly critical aims. I also hope to have shown that Hume, like Wittgenstein, often conceives of philosophical problems as illnesses to be treated rather than questions to be pursued. Hume, like Kant stands in the background of the early analytic tradition. Though Wittgenstein perceived him as the kind of classic philosopher who uttered the nonsense that he would spend his writing trying to reveal and dissolve, there is not such a gulf in their motivations.

Hume's descriptions and treatment of the philosophical worries of Ancient and Modern philosophers serve as key examples of his attitude towards certain philosophical practices. I have used his discussion of these distinct philosophical practices to draw out his ideas about philosophical nonsense. They are an example of Hume laying out where philosophers are engaged in meaningless discussion, or at least discussion that nothing meaningful can come out of. Hume's test for meaning, which requires that ideas be founded in impressions is a test directed at philosophical language. As he views the role of philosophy as clarifying and correcting reflections of common life, it must strive to use language with the same certainty as the language for common life. Furthermore, Hume seems quite content to have considered social origins for ideas and an expansion of impressions through the sharing by others. For Hume, as it is for Wittgenstein throughout his work, philosophy is uniquely placed to be the site of nonsense. Additionally, they both accept that the meaninglessness of philosophical utterances can be hidden by their resemblance to meaningful utterances and their frequent, confident repetition by philosophers.

Wittgenstein's conception of nonsense shares with Hume the idea that a nonsense utterance is something which is empty, but in both the early and later work, the site of nonsense is the whole proposition or utterance, and not one empty word as in Hume's critique of "substance."

Though both of their therapeutic methods involve a turning of attention away from the philosophical to the everyday: Hume cannot solve any philosophical problem he comes across. He can, for the case of sceptical doubt, only keep it at bay by keeping the nature of custom in mind (philosophical humility and piety) , and retreating where needed to the social world of common life. Unfortunately for Hume, though his vision for correct philosophy places importance on common life, he has the baggage of holding the idea that concepts map onto reality. The concepts used in the language of common life are already apparent, or easily traced down a chain of testimony, whereas philosophical concepts can be empty. Ideas of causal connection are derived from the impressions in the mind. The faculty for causal connection is located in the mind, so he cannot banish the doubts which led to the project of the Modern philosophers.

Because of his view of language, Wittgenstein is able to unite Hume's worries about the empty words used by philosophers and the explanatory abyss that such words plaster over. Even the explanatory abyss is an illusion emerging out of a misunderstanding about language. In Wittgenstein's therapeutic method, the use of language, and agreement about this use is constitutive of its meaning. The checking mechanism for concepts is the very use of the concepts. Though both he and Hume wish to allow the philosopher to cease his activities when he wants to, only Wittgenstein is able to put any philosophical problem that arises to rest.

Overall, the similarities between Hume and Wittgenstein on what we should do with philosophical nonsense can perhaps best be summarised by the guiding principle in the introduction to the *Enquiry:* "Be a philosopher; but, amidst all your philosophy, be still a man." (E, 9)

Chapter Two

Kant and Wittgenstein on the Inevitability of Nonsense

In the previous chapter, I argued that the notion of "nonsense" is vital to all critical philosophy but that the understanding of nonsense and the kinds of things which lead to philosophical nonsense differ between philosophers. (To reiterate: Critical is used in reference to Kant's *Critiques* and critical describes the attitude and approach in philosophy). In this chapter, I continue this line of inquiry by investigating Kant's conception of philosophical nonsense in comparison with Wittgenstein. Kant's transcendental or Critical method is the most influential of all critical philosophy, and he, like Hume, looms large in the background of the development of the analytic tradition. I aim to draw out the underexplored role of nonsense and related concepts in Kant's critical thought. This chapter will elaborate on Kant's place in the background of the emergence of analytic philosophy. I will also briefly examine Wittgenstein's direct exposure to Kant, including any insights one can glean from the mentions of Kant in his writings and lectures. Following this context setting, I will thoroughly examine "nonsense" as it appears in Kant's philosophy. I argue that his use of *ungereimt* (absurd or unrhymed) in the first critique corresponds to his use of *Unsinn* (nonsense) in the third critique. Before offering comparisons to Wittgenstein, I also argue that Kant treats the transcendental illusion as a specific and important kind of nonsense. The transcendental illusion is Kant's theory of error regarding metaphysical issues and therefore underpins metaphysical confusion.

I will directly compare Kant's characterisation of and identification of the transcendental illusion in philosophical thought to Wittgenstein's method of uncovering nonsense to dissolve problems in philosophy. I conclude that there are profound structural similarities between these critical methods. Wittgenstein's solution to instances of nonsense in his later work is to engage in philosophical therapy. I assess if there are similar philosophical aims and therapeutic methods in Kant. Kantian therapy, I argue can be found in his notion of Discipline, and broadly in the activities he advises to censor the faculty of reason. I argue that while they share a desire to give philosophy peace, and methodological similarities, there are significant consequences to Wittgenstein working explicitly within the philosophy of language. I conclude that Kant's working use of nonsense is more developed and delineated than in Hume's. Nonsense is well-defined in Kant's philosophical method. Wittgenstein's major departures from Kant can be located in his linguistic concerns which I introduce here and explore fully in Chapter Three.

2.1. Kant's Place in a Project About Nonsense

I have chosen Kant for this examination of the role of nonsense in largely critical philosophy for several reasons. The first is that Kant, like Hume, is a major force in the history of philosophy, particularly in the formative history of analytic philosophy. Secondly, Wittgenstein was familiar with Kant and read the first critique as a prisoner of war. Furthermore, Wittgenstein's philosophical education started with Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Idea* with which he was much impressed.[96] This text is largely a development on and response to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* and thus a direct line of influence can be traced.[97] Though he is generally reluctant to directly cite philosophers other than his mentors, Wittgenstein does directly engage with Kant in his writings and lectures, offering some insight into his impression of Kant. Thirdly, as I discussed in the previous chapter, Kant's Transcendental or Critical method is of vital importance to the development of critical philosophy generally, and his project of setting the limit to the field of possible enquiry can be seen to directly precede Wittgenstein's project of setting limits to language. In the following section, I elaborate on Kant's place within the development of the analytic tradition, particularly in his often-overlooked importance in the formation of Russell and Frege's positions. From here I explore Wittgenstein's direct and indirect exposure to Kant, including the scattered references to Kant in his writings and transcribed lectures, and how he would have likely been exposed to these ideas.

2.1.1. Kant and the Analytic Tradition

Alberto Coffa writes "For better or worse, almost every philosophical development of significance since 1800 has been a response to Kant"[98] This is hardly an exaggeration. Coffa and Robert Hanna have argued extensively that the rise of the early analytic tradition can be directly attributed to continuities and contentions with Kant:

> One obvious fact is that the rise of analytic philosophy decisively marked the end of the century-long dominance of Kant's philosophy in Europe. But the deeper fact is that the analytic tradition emerged from Kant's philosophy in the sense that its members were

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[96] Anscombe, *Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus,* 11 - 12
[97] See Schopenhauer's introduction to The First Aspect – A. Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation,* Vol 1, 7th edition, trans. R. B Haldane & J. Kemp. (London: Kegan Paul, 1909) 26 – 29.
[98]A. Coffa, *The Semantic Tradition from Kant to Carnap: To the Vienna Station* (Cambridge: CUP, 1991) 7.

able to define and legitimate their views only by means of an intensive, extended engagement with, and a partial or complete rejection of, the first Critique.[99]

It is of course, impossible to fully capture Kant's achievements and enduring influence in this chapter. However, it is worthwhile expanding further on his presence in the background of the early analytic tradition. For my present purposes, I will expand on Kant's radical reframing of the scope of the role of philosophy and the philosopher. Hacker in his critical comparison of Kant and Wittgenstein writes, "No other philosophers in the history of the subject have been so preoccupied, and so fruitfully preoccupied, with the nature and status of philosophy itself."[100] Given, that Kant describes his project as being to philosophy what Copernicus' revolution was to science, Hacker's framing captures Kant's intentions and view of his own achievements.[101] The Copernican comparison, even more aptly in hindsight, demonstrates both the radicalness of his departure from the then-contemporary metaphysics and Lockean empiricism, but also the profound effect of this departure on ensuing philosophy. For the purposes of my chapter, I will examine some specifics of Kant's revolution and its place in the background of early analytic philosophy.

One of Kant's proudest achievements was his discovery of the synthetic *a priori.* Hanna frames the question that the synthetic a priori answers as, "how can the same judgement be at once necessarily true, referred to the real or natural world in a substantive way, yet cognisable by creatures minded like us apart from all sense experience?" Contained in this question is the possibility of, for example, much of our mathematical and philosophical judgements. Kant's elaboration on, and explanation for the possibility of synthetic a priori judgements is an aspect of his revolutionary thought because it shifts the philosophical enquiry to the limits of human cognition. As J. E Creighton describes, "the centre of the philosophical universe is changed from the object to the knowing subject: we have to recognise that the understanding gives laws to nature."[102] Without drawing out in detail his arguments for the possibility of the synthetic a priori, he firmly grounds the synthetic a priori in pure intuition. Pure intuition requires representations of space and time "which in turn are the a priori forms of human sensibility."[103]

[99] R. Hanna, *Kant, and the Foundations of Analytic Philosophy* (Oxford: OUP, 2001) 5.
[100] P. M. S. Hacker, *Wittgenstein: Comparisons and Context* (Oxford: OUP, 2013) 33.
[101] I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason,* trans. & ed. P. Guyer & A. W. Wood (Cambridge, CUP, 1998) B xxii.
[102] J. E. Creighton, "The Copernican Revolution in Philosophy," *The Philosophical Review* 22 no. 2 (1913): 134.
[103] Hanna, *Kant, and Analytic Philosophy,* 264.

Kant, in grounding pure intuition in representations of space and time, affirms that synthetic a priori knowledge is restricted to the "human standpoint." He writes:

> We can accordingly speak of space, extended beings, and so on, only from the human standpoint. If we depart from the subjective condition under which alone we can acquire outer intuition, namely that through which we may be affected by objects, then the representation of space signifies nothing at all. (A26)

As Allison remarks, this requirement for the subjective conditions which allow pure intuition ensures that "neither spatial nor temporal properties can be meaningfully assigned to things in themselves."[104] In addition to grounding the synthetic a priori in the irreducibly experiential, Kant's formulation of the necessity of such judgements also requires the human standpoint. Synthetic a priori judgements are necessary but logically deniable. Hanna uses a possible world argument to explain, how this can be, writing, "while a synthetic proposition is consistently deniable in relation to all logically and conceptually possible worlds, if we evaluate a synthetic a priori truth under the restriction to all and only the experienceable worlds, then it comes out exceptionless universal and necessary..." Synthetic a priori knowledge is necessary but only necessary where there is also experience of a kind like ours. From this brief exploration of Kant's understanding of the synthetic a priori, it is clear his aims were in setting and limiting the scope of philosophy.

Kant's treatment of synthetic *a priori* truths exemplifies his revolutionary project and his departure from earlier philosophy. The synthetic *a priori* is also relevant for examining how early analytic philosophy is influenced by and responding to Kant. Russell and Frege are direct, cited influences on Wittgenstein and thus they are intermediaries of Kantian influence. Frege holds Kant's distinction between analytic and synthetic *a priori* in high regard; "I see Kant as having performed a great service in drawing the distinction between synthetic and analytic judgements. In calling geometrical truths synthetic and *a priori,* he revealed their true nature."[105] Though Frege uses a significantly broader definition of analytic than Kant, he admires and follows from Kant's work on the synthetic a priori. He even calls his own work an "an improvement on Kant's view"[106] Furthermore, Frege's notion of intuition is notably similar to Kant's. Fregean intuitions require geometry as Kant's require space and time; "The wildest

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[104] H. Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism: An Interpretation and Defence* (CT, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 114.
[105] G. Frege, *The Foundations of Arithmetic: A logico-mathematical enquiry into the concept of a number,* trans. J. L Austin (Oxford: Blackwell, 1953) 89.
[106] Ibid., 109.

vision of deliriums…all these remain, so long as they remain intuitable, still subject to the axioms of geometry."[107] Furthermore, Frege, like Kant contrasts intuitions with "the objective".[108] Hanna argues that Frege's understanding of the synthetic *a priori* and his theory of intuition was largely missed or underappreciated by later analytic philosophers.[109] Nevertheless, these largely Kantian ideas are part of the foundation of the analytic tradition.

Russell, early in his writing, wholly accepted Kant's characterisation of arithmetic as synthetic *a priori*, writing in his *Critical Exposition of the Philosophy of Leibniz,* "And hence the propositions of Arithmetic, as Kant discovered, are one and all synthetic."[110] However, in later editions, Russell's new introduction noted, "I should not now say, as is said in the following, pages, that the propositions of pure mathematics are "synthetic… modern logicians, for the most part, regard pure mathematics as analytic, but consider all knowledge of matters of fact to be synthetic."[111] Later, notably in *Principles of Mathematics* Russell explicitly rejects Kant's theory of space, and therefore his intuitionism.[112] Russell's rejections represent a major shift in the analytic tradition's relationship to Kant, but nevertheless, he had an evolving relationship with and ongoing conversations with Kantian ideas across his work.

Frege's partial affirmation of, and Russell's early acceptance and later pointed rejection of major Kantian principles shows that the early analytic tradition was, to paraphrase Coffa, a response to Kant. Russell. As perhaps the most direct influence upon Wittgenstein's early thought, his early exposure to Kant was mediated through Fregean and Russellian lenses. His most prominent teachers certainly considered Kant of significant importance to their philosophical endeavours.

2.1.2. Wittgenstein's Engagement with Kant.

A few direct references to Kant are scattered across Wittgenstein's work. Compared to Hume who is rather infrequently mentioned in Wittgenstein scholarship, Kant and Wittgenstein are often compared. For example, Hacker dedicates much of his *Comparisons and Context* to their affinities.

In the following, I discuss the most notable of Wittgenstein's mentions of Kant. These remarks are important, not simply for thoroughness in this comparative study, but because they are

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[107] Frege *Foundations of Arithmetic* 20 – 21.
[108] Ibid.
[109] Hanna, *Kant and Analytic Philosophy,* 238.
[110] B. Russell, *Critical Exposition of the Philosophy of Leibniz,* 2nd Ed (London: Routledge, 2005), 35.
[111] Ibid., xvii.
[112] B. Russell, *Principles of Mathematics,* (London: Routledge, 1992*)* 461.

revelatory of how Kant was initially distilled to Wittgenstein through his influences. Further, some of these remarks reveal some sense of reverence towards Kant, and some attempt to place Wittgenstein's own thoughts in contrast.

Wittgenstein's earliest reference to Kant appears at proposition 6.36111 in the *Tractatus*. Interestingly, this remark does not concern Kant's *Critique* but rather one of his early essays, "Concerning the Ultimate Ground of the Differentiation of Directions in Space." His comment on Kant's problem of incongruent counterparts appears as such:

> Kant's problem about the right hand and the left hand, which cannot be made to coincide, exists even in two dimensions. Indeed, it exists in one dimensional space.
>
> $$- \,-\, -\; O \text{———} X \,-\, -\, X \text{———} O \;-\, -\, -$$
> $$\qquad\qquad a \qquad\qquad\qquad b$$
>
> in which two congruent figures, *a* and *b,* cannot be made to coincide unless they are moved out of this space, The right and the left hand are in fact completely congruent. It is quite irrelevant that they cannot be made to coincide.
>
> A right-hand glove could be put on the left hand if it could be turned round in four-dimensional space.
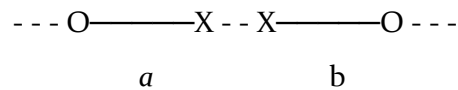
This reference is underexplored in the comparative literature. For background on this, Kant's observation is that two figures, such as the right and left hands on a human body can be "exactly equal and similar" in terms of their scale, and internal relations to their own parts, but cannot be made to fit inside the same space.[113] These objects can be described as *incongruous counterparts*. One cannot place their right hand upon my left hand, line up my thumbs, and have both palms facing upwards. Kant's argument about incongruent counterparts targets the assumption that space is the relation between objects and that objects cannot be in relation to space itself. If we picture an otherwise empty universe where only a human hand exists, if we take the assumption to be true, then "...it would therefore follow that the hand would be completely indeterminate in respect of such a property. In other words, the hand would fit equally well on either side of the human body; but that is impossible."[114] Kant uses this as an argument for the existence of space as something that objects stand in relation to.

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[113] I. Kant. & R. Meerbote, "Concerning the Ultimate Ground of the Differentiation of Directions in Space (1768)" in *Theoretical Philosophy, 1755–1770 (The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant),* ed. D. Walford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 2.382.
[114] Ibid., 2.383.

Wittgenstein's dismissal is markedly similar to Russell's discussion in *Principles of Mathematics*. Russell writes, "In this fact, however, there seems, to my mind, to be nothing mysterious, but merely a result of confining ourselves to three dimensions. In one dimension, the same would hold of distances with opposite sense; in two dimensions, of areas."[115] Andrew Lugg, in his discussion of Russell and Wittgenstein's treatment of this issue, suggests that their shared framing of the problem in regard to dimensionality aims to make the concern "no more problematic than clear-cut mathematical impossibilities—for instance, the concept of an even prime number greater than two or the concept of a regular plane figure with just two interior angles."[116] The attitude towards Kant's puzzle in both cases is deflationary – to demonstrate why it is not a genuine worry.

Kant and the synthetic *a priori* appear in *Philosophical Grammar* and *Philosophical Remarks,* with nearly identical wording:

> For if we had asked someone unacquainted with periodic division whether the first remainder in this division was the same as the dividend, of course he would have answered "yes"; and so, he did realise. But that doesn't mean he must have realised the periodicity; that is, it wouldn't mean he had discovered the calculus with the sign a/b=c. Isn't what I am saying what Kant meant, by saying 5+7 = 12 is not analytic but synthetic *a priori.* [117]

> What I said earlier about the nature of arithmetical equations and about an equation not being replaceable by a tautology explains – I believe what Kant means when he insists that 7 +5 = 12 is not an analytic proposition but merely synthetic *a priori.*[118]

These remarks are of interest because if we take them to be affirmative of the synthetic a priori nature of mathematical propositions they show an apparent inconsistency in Wittgenstein's thought while writing the work that would later be published *Philosophical Remarks.* In a conversation with Schlick in 1929 Wittgenstein, when asked his thoughts on synthetic *a priori* phenomenological *statements*, stated that such propositions were impossible [119] As such, there is interpretative debate as to how to appropriately consider Wittgenstein's relationship to the synthetic *a priori.* Nicholas Gier makes sense of this contradiction by suggesting that

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[115] Russell, *Principles of Mathematics,* 404.
[116] A. Lugg, "Russell and Wittgenstein on Incongruent Counterparts and Incompatible Colour," *Russell: The Journal of Bertrand Russell Studies* 35 no. 1. (2015): 53.
[117] L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Grammar*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980) 404.
[118] L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Remarks*, eds. Rush Rhees (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980) 129.
[119] F. Waismann, *Wittgenstein und der Wiener Kreis*, Waismann (Oxford: Blackwell, 1967) 67 – 68.

Wittgenstein at this time, believed the propositions of mathematics to be synthetic *a priori* but the grammar of colour to be analytic.[120] Gier highlights a later reference to the synthetic *a priori* to show that Wittgenstein eventually regarded all grammatical propositions, including those on colour to be synthetic:

> Thus, we might say that the laws of logic show what we *do* with propositions as opposed to expressing opinions or convictions.

> They are not unique in this. There are propositions regarded as synthetic *a priori*, like "A patch cannot be at the same time both red and green." This is not reckoned a proposition of logic but the impossibility which it expresses is not a matter of experience – it is not a matter of what we have observed. [121]

The impossibility of an object being both red and green was the exact proposition regarded as non-synthetic in his conversation with Schlick ten years prior. Similarly, in the *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics,* Wittgenstein seems to reaffirm the synthetic status of mathematical propositions:

> It might perhaps be said that the synthetic character of the propositions of mathematics appears most obviously in the unpredictable occurrence of prime numbers…

> … an ideal example of what could be called synthetic *a prior,* for one can say at any rate not discoverable by an analysis of the concept of a prime number.[122]

If we accept that Wittgenstein uses a conception of the synthetic *a prior* as he seems to in this, remark, then a further question follows as to whether he retains a Kantian theory of intuition. Gier sees Wittgenstein's understanding of the synthetic *a priori* as being found, not in an intuition of time and space but in the power of human constitution.[123] In this understanding, Wittgenstein can like Kant allow synthetic *a priori* propositions to be both necessary and logically deniable, to quote Gier:

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[120] N. Gier, *Wittgenstein and Phenomenology: A Comparative Study of the Later Wittgenstein, Husserl, and Merleau-Ponty* (Albany: State University of New York Press: 1981), 158.
[121] L. Wittgenstein, *Lectures on the Foundations of Mathematics*, ed. Cora Diamond. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989) 232.
[122] L. Wittgenstein Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, eds. Rush Rhees, G. H. von Wright, G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Blackwell, 1964) 125 – 6.
[123] Gier, *Wittgenstein and Phenomenology,* 174.

> ...Wittgenstein bases necessity on *Darstellenformen* which we could never think of doubting but could be doubted or even non-existent in another culture. For him that which is necessary is simply that which is always *used* and *used* without hesitation.[124]

For Kant, to conceive of a counterfactual situation where synthetic *a priori* are deniable requires a possible world without human or human-like experience. For Wittgenstein, these can be conceived of by envisioning a different linguistic culture, but they remain profoundly necessary within their culture of use.

This interpretation by Gier of Wittgenstein's use of the term synthetic *a priori* and later remarks on Kant is thoroughly rejected by Ray Monk. Monk argues that Gier misses Wittgenstein's use of qualifiers in the aforementioned remarks: "regarded as", "perhaps be said that", "could be called." [125] Emphasising these qualifiers, Monk argues that they show Wittgenstein expressing understanding as to why someone might call these propositions synthetic *a priori* but does not affirm that he understands the term to genuinely apply. In contrast, Monk argues that Wittgenstein would never see the kind of proposition that Kant, or phenomenologists like Husserl, would describe as synthetic *a priori* as a description of a phenomenon. Indeed, he rejects that Wittgenstein would agree with calling something like "something cannot be red and green" propositional at all. He writes, "These conventions govern what it does and does not make sense to say; therefore, there is no non-question-begging way of expressing them in meaningful proposition."[126] Monk holds onto the early Wittgenstein's showing and saying distinction, viewing the rules which would have otherwise been considered synthetic *a priori* as something which can only meaningfully be seen. He writes, "whether one conceives these propositions to be tautologies, synthetic *a priori* or "analytic *a posteriori"* [Schlick's interpretation] – rather they were what one sees when one achieves insight into how they use the words of our language."[127]

Monk and Gier disagree on whether Wittgenstein merely mentions or actually endorses the Kantian idea of the synthetic *a priori.* I agree with Monk's key observations that Wittgenstein never admits something to be synthetic *a priori* uncomplicatedly. Monk also accounts for the apparent discrepancy between Wittgenstein's conversations and private writings – he is acknowledging the understandable desire to label grammatical rules as synthetic *a priori* but

[124] Ibid., 167.
[125] R. Monk, "The Temptations of Phenomenology: Wittgenstein, the Synthetic a Priori and the 'Analytic a Posteriori," *International Journal of Philosophical Studie*s 22 no. 3 (2014): 325.
[126] Ibid., 333.
[127] Ibid., 334.

does not accept that this categorisation is correct. I also agree that Wittgenstein's later investigations were grammatical studies of the use of language rather than of any phenomena language is associated with. Nevertheless, I am less sympathetic to the idea that propositions which were formerly regarded as synthetic *a priori* are without any meaning for Wittgenstein. Language games need not be descriptive, they can be instructive or be used as reminders or pointers. He is correct that they do not function the same way as "the curtains are red" or similar descriptions, but this does not wipe them of meaning. There is an instructive, educational role for such utterances.

Wittgenstein's remarks on the synthetic *a priori* suggest disagreement with Kant's categorisation. However, he clearly understands the desire and natural pull towards conceiving a category of this kind. Furthermore, Monk's categorisation of Gier is somewhat uncharitable. Though Gier wants to retain the use of the term synthetic *a priori* in Wittgenstein's philosophical method, he firmly places the source of synthetic *a priori* knowledge in the human constitution and specifically in contextual linguistic communities. To *see* that something cannot be both red and green is to study how ones' linguistic community uses "this is red" or "this green." On this, both Monk and Gier would agree.

Finally, for this study of Wittgenstein's direct references to Kant, there is a brief remark in the *Lectures on Freedom of the Will*:

> There is the point of view of the biologist and the psychologist who more and more insist who that they have made more and more progress; that it is only a question of time; only a question of degree.
> Suppose I said: "The difference (in greatness) between myself and Kant is only one of degree"? Would I say the difference between black and white is only one of degree?[128]

To contextualise this remark, which has generally evaded analysis concerning Wittgenstein's relationship to Kant, Wittgenstein is here arguing against fatalism by critiquing the idea that "It is as inevitable for a thief to steal as a stone to fall".[129] The figurative biologist and psychologist represent the scientist view that in the future, as knowledge of all natural laws is sharpened, we will be able to fully understand and predict human behaviour and therefore human choices. In such a hypothesised future, the inevitability of the thief's behaviour will be understood in terms of cause and effect as readily as physical laws govern the stone. This remark allows

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[128] Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Occasions* 432.
[129] Ibid.

Wittgenstein to do two things. Firstly, he critiques the inevitability principle at play, "In 1000, or 10,000 years? Is there any reason to say they will find it out?"[130] Secondly, he undermines the framing of scientific discoveries as a part of a flowing continuation. Though massive paradigm shifts in scientific thought are relatively uncommon, there is no way to know, inside of a current paradigm when it will end. There is likely a performance of modesty or inadequacy on Wittgenstein's part because he sees himself as different from Kant, a great and historically important philosopher as black is from white.

Wittgenstein's references to Kant are few in number, and often off-hand rather than complex. Kant's incongruous counterpart problem is used in the *Tractatus* as an example of a typically confused philosophy. This said, he clearly has some reverence for Kant's philosophical achievement, as evidenced in his mention in the *Lectures on the Freedom of the Will.* Wittgenstein does not see himself as continuous with Kant, and would, regardless of any affinities with his philosophical project be uninclined to admit affinity with Frege's desire to write "an improvement on Kant's view." Nevertheless, in analysing his more numerous mentions of the synthetic *a priori* there is evidence of shared motivation between Kant and Wittgenstein. Even if we accept Monk's deflationary reading of the remarks on the matter, Wittgenstein's work is motivated by similar observations and frustrations to those that brought about Kant's Critical method.

2.2. Kant on Nonsense

In characterising the main connections between Kant and Wittgenstein, Hacker writes, "Both were concerned with characterising the bounds of sense."[131] I argue that further connections can be found in how they conceptualise the other side of the bounds - in how they define and use the concept of nonsense. Unlike Wittgenstein, Kant's use of the word "nonsense" is infrequent, but a notion of it is evident in and vital to his *Critiques.* In the following, I draw out how to find "nonsense" in Kant, and how the uncovering of the Transcendental Illusion has much in common with Wittgenstein's vision of the failings of traditional philosophy.

Examining the concept of nonsense in Kant involves consideration of translation and of his use of related words. "Nonsense" (*Unsinn*) appears in Kant's *Critique of Judgement*. However, this term is absent from the *Critique of Pure Reason* which had Wittgenstein read as a prisoner of

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[130] Ibid.
[131] Hacker, *Comparisons and Context*, 33.

war. I draw out how "absurd" (*Ungereimt*) is used in the first critique in much the same way as "nonsense" in the third critique.

2.2.1. *Unsinn* in Kant's Aesthetics

Unsinn appears repeatedly in Kant's discussion of works of artistic genius. He writes:

> Since nonsense too can be original the products of genius must also be models, i.e., they must be exemplary; hence, though they do not themselves arise through imitation, still they must serve others for this, Le., as a standard or rule by which to judge.[132]

To grasp what nonsense means in this context requires an understanding of Kant's notion of "genius." He states that works of fine art (*Kunst schöne*) are necessarily works of genius.[133] Genius for Kant is a specific talent, he writes:

> Genius is the talent (natural endowment) that gives the rule to art. Since talent is an innate productive ability of the artist and as such belongs itself to nature, we could also put it this way: Genius is the innate mental predisposition (Ingenium) through which nature gives the rule to art.[134]

In other words, works of genius are exemplary because they produce the rules or standards by which one can judge art. They inspire imitation by lesser artists and inspire further originality in other geniuses.[135] Works of genius are not rule-derived like what Kant calls mechanical art and are defined by their originality and opposition to what Kant calls "*a spirit of imitation.*"[136] However, this originality has certain attributes which set its products apart from nonsense. As Michael Haworth puts it, "Original nonsense is the result of an untrammelled, uncultivated activity that is not in conformity with any rule or standard of 'academic correctness' whatsoever."[137] Kant suggests that genius must interact with mechanical talent. Genius provides the raw material of originality, and the learned skills give the art its form.[138] Thus, genius is in connection with rules and "academic correctness" even if there is a breaking of them. Fine Art must be both consistently transforming standards, but must consider academic correctness is

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[132] I. Kant, *Critique of Judgement* trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987) 308.
[133] Ibid.,
[134] Ibid., 307.
[135] Ibid., 309, 318.
[136] Ibid.,
[137] M. Haworth, "Genius is What Happens: Kant and Derrida on Genius, Rule-Following and the Event," *British Journal of Aesthetics* 54 no. 3 (2014): 330.
[138] *Critique of Judgement* 310.

well captured by Haworth's observation, "…if *The Rite of Spring* was not at all recognizable as being in conformity with Western musical traditions it would not have caused such a scandal."[139] Works which are nonsense then can perhaps be understood as a naïve attempt at genius, Kant writing "shallow minds believe that the best way to show that they are geniuses in first bloom is by renouncing all rules of academic constraint."[140]

To expand further on the idea of original nonsense, Matthew Coate argues that it is essential to a Kantian account of ugliness. Coate writes, "An object judged ugly seems as though it ought to 'mean something' to us, to evoke something profound, 'beyond words'—but does not."[141] Judging something beautiful for Kant, involves the experience of aesthetic pleasure. This pleasure is derived from the perception of purposiveness in the object.[142] The presentation of purposiveness does not necessarily involve the object having a definite purpose but does affect the perceiver in much the same way as perceiving something which fulfils its purpose. This effect is characterised by the free play of the imagination and the understanding.[143] Beautiful objects send the imagination and understanding to work. Coate here characterises the ugly as something which *almost* sets the imagination and understanding to work but falls short. It seems that these naïve attempts at genius are exactly the sort of thing which feel like they should offer purposeless purposiveness but fall short. Coate suggests "An object judged ugly, instead—again, because of the way its elements are arranged— is one that evokes, well … nothing. The arrangement of its constitutive elements provokes the imagination also, as though the object ought to give us a glimpse of something beyond words, but on the contrary, it conveys only a sense of pure senselessness or absurdity."[144]

Unsinn appears again, in Kant's description of judging fine art:

> an indispensable condition (conditio sine qua non). In order [for a work) to be beautiful, it is not strictly necessary that it be rich and original in ideas, but it is necessary that the imagination in its freedom be commensurate with the lawfulness of the understanding. For if the imagination is left in lawless freedom, all its riches (in ideas) produce nothing but nonsense, and it is judgement that adapts the imagination to the understanding.

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[139] Haworth "Genius is What Happens," 330.
[140] Ibid.
[141] M. Coate, "Nothing but Nonsense: A Kantian Account of Ugliness," *British Journal of Aesthetics* 58 no. 1 (2018): 61.
[142] Kant, *Critique of Judgement* 190, 236.
[143] Ibid, 241. Though without the imposition of concepts by the understanding.
[144] Coate, "Nothing but Nonsense," 70.

This passage further demonstrates where Coate sees the divergence between the beautiful and the nonsensical. The ugly object might trigger the imagination, but it will not adequately be tempered by the understanding and thus fail to produce aesthetic pleasure. This notion is echoed in Theodore Gracyk's commentary on ugliness. In his reading, the beautiful is characterised by the imagination and understanding allowing a grasping of the unity of an object. Thus, "An ugly object would have to be one with minimal unity or one accompanied by non-unified elements which are just too obtrusive to allow continuous apprehension of the formal connections which are present."[145] Gracyk's unification characterisation of beauty shows what it means for the understanding to be hindered by an ugly feature.

We can consider nonsense in Kant's aesthetics to be characterised by a lack of order, an impediment upon the understanding, and thus a lack of free harmonising between the imagination and understanding. Broadly then, it can be stated that nonsense has to do with a dearth of meaning. Of course, this is complicated by the difference between how the understanding works in aesthetic and non-aesthetic judgements for Kant. Whilst there is nuance in the scholarship, it is generally accepted that judgements of taste are purely *reflective* whereas empirical judgements are *determining.* Malcolm Budd describes the distinction as "in a determinative judgement you possess a certain concept and bring some empirical item under it; in reflective judgement, you are aware of something and attempt to acquire a concept under which it can be brought."[146] In aesthetic judgements, there is no presupposition of or arrival at what Kant calls "a determinate concept".[147] Rather, as Allison puts it, "[aesthetic] reflection consists in a comparison between the relation of the cognitive faculties in their free engagement with a given object or its representation and the ideal, frictionless harmony, which maximally facilitates cognition."[148] The free play of the imagination and understanding in response to a beautiful object results in the experience or feeling of subjective purposiveness rather than a determinate concept.[149] But in apprehending the ugly or utterly disordered presentation, the imagination is alone and uncontained. Nonsense is the result of something which cannot be effectively acted on by the understanding and thus it is meaningless.

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[145] T. A. Gracyk, "Sublimity, Ugliness, and Formlessness in Kant's Aesthetic Theory," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 45 no. 1 (1986): 55.
[146] M. Budd, *Aesthetic Essays* (Oxford: OUP, 2008), 106.
[147] Critique of Judgement, 217
[148] Henry Allison, *Kant's Theory of Taste : A Reading of the Critique of Aesthetic Judgment*, (Cambridge University Press, 2001) 75.
[149] See Budd, *Aesthetic Essays,* 111 and H. Allison, *Theory of Taste,* 70 -71.

2.2.2. Ungereimt *as Nonsense*

This feeling of meaninglessness offers a means of seeking "nonsense" in Kant's First Critique. It is known that Wittgenstein was familiar with the *Critique of Pure Reason* and "nonsense" (*Unsinn)* is not present in this work.[150] In this text, however, "absurd" (*ungereimt*) appears with relative frequency The adjective *ungereimt* can be literally translated as "unrhymed" or "inconsistent" and describes blank verse in poetry or lyrics. It is used almost universally in the figurative in German to convey something being muddled, incoherent, or absurd. Nonsense is also an acceptable translation for this figurative use. [151] I argue that there are enough overlaps in use between *ungereimt* and *Unsinn* that they can both be used to understand Kant's conception of nonsense. Doing this allows us to see a generalised version of the concept rather than just the use specific to the aesthetics.

1) The first point of connection is that both are used in reference to attempts at something better. Kant is inclined to call certain questions absurd:

> It is already a great and necessary proof of cleverness or insight to know what one should reasonably ask. For if the question is absurd in itself and demands unnecessary answers, then, besides the embarrassment of the one who proposes it, it also has the disadvantage of misleading the incautious listener into absurd answers, and presenting the ridiculous sight (as the ancients said) of one person milking a billy-goat while the other holds a sieve underneath. (A58)

In a rare joke for Kant, he conveys the futility of absurd questions and answers. Questioner and responder feel like they are chasing something meaningful, but they never capture it. Kant's conception of absurdity here, like his conception of nonsense in the third critique, can be produced when there is a naïve attempt at something brilliant: genius or cleverness.

2) Secondly, both "nonsense" and "absurd" are used in reference to inconsistency or non-unity. Kant writes, regarding how one should understand inner and outer appearances:

> As long as we keep inner and outer appearances together with one another, as mere representations in experience, we find nothing absurd and nothing that makes the community of both modes of sense appear strange. (A386)

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[150] As noted in Ray Monk's biography
[151] See the entry in the Langenscheidt Online Dictionary. https://en.langenscheidt.com/german-english/ungereimt

He is concerned about the impulse to "hypostasize outer appearances" such that the subject conceives of the appearances as independent from their representational faculties and as things in themselves. In doing this the subject drives a wedge between the two classes of appearances and consequentially can fall into absurd lines of questioning. Previously, I noted Gracyk's formulation of an ugly or nonsensical object in Kantian terms as "one with minimal unity or one accompanied by non-unified elements."[152] Though in the case of appearances, the issue is a lack of recognising the unity of the inner and outer kinds, the consequence of failing to recognise them as unified results in similar consequences to engaging with the ugly object. In the former, this failure to recognise their unity results in the absurd questions associated with thinking one has grasped a thing in itself. In the latter, in the presence of the ugly object, the subject's imagination will act without the commensurate action of the understanding. Nonsense is the characterisation of the ugly object (one which fails to be beautiful), but also of its resulting unimpeded imagination. Absurdity seems present both in the error of separating inner and outer appearances and in the consequential philosophising that follows.

3) Finally, both nonsense and absurdity pertain to the overstretching or over-expectation of one faculty. In the Doctrine of Method, Kant makes several remarks about the limits of pure reason which mirror, at least structurally some of the commentary on the unbridled action of imagination in the critique of judgement. He writes of watching debates in pure reason:

> Thus, instead of charging in with a sword, you should instead watch this conflict peaceably from the safe seat of critique, a conflict which must be exhausting for the combatants but entertaining for you, with an outcome that will certainly be bloodless and advantageous for your insight. For it is quite absurd to expect enlightenment from reason and yet to prescribe to it in advance on which side it must come out.

Here Kant is discussing the act of expecting something from pure reason that it cannot do. For Kant, it is absurd (*ungereimt)* to use pure reason to form dogmatic propositions. He writes elsewhere that it cannot affirm or deny propositions about the existence of God or future life; "But it is also apodictically certain that no human being will ever step forward who could assert the opposite with the least plausibility, let alone assert it dogmatically." (A742) To

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[152] Gracyk, "Sublimity, Ugliness, and Formlessness," 50.

expect an outcome from the debate in pure reason is to expect dogmatic certainty from it. Kant continues:

> Besides, reason is already so well restrained and held within limits by reason itself that you do not need to call out the guard to put up civil resistance against that party whose worrisome superiority seems dangerous to you. In this dialectic there is no victory about which you would have cause to worry. (A747)

Of interest here is the notion that "reason is already so well restrained and held within limits by reason itself." Kant means firstly that reason itself will reveal the absurdity of extending it beyond its limits because, in these debates of pure reason, there is nothing that will result in a victory. The opponents might gain an upper hand with sophistry or intimidation, but reason itself will not decide a victor. Secondly, reason by its very nature, has limits, Kant writes, "Outside this sphere (field of experience) nothing is an object" for it;" (A 762)

Structurally, this description of the victor-less debate, and of the correct application of reason mirrors Kant's remarks on the imagination and nonsense. A debate in pure reason does not produce anything concrete, just as the imagination, sent into activity by a nonsensical (ugly) object does not produce the feeling of subjective purposiveness or a determinate concept without the understanding. To expect enlightenment from pure reason is an absurdity, and we cannot expect the imagination in limitless freedom to produce anything but nonsense.

Thus, sharing these features and associations it seems that *ungereimt* and *Unsinn* are functionally the same kind of description for Kant. They both emerge when a faculty attempts to do something which it cannot, and where this overstretching results only in disjointedness and obfuscation.

2.2.3. The Transcendental Illusion and Nonsense

I have so far shown that Kant had a notion of nonsense throughout his philosophy – appearing in his aesthetic work in the *Critique of Judgement* and in his *Critique of Pure Reason*. I have also mapped out some of the contours of this concept and highlighted some key uses of it. I will now make a case for the importance of this concept throughout Kant's work. Primarily, I argue that Kant's conceptualisation of the Transcendental Illusion shares key features with his notion of nonsense. I will briefly describe e the transcendental illusion and its role in Kant's critical philosophy, and then I show that it has all of the features of his understanding of nonsense and absurdity.

Michelle Grier, in *Kant's Doctrine of the Transcendental Illusion,* describes the transcendental illusion as Kant's "theory of error".[153] Kant characterises the illusion as one which persists even when it is under scrutiny and writes:

> "The cause of this [persistence] is that in our reason (considered subjectively as a human faculty of cognition) there lie fundamental rules and maxims for its use, which look entirely like objective principles, and through them it comes about that the subjective necessity of a certain connection of our concepts on behalf of the understanding is taken for an objective necessity, the determination of things in themselves" (A297)

Grier succinctly describes Kant's general description of the transcendental illusion as "the propensity to take the subjective or logical requirement that there be a complete unity of thought to be a requirement to which "objects" considered independently of the conditions of experience (things in themselves) must conform."[154] The transcendental illusion is a confusion of reason's subjective principles with objective facts. It is this propensity which Kant sees as leading to metaphysical error.

For Kant, the transcendental illusion is that which grounds metaphysical fallacies.[155] His Transcendental Dialectic aims to "...content itself with uncovering the illusion in transcendental judgements, while at the same time protecting us from being deceived by it..." (A297). The transcendental illusion therefore is at once the target of Kant's critique but also that which is revealed by critique. Livingston writes that critiquing and revealing the "transcendental illusion opens an irreducible gulf between the sphere of possible knowledge and the satisfaction of reason's own demands, disrupting every attempt or pretence to present the work of reason as complete or completable."[156] The transcendental illusion is therefore of central importance to the *Critique of Pure Reason.*

Even this brief discussion reveals how the transcendental illusion matches Kant's understanding of the nonsensical. It naturally involves the over-extension of a faculty, often in an attempt to do something grand.

> We have represented the glittering pretensions of reason to extend its territory beyond all the bounds of experience only in dry formulas, which contain merely the ground of

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[153] M. Grier, *Kant's Doctrine of Transcendental Illusion* (Cambridge: CUP, 2001), 8.
[154] Ibid., 9.
[155] Ibid., 12.
[156] P. Livingston, *Philosophy and the Vision of Language* (London: Routledge, 2008), 135.

reason's legal claims; and, as is fitting for a transcendental philosophy, we have divested these claims of everything empirical, even though the full splendour of reason's assertions can shine forth only in such a combination. (A462-3)

Less obviously, the transcendental illusion by its very nature involves non-unity or disjointedness. It seems at first that the great transcendental error is one of over-unifying, of extending the need for a unity of thought to things in themselves. However, the consequence is the perception of artificial separation, as inner and outer appearances are treated differently, with the apparent status of outer appearances forming the basis for metaphysical error.

The feature of the Transcendental Illusion which most firmly identifies it as a kind of Kantian nonsense is its meaninglessness under scrutiny. Kant writes of a metaphysical squabble:

Thus no means is left for ending the dispute in a well-grounded way and to the satisfaction of both sides, unless through the fact that they can do such a fine job of refuting each other they are finally won over to the view that they are disputing about nothing, and that a certain transcendental illusion has portrayed a reality to them where none is present.[157] (A501)

In this remark, the disputers on each side are arguing with the assumption that their positions are meaningfully and consequentially different. It is only with reasoned arguments against one another that they can both come to doubt their assumptions at all. In Gracyk's Kantian account of ugliness, the ugly object is such that the imagination is activated but the understanding is not, preventing their free harmonisation. Though the aesthetic experience is meaningless, the imaginative activation makes it such that it *almost* means something. The grip of the transcendental illusion in this example is analogous to the unrestrained activity of the imagination. The positions of the disputers do not mean anything, but they are convincing and intriguing enough to lead them to dispute.

The Transcendental Illusion, having the features of faculty over-extension, disjointed apprehension of experience, and resulting meaningless debates can be understood as a root of nonsense. When Kant points out the presence of the Transcendental Illusion in a position or idea, he is pointing out the absurdity of that position.

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[157] "A certain transcendental illusion" we can take to mean this particular manifestation of the confusion of subjective principles for objective reality. Kant discusses both *the* transcendental illusion and various illusions.

2.3. Kant's Nonsense against Wittgenstein's Nonsense

I have thus far elaborated upon the features of Kant's notion of nonsense and examined an application of this notion in his idea of transcendental illusions. With this, I can now offer a direct comparison with the features and applications of Wittgenstein's notion of nonsense. In this comparative investigation I highlight a shared interest in over-extension, shared expressions of understanding regarding the inevitable temptation towards nonsense, and a shared vision for correcting confusion. I lay out how Kant sees Transcendental Illusion as a cause of philosophical problems and compare this to how Wittgenstein views confusions about language, especially in his later work. I also take this opportunity to further elaborate upon how the uncovering of transcendental illusion is a core component of Kant's method.

2.3.1. Temptation, Inevitability, and Persistence

The first point of comparison between Kant and Wittgenstein on these matters can be found in what Grier has labelled the *inevitability thesis*. Gier defines Kant's inevitability thesis as the idea that "the fallacious inferences involved in each of the dialectical syllogisms are themselves (and because of a transcendental illusion) somehow "natural," "inevitable," and "grounded in the nature of human reason."[158] Kant is careful to draw a distinction between logical and transcendental illusion. He writes of logical illusion, "[it] arises solely from a failure of attentiveness to the logical rule. Hence as soon as this attentiveness is focused on the case before us, logical illusion entirely disappears." (A296 -7) We can think of logical illusions as being mere mistakes, like that of a student of mathematics forgetting how to apply a formula correctly and getting incorrect answers. This kind of error is contrasted with transcendental illusion:

> Transcendental illusion, on the other hand, does not cease even though it is uncovered, and its nullity is clearly seen into by transcendental criticism (e.g. the illusion in the proposition: "The world must have a beginning in time") (A297)

Kant further naturalises this illusion by describing it as akin to the illusory perception of scale, writing, that it is like how an astronomer cannot "prevent the rising moon from appearing larger to him, even when he is not deceived by this illusion." (A297) The illusion, therefore, is not only natural, but, like the perception of distance as changes in scale, a necessary feature of the faculty in which it sits. Thus, just as we learn how to notice and compensate for the inherent

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[158] Grier, *Kant's Transcendental Illusion,* 12.

illusions of our visual field, Kant is offering a means to learn to notice the transcendental illusion:

> The transcendental dialectic will therefore content itself with uncovering the illusion in transcendental judgements, while at the same time protecting us from being deceived by it; but it can never bring it about that transcendental illusion (like logical illusion) should even disappear and cease to be an illusion. (A297 – 298)

This note that the illusion is inevitable is therefore also a note of its persistence. The illusion's naturalised place in reason means that even if it is noted, and its consequences are dispelled it never ceases to be present. The transcendental illusion is therefore presenting temptation that is both inevitable and persistent. For Kant's project to be productive, but for the inevitability thesis as I have outlined to hold, the transcendental illusion must be understood as being fundamentally separate from its consequences. Metaphysical dogma, which characterises the positions Kant criticises results from a failure to recognise the transcendental illusion as an illusion. One such area of metaphysical dogma, which Kant addresses in detail is rational psychology. In addressing his analysis of an argument attributed to the rational psychologists we can observe how he conceives of the illusion leading to metaphysical fallacy but being separate from it.

The target of, or inspiration for Kant's Paralogisms of Rational Psychology is the metaphysical tradition started by Descartes and developed by Leibniz. Corey Dyck argues that Kant was also critiquing more immediate predecessors in the German philosophical tradition: such as Christian Wolff and Alexander Baumgarten.[159] For context, rational psychology for Kant, as Allison succinctly describes is "...metaphysical theory of the soul, mind, or self, which is based solely on an analysis of its capacity to think or, equivalently, its presumed nature as a "thinking being."[160]

Kant attributes, in the B-edition, the following argument to the rational psychologists:

> [Premise 1:] What cannot be thought otherwise than as subject does not exist otherwise than as subject and is therefore substance.

> [Premise 2:] Now a thinking being, considered merely as such, cannot be thought otherwise than as subject.

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[159] Dyck, *Kant and Rational Psychology* (Oxford: OUP, 2014), 1 – 2.
[160] Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism,* 283.

[Conclusion:] Therefore it also exists only as such a thing, i.e., as substance. (B410 -411)

Kant holds that this argument commits the fallacy of an ambiguous middle-term (*Sophisma figurea)* (B411). He attributes the ambiguity to the notion of thinking, writing:

> "Thinking" is taken in an entirely different signification in the two premises: in the major premise, as it applies to an object in general… but in the minor premise only as it subsists in relation to self-consciousness, where, therefore, no object is thought, but only the relation to oneself as subject (as the form of thinking) is represented." (B411 footnote).

This analysis of the argument and this footnote where he points out the ambiguous middle-term has encouraged some debate in Kant scholarship. For example, scholars disagree on whether the fallacy is in the logic of the argument, or if the fallacy is in taking the argument as proof for a metaphysical claim despite logical soundness. [161] Toni Kannisto proposes that the argument should be considered valid in formal logic, but fallacious in Kant's transcendental logic.[162] For the purposes of this chapter, I will acknowledge this interpretive complexity, and demonstrate that in any case, the paralogism is founded in but distinct from the transcendental illusion. The paralogism is neither inevitable nor persistent.

Like Grier, Iain Proops argues that Kant straightforwardly (that is, formally) considers the paralogism to have an ambiguous middle-term, and thus the conclusion does not follow from the premises in any logic. Iain Proops finds evidence for this reading in Kant's understanding of the term "paralogism" and in his previous outlining of the transcendental illusion. Proops turns to Kant's outlining of paralogism earlier in the chapter and also refers to the pre-*Critique Duisburg Nachlass*. Here Kant writes, "A paralogism is a syllogistic inference that is false as far as its form is concerned, although as far as its matter (the antecedent propositions) are concerned [bei Vordersatzen ¨], it is correct. (R 5552; 18:218)[163] Proops takes this to mean that in the first *Critique* "an inference that is invalid, even though its premises are true."[164]

Further, Proops also draw upon the features of the Transcendental Illusion previously discussed to arrive at necessary features of a true-to-text interpretation of the paralogism. These features are that the reading 1) acknowledges the ambiguous middle-term. 2) portrays the premises of

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[161] T. Kannisto, "Transcendental Paralogisms as Formal Fallacies – Kant's Refutation of Pure Rational Psychology," *Kant Studien* 109 no. 2 (2018): 195.
[162] Ibid., 197.
[163] Translation from I. Proops, "Kant's First Paralogism." *Philosophica*l Review 119 no. 4 (2010): 467.
[164] Ibid., 467- 468.

the argument as true 3) portrays the inference as highly seductive in line with Kant's "a transcendental ground for inferring falsely due to its form." (B399) Therefore a true-to-text reading of Kant's analysis of the rational psychologists' argument requires that the conclusion does not follow from the premises, but that there is a temptation towards thinking that it does. Proops reading of the ambiguous middle-term fallacy is that in the first premise, "to think something is to conceive of it," and in the second "to think something is to assign its representation a certain role in judgement." In other words, he sees Kant as arguing that "this fact about the grammatical distribution of the first-person singular personal pronoun entails nothing about how the self can or cannot be conceived.[165]

To acknowledge nuance within the scholarship, Kannisto rejects that thinking is a different term between the two premises, rather it is the same term with a different use.[166] I find this distinction between different concepts and different uses of concepts suspicious as a Wittgensteinian but must acknowledge Kannisto's textual evidence for this framing. Kant held, rather famously, that "existence is not a real predicate that can change a concept."[167] As such, Kannisto sees Kant as highlighting an equivocation of "the same concept considered with and without reference to an existing object."[168] He would consider Kant accepting that the rational psychologists' argument holds formally, but formal logic has no bearing on the existence of a metaphysical entity. Kannisto has us consider, rather than an argument about a thinking thing as substance, one about a unicorn as a horned horse. He sees the error as the metaphysical inference which follows from the conclusion, not the inference between the

Kannisto's argument has persuasive power in light of Kant's understanding of existence, however, it does not fully address Kant's understanding of "paralogism" as a term, nor fully unpack why Kant straightforwardly points out that an ambiguous middle-term fallacy takes place. In my understanding, Kant, under the scrutiny of an argument like Kannisto's might have admitted that the fallacy was not formal and that in a completely abstract set of propositions, the argument at B410 would hold. However, as Grier describes, the thrust of his criticism is that "The problem is that this last claim appears to be a straightforwardly metaphysical one about an existing being."[169] Kant puts the paralogistic argument at the heart of the rational psychologists'

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[165] Ibid.,476.
[166] Kannisto, "Transcendental Paralogisms," 212.
[167] Ibid.
[168] Ibid., 221.
[169] Grier, *Kant's Transcendental Illusion,* 145.

metaphysical position. The argument, whether it holds formally or not, cannot do the metaphysical work it supposed to. It is an undeniable error.

It is clear that the argument is itself distinct from the transcendental illusion, because, under scrutiny of its parts, it becomes clear that it provides no basis for metaphysical truth and considered at least in a transcendental logic which distinguishes between existing and non-existing things, it can be dissolved. We might now be inclined to ask, what this temptation towards a false inference has to do with taking the subjective principles of reason as objective principles of things in themselves. Proops and Grier ground their interpretation of Kant's analysis similarly. Proops writes that "Owing to the transcendental illusion, we are inclined to think of the self not just as unifying its representations but, further, unifying them in virtue of standing to them in the unconditioned condition."[170] In Proops's view then, the transcendental illusion is present in the paralogism because it tempts the rational psychologist to mistake the subjective unification of their representations (thoughts) with an objective unification of a substantive self. Grier echoes the same sentiment, put even more simply, "Indeed, he claims that a "natural illusion" compels us to regard the apperceived unity of consciousness as an intuition of an object (A402).[171]

Examining how the transcendental illusion underpins one of Kant's paralogisms, shows that the illusion, unlike any particular mistaken metaphysics, is enduring. The illusion is a natural, even necessary aspect of the ordering of subjective experience, but it can cause confusion if its influence is not accounted for in the practice of metaphysics.

In this chapter, I have thus far sharpened an understanding of how Kant, especially the Critical period Kant, conceived of nonsense. I have highlighted where "nonsense" appears in his writings, and where the concept can otherwise be found. Furthermore, I have identified the transcendental illusion, or rather, the problems which follow from it, as meeting the criteria of Kantian Nonsense. I have expanded upon the operation of the Transcendental Illusion in the kinds of metaphysical concerns that Kant critiques in his paralogisms. From here, I can now offer comparisons to Wittgenstein's conception of nonsense, especially on the features of inevitability, persistence and temptation which define the Kantian Transcendental Illusion.

I argue that nonsense for the later Wittgenstein, is tempting, largely inevitable, and persisting. This is not to say that any individual instance of nonsense persists forever, but rather the

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[170] Proops, "Kant's First Paralogism," 491.
[171] Grier, *Kant's Transcendental Illusion,* 147.

aspects of language, and human life which sometimes give rise to nonsense will be ever-present.

Let us first consider, temptation and inevitability which emerge together in his writing. In *Philosophical Investigations,* he often characterises a manner of speaking about a philosophical problem, or the emergence of a problem at all as a matter of temptation, captivation, or urge. For example, in contrasting his "correct" mission for philosophical projects, with a more traditional (largely metaphysical) approach, he acknowledges that people feel an urge to misunderstand.

> All *explanation* must disappear, and description alone must take its place. And this description gets its light- that is to say, its purpose – from philosophical problems. These are, of course, not empirical problems; but they are solved through an insight into the workings of our language, and that in such a way that these workings are recognised – *despite* an urge to misunderstand them. (PI, 109)

This notion of an urge to misunderstand also appears in his analysis of his own project in the *Tractatus*. He describes the Tractarian assertion that propositions map onto or *picture* how things are thusly; "A *picture* held us captive. And we couldn't get outside it, for it lay in our language, and language seemed only to repeat it to us inexorably." (PI, 116) Here, Wittgenstein, like Kant, is naturalising philosophical error. There is a sense that language has certain attributes which allow it to be a base for philosophical confusion. This sentiment is also echoed much later in the *Investigations*, "But the difficulty is to remove the prejudice which stands in the way of doing this. It is not a stupid prejudice." (PI, 340) Here, Wittgenstein is not only naturalising the manner in which language can lead to philosophical confusion but is also acknowledging that it is difficult to do anything but fall into confusion. As mentioned in the previous chapter, part of Wittgenstein's method for dispelling philosophical questions is to delve into how the language used in these questions is used ordinarily.

One of Wittgenstein's investigations which demonstrates both the temptation towards philosophical questions and the role of examining ordinary language to dispel it concerns colour. He examines the tendency for people to use "colour" in two contradictory ways. One of these ways is to, in overt consideration of the topic, to consider colours to be names for certain "visual impressions." These impressions are thought to be private, and to belong only to the person having them. The other way is far more ordinary, "When you do it [look at the sky] spontaneously – without philosophical purposes – the idea never crosses your mind that this impression of colour belongs only to *you.*" (PI, 275) From this observation, he writes:

"But how is it even possible for one to be tempted to think that one uses a word to *mean* at one time the colour known to everyone – and yet at another time the "visual impression" which *I* am getting *now?"* How can there be so much as a temptation here? – I don't turn the same kind of attention on the colour in the two cases. (PI, 277)

There is a mode of thinking about colour which is ordinary, in context, and essentially shareable, and there is another mode which denies that its subject can be shared. Wittgenstein uses this colour example as a preamble for the more developed example of pain in his Private Language Argument. He closes out the colour example by asking what uses there are for descriptions of having a personal experience of colour and comparing "someone saying, "But I know how tall I am!" and laying his hand on top of his head to indicate it!" (PI 279) The point, flippantly made, is that the sentence is neither demonstrative (it is a gesture without any context or point for reference) nor informative (it tells us nothing about colour).

Wittgenstein describes our tendency to point out personal sensations as the important aspects of concepts like colour and pain as showing "how much we are inclined to say something which is not informative." (PI,298)

The later Wittgenstein's description of arriving at misleading philosophical language as a pervasively tempting phenomenon echoes Kant's inevitability thesis. The sentiment's persistence, despite our best efforts, is perhaps best described famously in his (so-called) middle-period *Lecture on Ethics; "*My whole tendency and I believe the tendency of all men who ever tried to talk Ethics or Religion was to run against the boundaries of language…it is a document of a tendency in the human mind which I personally cannot help respecting deeply…."[172] We can see a distinct parallel to Kant in this depiction of temptation towards philosophical thinking. Moore describes Wittgenstein's lectures in the philosophy of mathematics as focussing on how we should account for the construction of mathematical rules, induction of one rule from another, and the notion of indeterminacy. Wittgenstein, "also said many of the difficulties (are due to the fact that there is a great temptation to confuse what are merely experiential propositions which might, therefore, not be true, with propositions which are necessarily true."[173] This resembles, perhaps more than any of Wittgenstein's other remarks, Kant's Transcendental illusion whereby there is confusion between the subjective and the objective.

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[172] Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Occasions,* 44.
[173]Ibid., 98.

2.3.2. Wittgenstein's Plurality

So far, Wittgenstein's framing of philosophical problems looks similar to Kant's conception of the Transcendental Illusion as tempting, persistent, and unavoidable. There are, however, major departures in their framing of the character of philosophical nonsense. I have mentioned *Lecture on Ethics* where Wittgenstein describes the urge to use language beyond its bounds as a tendency of the human mind. This description is markedly more Kantian than those in the *Philosophical Investigations because* it can be more neatly mapped onto Kant's depiction of the Transcendental Illusion as a necessary and unavoidable feature of reason. However, later in his writings, Wittgenstein moves on from this kind of language about the mind, replacing it with descriptions of philosophical nonsense emerging from language.

The shift to discussing language rather than minds has a further differentiation from Kant, in that it introduces a plurality of reasons for philosophical nonsense. Though there can be something like the Transcendental Illusion emerging in his investigations of the philosophy around colour and pain and Private Language, wherein there is an overemphasis on the subjective perception of phenomenon, over and above how the words function, the source of philosophical error can be different. For example, a philosophical puzzle or even an entire philosophical domain can arise and be sustained by a misleading parallel. A major one which appears in his later work is the parallel which is drawn between psychology and physics: "psychology treats of processes in the mental sphere, as does physics in the physical" (PI 571)

Stefan Majetschak locates Wittgenstein's understanding of the origins of this physics-psychology parallel with physics in an earlier remark in the *Investigations* regarding the application of the language of processes to discussions of psychology.[174] In this remark, Wittgenstein responds to his interlocuter's charge of being a behaviourist in disguise, "How does the philosophical problem about mental processes and states and about behaviourism arise? ... We talk of processes and states and leave their nature undecided." (PI, 308) As the discipline of physics uses the language of processes and states with clear boundaries, uses, and effect, the repeating of these same terms in discussions of psychology leads to confusion. Despite, the fact that these concepts are used with a completely different standard of rigor in psychology, they are taken for granted in the building of psychological theory and philosophy of mind. As Majetschak puts, the difference in the concreteness of these terms in physics and their indeterminacy in psychology is that, "In psychology, the phenomena cannot be grasped

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[174] S. Majetschak, "'A misleading parallel': Wittgenstein on Conceptual Confusion in Psychology and the Semantics of Psychological Concepts," *Journal for the History of Analytic Philosophy* 9 no. 4 (2021): 19.

using experimental methods in the same direct unmediated way as the phenomena of physics, but they are always given to us only in the guise of a specific form of expression."[175] There is a distance between a description of a mental process and the thing that it is supposedly describing which is absent in a physical description.

In this case, we can see confusion about the philosophy of mind arising from common language used to describe the mental. Thus a misleading parallel arises between this language and the clear scientific language of physics. This example has a different underlying confusion than the example of the problem of knowing another's pain. Though these confusions are related and may through discourse become intertwined and embedded within one another, there is a plurality of linguistic confusions at the heart of philosophical nonsense. Perhaps, something in the spirit of Kant's illusion can be seen here in that there is a strong supposed parallel between the outer and the inner.[176] However, this is not the same confusion as prioritising the subjective sensation rather than the use of a word. In contrast to Wittgenstein's plurality, though Kant describes many problems arising from the Transcendental Illusion (I have only explored on Paralogism of Rational Psychology), they share the unavoidable presence of the illusion as their cause.

2.4. Kant and Wittgenstein's Therapeutic Aims

Another area of similarity between Kant and Wittgenstein regarding their conceptions of nonsense is in how they conceive of avoiding or minimising its impact. In the previous chapter, I characterised both Wittgenstein and Hume's responses to philosophical nonsense as broadly therapeutic, with Wittgenstein adopting more explicitly psychotherapeutic language and structure. In this chapter, I have emphasised the features of inevitability, persistence, and temptation which permeate both Wittgensteinian and Kantian nonsense. These features, create difficulty in conceiving of an appropriate response to something so powerfully unavoidable. Daniel Dwyer expresses this problem as two contradictory claims:

> ...it is difficult to reconcile the following two claims: on the one hand, the assertion of apparently compulsory Platonistic temptations that make it hard for us to remind ourselves of the limited nature of philosophical insight and, on the other, the claim of

[175] Ibid., 20.
[176] Ibid.

the genuine prospect of full diagnosis, therapy and cure which would completely deprive these philosophical pictures of their compulsory force.[177]

The purpose of this section is to reconcile Kant and Wittgenstein's philosophical aims with the apparently insurmountable task of overcoming philosophical nonsense. This will enable me to elaborate further upon Kant's method proposal for overcoming the errors arising from the transcendental illusion. I will argue that this method can be described as therapeutic in the same sense as Hume and Wittgenstein. It will also allow me to gesture at Wittgenstein's innovations in how to characterise and handle philosophical nonsense.

2.4.1. Locating Kantian Therapy

Wittgenstein's therapeutic method is frequently referred to in the literature. Though there is debate about what this means, and the extent to which his method can be compared to other therapies, the terminology is readily applied to his later work. This terminology however is far less prevalent in Kant scholarship. Notable exceptions to this rule include commentaries by Dwyer, Henry Allison, and Kurt Mosser. The aspect of Kant's thought which is referred to as like therapy is that which allows one to overcome the problems underpinned by the transcendental illusion. Allison describes Kant's "philosophical therapy" in contrast to Hume's "Therapeutic Natural History of Philosophy."[178]

To locate Kantian therapeutic philosophy within his project, let us first examine a contrast. In his investigation into what he considers the fundamental arguments of rational psychology, Kant finds each paralogistic. He makes the following remark regarding the field:

> ...there is no rational psychology as doctrine that might provide us with an addition to our self-consciousness, but only as discipline, setting impassable boundaries for speculative reason in this field, in order, on the one side, not to be thrown into the lap of a soulless materialism, or on the other side not to get lost wandering about in a spiritualism that must be groundless for us in life... (B421)

There is a contrast here between a doctrine of rational psychology and a discipline of rational psychology. One is founded upon paralogisms, and cannot say anything meaningful about the soul, mind, or substance, and the other appears to be inherently deflationary and boundary-setting. "Discipline" as terminology implies work, dedication, or perhaps even tedium.

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[177] D. J. Dwyer, "Wittgenstein, Kant and Husserl on the dialectical temptations of reason," *Continental Philosophy Review* 37 (2004): 282.
[178] H. Allison, *Custom and Reason in Hume,* 259 – 260.

Interestingly "Discipline" is one of the terms that Mosser attaches to Kantian therapy. He writes, "Dialectical illusion will continue to mock us, generating the need for what Kant calls "Discipline" but which could just as easily be regarded as an ongoing demand for therapy."[179] To define discipline (*Disciplin* in Kant's German*)* generally, Kant writes, "The compulsion through which the constant propensity to stray from certain rules is limited and finally eradicated is called discipline." (A 709) This definition looks more dogmatic and definitive than what we might be looking for in Kantian therapy. The notion of a final eradication is at odds with the inevitability of the transcendental illusion, and it is also at odds with general understandings of therapy.

In response to discipline appearing at odds with the inevitability thesis, Brian Chance, following from Grier, sees discipline as how Kant would have us be free from the errors underpinned by the transcendental illusion, eliminating the illusion itself. He calls the errors "Transcendental deception" to clarify the distinction. [180] Chance characterises Kantian discipline as largely a response to Hume's sceptical method and account of causation.[181] He argues that Kant finds common goals with Hume. To use the language of the previous chapter, both philosophers aim to eliminate the spectres in the dark.

For Hume, we can provide no argument nor empirical evidence that causation is anything but a label for the empirical regular convergence of two events. His conclusion is that there is no external principle of causation, merely a useful mode of thinking. Kant describes Hume's method, particularly in this example as, "subjecting the *facta* of reason to examination and when necessary to blame, the censorship of reason." *Facta* is the plural of *factum* a Latin term meaning fact, act, or deed, which remains in use in legal settings. Chance argues that "the most plausible way to interpret Kant's reference to the '*facta* of reason' is as reference to the activities of reason or, more precisely, to individual attempts to cognize objects through reason. "[182] Kant's critique of Hume is based on the notion that his method is immature; in that it represents an incomplete development in the critique of pure reason. Kant describes scepticism (like Hume's) of the *facta* of reason as the second step in development after shaking off the undoubted dogma of childhood, and finally the critique of pure reason as the last step in maturation. The latter stage, contrasted with Hume "subjects to evaluation not the *facta* of reason but reason itself."[183]

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[179] K. Mosser, "Kant and Wittgenstein: Common sense, therapy, and the critical philosophy." *Philosophia* 37 no. 1 (2009): 18.
[180] B. Chance, *"Kant and the Discipline of Reason," European Journal of Philosophy* 23 no. 1 (2013): 88.
[181] Ibid. 99 – 100.
[182] Ibid., 102.
[183] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason,* A760 – A761.

(A760/761) In other words, Kant's method sets universal boundaries for reason, whereas Hume's method he interprets as merely showing the limits of individual acts of reason.

As I have discussed previously, a Humean therapy might involve examining history to contextualise and deflate certain inquiries and spending time away from philosophical problems altogether and finding them far less troubling upon returning to them.[184] I noted that Humean therapy – though effective in revealing meaningless philosophical jargon, does not close down all philosophical problems, rather diminishes their importance and urgency. As Chance writes, "Kant suggests that his entire critique of the faculty of reason, including the arguments of the Discipline, is an attempt to end the conflicts of metaphysics that Hume could not."[185] Thus a key distinction here between Kantian discipline and the Humean method is the maturation step where it is possible to set universal boundary principles.

What is discipline then? Chance provides the following schema citing extensively from the Doctrine of Method:

1. Pure reason should not use the mathematical method because philosophy does not contain the elements required for this method: definitions, axioms, and demonstrations.

2. Pure reason has no legitimate sceptical use. That is, it should not be used to eliminate metaphysical conflicts simply by opposing arguments to each other or by showing that particular attempts at rational cognition fail.

3. Hypotheses about supersensible objects should not be used as explanatory devices in science or common sense judgements about the world, and their only permissible use is as a means to undermine dogmatic claims about supersensible objects.

4. Any attempt to establish rational cognition of supersensible objects must adhere to the rules of transcendental proof. And when these rules are understood, we learn that there can be no such cognition.[186]

The idea is that if these rules are understood and applied. Any deception resulting from transcendental illusion can be overcome. Mosser, like Chance, links discipline and therapy, writing, "Dialectical illusion will continue to mock us, generating the need for what Kant calls "Discipline" but which could just as easily be regarded as an on-going demand for therapy."[187]

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[184] Recalling Hume's suggestion to go and play backgammon with one's friends.
[185] Chance, *"Kant and the Discipline of Reason,"* 102.
[186] Ibid., 91.
[187] Mosser, "Kant and Wittgenstein," 17 – 18.

Kantian Discipline must not be understood as a final answer to the confusions generated by transcendental illusion, but rather as a set of rules, which when applied with constant vigilance can address and ultimately avoid these confusions. No paralogisms emerge in the presence of Discipline.

It is noteworthy, that not all commentators who read Kant as having a therapeutic approach to philosophy explicitly relate therapy and discipline. Allison for example locates Kant's therapy in careful recognition of conditions which separates transcendental realists and transcendental idealist:

> ...for Kant it is only the recognition that space and time are such conditions, which is the central tenet of transcendental idealism, that loosens the grip on us of the transcendental illusion underlying the antimonial conflict by making it possible to see that the spatio-temporal world cannot be coherently considered as a self-contained totality that would be accessible to a God's-eye view.[188]

In Allison's sketch, this careful recognition forces us to acknowledge that our understanding can only come from the human standpoint. As explored in the prior discussion of the synthetic *a priori,* cognition of space and time is inherently subjective for Kant.

Recognition or discipline, both elements of Kant's method are about establishing boundaries for pure reason. I would argue that Kant's therapeutic attitude in the face of illusion is best summarised in the following:

> Nothing but the sobriety of a strict but just criticism can liberate us from these dogmatic semblances, which through imagined happiness hold so many subject to theories and systems, and limit all our speculative claims merely to the field of possible experience, not by stale mockery at attempts that have so often failed, or by pious sighing over the limits of our reason, but by means of a complete determination of reason's boundaries according to secure principles, which with the greatest reliability fastens its *nihil ulteriusa* on those Pillars of Hercules that nature has erected, so that the voyage of our reason may proceed only as far as the continuous coastline of experience reaches, a coastline that we cannot leave without venturing out into a shoreless ocean, which, among always deceptive prospects, forces us in the end to abandon as hopeless all our troublesome and tedious efforts. (A 395 – A 296)

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[188] Allison, *Custom and Reason in Hume,* 279.

I am content that Kant's methods which set the boundaries of reason, and thus allow one to avoid the confusion generated by the transcendental illusion can be described as therapeutic. Broadly this includes much of his Critical method, but for the purposes of this thesis and my comparative study with Wittgenstein I shall home in Discipline and what Allison points out as careful recognition.

2.4.2. Wittgenstein's Therapeutic Developments

As I have mentioned previously, and will develop further in this thesis, Wittgenstein's later philosophy is frequently described as "therapeutic." This word is not merely used in some scholarship as it is with Kant and Hume but appears repeatedly in his writing. Wittgenstein's notion of therapy, as I will argue more extensively in a later chapter was inspired by Freudian psychoanalytic practice and has affinities with modern psychotherapeutic practices. The major divergences are a result of this psychotherapeutic model and Wittgenstein's inquiries being into language games rather than into the capacity of human reason. In Chapter Three, I will fully contextualise Wittgenstein's linguistic project against the work of Frege and Russell. I will argue that this context is vital for his fully developed notion of nonsense, and eventually his full attention to everyday practical language. Kant, in not conceiving of the transcendental illusion as a matter of language is forced to assign properties to it, and therefore to present principles about the human condition. As I will explore in the next chapter, Wittgenstein, in acknowledging that there are limits of language, ultimately has to admit that we cannot state these limits. This is the heart of his Tractarian quietism and his studies of philosophical language against everyday language in the investigations.

Kant, though he goes further than Hume in quieting metaphysical query, and finds principles for the boundaries of reason, rather than sceptical limits, ultimately grounds his therapeutic practice in a certain subjective, especially an experiential subjectivity. Recall again, that cognitions of space and time are grounded upon human perception. The Wittgensteinian method, as briefly outlined in the previous chapter is inherently linguistic. He writes, "The point is not to explain a language game by means of our experiences, but to take account of a language game." (PI,655) This means that Wittgenstein will always place the source of philosophical error in a misunderstanding of language. This change is profound because working in the domain of language means that Wittgenstein is not interested in subjectivity the way that Kant does. Language games, as he outlines in his private language are shared, or at least potentially shareable. Confusion might come from failing to check the language's application, but it does not come from an overstretching of subjectivity.

Interestingly, Wittgenstein's method specifically shares with Kantian Discipline, an idea that any approach like mathematics is wholly inappropriate for the task of setting boundaries to sense (in Kant's case, human reason). Wittgenstein writes, "It [philosophy, correctly practiced] also leaves mathematics as it is, and no mathematical discovery can advance it." (PI, 124) His method of doing philosophy does not involve the setting up of axioms or truths in a manner familiar to mathematics. Recalling the *Zettel* remark noted previously; "It [philosophising] must run its natural course, and slow cure is all important. (That is why mathematicians are such bad philosophers.)[189] These remarks show that Wittgenstein and Kant both view correct methods in philosophy as appropriately separating philosophy from other domains. However, Kant's method ultimately rests on his characterisation of the transcendental illusion. This allows him to build a systematic means, through Discipline of preventing pure reason from engaging in metaphysical debate. Wittgenstein's focus being on what can be done with language means that there is no way to "get outside of language" and set stable principles in the way that Kant inevitably has to.

It is my view that Wittgenstein's therapeutic philosophy offers a more concrete and plausible approach to philosophical nonsense than Kant's Discipline. In some of the comparative literature, Wittgenstein's method is criticised for lacking the ability to completely end philosophy. For example, Dwyer criticises Wittgenstein for failing to offer anything like a definitive cure for any particular philosophical problem despite his aims of achieving "complete clarity." (PI 133) He writes, "Wittgenstein practices her a certain reflection on unreflective philosophical practices, a reflection that points to the ineradicability of apparently compulsory temptations whose cure, no matter how slow, can never be definitive."[190] There are echoes in this critique by Dwyer of Kant's criticisms of Hume, whereby Hume's analysis of philosophy is incomplete. The acceptance that an approach "can never be definitive" looks like far more like the Humean therapy discussed previously than the rationality boundary setting which Kant is able to offer. Thus far, I have emphasised that the transcendental illusion for Kant is a truly unavoidable aspect of human experience which seems at odds with the definitive end characterisation made by Dwyer. He locates definitiveness in Kant's assessment that though the illusion is ever-present, the correct method of therapy can completely prevent the transcendental commitments which might follow from it. He contrasts Wittgenstein's method (across both his major philosophical works) as lacking, "an articulation of why his desire for

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[189] Wittgenstein, *Zettel.* *2nd* Edition, eds G. E. M Anscombe, G. H Von Wright. (Oxford: OUP, 1981) 382.
[190] Dwyer, "Wittgenstein, Kant, Husserl," 279.

perspicuity cannot be satisfied…"[191] Kant's therapeutic method, including his description of the transcendental illusion sets definitive perimeters on reason by articulating that it cannot know more than appearances. Discipline, as outlined by Chance also includes a set of principles which should prevent the illusion from causing the overstretching of reason. Kant's method can, in theory, put an end to bad philosophy.

I think Dwyer mischaracterises Wittgenstein's slow cure as a never-ending cure. My position is that the Wittgensteinian acceptance that there are no permanent cures differs strongly from the Humean version, at least the more avoidant version found in the *Treatise.* The distinction between permanent cure and never-ending cure is misleading. Wittgenstein does offer, approaches to problems which might end the hold of a philosophical problem for a particular individual, philosophy classroom, or small community. One cannot stop doing philosophy, firstly because there are always language games that confuse – bad philosophy persists. Secondly, investigating a philosophical problem as a piece of nonsense reveals something about the language, and thus about the forms of life whose specificity is poorly understood. Definitiveness can only be achieved in a piecemeal fashion.

Further, Wittgenstein's method, as I will argue fully in chapter five, though sharing major affinities with Kant, is more literally therapeutic in that it is heavily inspired by and mirrors the structure of psychoanalytic therapy. Wittgenstein's therapy could only emerge in the context of development in psychology and his exposure to the work and clinical practice of Freud and other psychoanalysts. This shift to viewing properly practised philosophy as a kind of psychotherapy partially explains both Wittgenstein's piecemeal approach to problems and the characterise of these problems as explicitly nonsensical. They have no meaning within the bounds of language games that are actually part of forms of life, and thus their consequences are not substantively philosophically but are more literally cognitive or psychological. To realise that the question one asks is nonsensical is to remove the consequent worry which accompanies an unanswerable question.

Thus, when Wittgenstein examines the philosophical question, "How do I know that another person is in pain?" the question is nonsensical, betraying a misunderstanding of language games concerning "I am in pain". For Wittgenstein, this is not a genuine doubt: "Just try – in a real case – to doubt someone else's fear or pain!" (PI 303) We are led to ask philosophical questions about the experience of pain because in treating "I am in pain" like a description, we look for criteria to apply this description to others. The exploration of language and pain

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[191] Ibid., 290.

behaviour in Wittgenstein's analysis of this problem can be a slow, but definitive cure for someone who thinks we can doubt that others have pain. No longer feeling compelled to ask a nonsensical question does not mean that one is immune from other questions, or that this method of slow cure would work for every person in every linguistic community. This is not altogether dissimilar to the looming, inevitable presence of the transcendental illusion in human cognition for Kant but is defined by a plurality of approaches and an understanding that no one method can protect against philosophical confusion. Also, as I will explore in more detail in my final chapter, Wittgensteinian therapy is a beneficial exercise. It is not always better that the fly managed to avoid getting trapped in the fly bottle.

The idea that philosophical problems can be re-occurring ailments reflects how these ailments emerge out of understandable confusions in language, as well as from uncorrected popular philosophical thinking. It also acknowledges that problems will continue to emerge, and new philosophical modes of thinking might emerge as languages themselves grow and change. As I will argue in my last chapter of this project, Wittgenstein's therapeutic method, even if it is informed by Freudian psychoanalysis, does involve arguments, and arguments settle issues. The acknowledgement in Wittgenstein's theory is that the therapeutic method (argument style, or type) will have to differ depending on the area of language that the confusion is emerging from, and even differ between different individuals.

Kant's Critical philosophy, as I have argued throughout this chapter, is occupied with identifying and dissolving philosophical nonsense. A comparative study between Kant and Wittgenstein is not only justified because of Kant's enduring influence in the early analytic tradition and because of direct lines of influence, but also because of profound motivational and even methodological similarities in their projects. Importantly, I hope to have convinced the reader that it is appropriate to consider Kant's first Critique to be performing the same kind of work with "absurd" (*ungereimt)* as was performed by "nonsense" (*Unsinn)* in his third. Nonsense for Kant is characterised by being a striving for something which is unachievable, an inconsistency or non-unity in the application of the faculties, and an over-expectation or over-stretching of one faculty. I hope to have also shown that the Transcendental Illusion as it emerges in human experience fits all of the parameters of Kantian nonsense, indeed it grounds all other metaphysical nonsense. In my comparative study, I have drawn out three areas where Wittgenstein and Kant collide in their characterisation of philosophical nonsense: temptation, (near) inevitability, and persistence. I have argued that Wittgenstein's key divergence, especially

visible in his later work is that he identifies many different nonsenses which have different philosophical routes.

I have also argued that it is appropriate to call Kant's project therapeutic. I identify Kantian therapy as the work Kant advises his readers to do which guards against common consequences of the transcendental illusion. This is located both in Discipline which guards against philosophical nonsense, and careful recognition which allows one to address confusions which have already emerged. Importantly, Kantian therapy, in identifying the transcendental illusion is capable of setting one up to never fall into its consequences. For Kant, one cannot avoid the illusion, but one can avoid its consequences through a programme of Discipline.

Overall, I hope to have convinced that Kant's notion of nonsense plays a considerable role in his Critical philosophy. Kantian therapy moves a step beyond the therapeutic method I identified in Hume. Whereas Hume has us stop at scepticism but be able to immerse ourselves in everyday life and pleasures that the scepticism becomes non-pressing and irrelevant, Kant allows us to identify the source of the philosophical confusion broadly. Kant's critical project heavily involves the creation of a programme which enables an end to endless metaphysical discussion. However, Kant's identification of nonsense, at least the metaphysical kind, as being routed in the transcendental illusion limits the revelatory characteristics of his identification of nonsense. Wittgenstein, throughout his philosophical career, argues that philosophy, properly practised, is a slow cure for nonsense and that we must go through the process of unravelling it. This is beneficial not only because it allows the nonsense to be fully inspected and understood as emerging from a misunderstanding of how language is used, but also enables the individual to not only intellectually survey the area of language which has thrown them off but to reach self-insight, in the vein of psychoanalytic self-insight. This process not only reinforces the lesson for the individual but also enables them to gain an appreciation for the everyday language and forms of life around them.

Chapter Three

Idols and Mentors: Language and Nonsense in the Early Analytic Tradition

In the previous two chapters, I have offered critical comparisons of Hume and Kant against Wittgenstein. I have facilitated these comparisons by locating "nonsense" and "therapy" in the work of each of these thinkers and drawing out their use and conception of these notions. I have suggested, in both chapters that there are two important features of Wittgenstein's thought which distinguish him from other broadly critical projects. On one hand, I have introduced Wittgenstein's exposure to a more modern notion of psychotherapy and his implementation of a psychotherapeutic structure into his philosophical project. For obvious historical reasons, Hume and Kant did not have access to these developments. On the other, I have emphasised his work being located firmly within the philosophy of language. In other words, Wittgenstein's innovations hinge on his understanding of therapy and, as I will explore in this chapter, of nonsense as a feature or error of language.

This chapter will argue that much like his understanding of therapy, Wittgenstein's emphasis on language and nonsense is, at least in part, a feature of his historical context and influences. I will examine the role of language, especially the notions of sense and nonsense as they appear in the work of Wittgenstein's Russell and Frege, respectively his mentor and his idol. In doing this I will also examine the idea of the "linguistic turn" as the fundamental feature of the emergence of the analytic tradition. This chapter will also examine debates between Wittgenstein and these influences to trace his preoccupations with language.

I begin by briefly outlining the historical-biographical context of Wittgenstein's relationship to the other early analytic philosophers, including Russell's mentorship role. This section will also introduce the idea that Frege and Russell's influence extends beyond Wittgenstein's early work. In section two I develop this notion further by exploring Russell's most language-oriented philosophy, especially in the periods before and during his working relationship with Wittgenstein. Though it would generally be inaccurate to call Russell's theory of descriptions or his *multiple relations theory of judgement* philosophy of language, I argue that both provide foundations for Wittgenstein to respond to firmly within the philosophy of language. In section three I turn my emphasis to the notions of sense and nonsense as they appear in Frege, building a pre-Wittgensteinian picture of these concepts, and arguing that Wittgenstein's notion of

nonsense owes much to Frege. A Fregean notion of sense is outlined in his "On Sense and Reference," and a particular conception of nonsense is drawn out from the key principles of the *Grundlagen der Arithmetik* by several Frege commentators. I argue that sense as the opposite of nonsense, and sense as in the companion to reference are not so disparate in Frege, or at least not so disparate in Wittgenstein's reading of Frege. Finally, in section four, I argue that Frege's context principle has a significant influence on Wittgenstein's philosophical development.

3.1. Wittgenstein's Relationship to Frege and Russell

In my prior endeavours to track connections between other philosophers and Wittgenstein's work, I have initially tracked and engaged with discussions in the literature regarding his personal relationship to their texts and ideas. I have noted that Wittgenstein is often reluctant to engage in the history of philosophy and does not write extensively about his influences or opponents. In this chapter by contrast, I have significant amounts of published and personal writings, letters and secondary accounts that detail the complex, intense, and changeable relationships he had with Frege and Russell in both the philosophical and personal spheres. In the following, I present a short historical-biographical account of these relationships.

While pursuing research interests in aeronautical engineering in Manchester, Wittgenstein read Russell's *Principles of Mathematics* and shortly after Frege's *Grundgesetze der Arithmetik.* These were the texts which sparked an obsession with the philosophy of mathematics in the young Wittgenstein.[192] Of the two, Wittgenstein first wrote to Frege and visited him at his post at the University of Jena in mid-1911.[193] Frege, aware that he was drawing near to retirement and then suffering from ill health, suggested Wittgenstein study under Russell at Cambridge. Ludwig's sister, Hermine, recounting her brother's account of his first visit to Jena wrote, "During this time Ludwig was in a constant, indescribable, almost pathological state of agitation, and I was very much afraid that Frege, whom I knew to be an old man, would not have the patience or understanding to go into the matter in the way which the seriousness of the situation demanded."[194] Following Frege's advice, Wittgenstein arrived at Cambridge, at Russell's private rooms, unannounced, to talk with him later in 1911.

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[192] R. Monk, "Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Sketch of His Life," *A Companion to Wittgenstein*, eds. Hans-Johann Glock and John Hyman (Sussex: John Wiley and Sons, 2017).

[193] M. Beaney, "Wittgenstein and Frege," In A *Companion to Wittgenstein*, eds. Hans-Johann Glock and John Hyman (Sussex: John Wiley and Sons, 2017).

[194] Hermine Wittgenstein, "My Brother Ludwig," *Recollections of Wittgenstein*, ed. Rush Rhees (Oxford: OUP, 1984), 2.

Immediately after this abrupt in-person introduction, Wittgenstein began attending Russell's classes but did not immediately enrol at the university. At this time, Wittgenstein was torn between his growing passion for philosophy the engineering pathway upon which he had already embarked. Arguably, the most profound impact Russell had on Wittgenstein was directly steering him into professional philosophy. Following conversations during his unofficial attendance at Cambridge, Russell suggested he write something over the Christmas holidays. He gave the piece, which has been lost to time, a glowing review and encouraged the young Wittgenstein to abandon his research studentship in Manchester and enrol at Cambridge in 1912.[195]

Though Russell was his primary mentor at this time, Wittgenstein remained in contact with Frege and even visited him several more times.[196] Wittgenstein conceived of himself as working within and defending a new philosophical model defined by Frege and Russell.[197] He even wrote, in a review of Peter Coffey's *The Science of Logic* for the Cambridge Review, "The author has not taken the slightest notice of the great work of the modern mathematical logicians— work which has brought about an advance in Logic comparable only to that which made Astronomy out of Astrology, and Chemistry out of Alchemy."[198]

Though he was positioned as a student, Russell by the end of Wittgenstein's first full year in Cambridge, came to see Wittgenstein as a colleague and had him in mind as a successor in the profession. Ray Monk in his biography of Wittgenstein remarks: "He [Russell] even felt that when his five-year lectureship at Trinity expired, he should give it up and let Wittgenstein take his place."[199] Wittgenstein remained in contact with Russell even when he left Cambridge to serve the Austrian army in the First World War. Wittgenstein finished *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* whilst serving and immediately sent it to an Austrian publisher. Soon after Wittgenstein was taken as a prisoner of war in Italy. He was able to exchange greeting cards and personal letters during this time and even sent Russell a manuscript of the *Tractatus* which had been rejected by his first choice of publisher.

Wittgenstein sent a further copy of the pre-publication *Tractatus* to Frege. To his frustration, Frege's review of the book was curt and unimpressed. Indeed, the letter in which he replies does

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[195] Monk, "A Sketch of his life."
[196] Reck, "Wittgenstein's 'Great Debt' to Frege: Bibliographical Traces and Philosophical Themes," in From *Frege to Wittgenstein: Perspectives on Early Analytic Philosop*hy. Edited by Erich H. Reck. (Oxford: OUP, 2002), 8.
[197] Monk, "A sketch of his life."
[198] L. Wittgenstein, "Review: P Coffey, The Science of Logic*," Cambridge Review* 34 no. 853 (1913).
[199] Monk, *Duty of Genius*, 54.

not even suggest Frege entertained the book beyond the first page.[200] Frege wrote, remarking on being unclear of Wittgenstein's meaning "from the beginning I find myself entangled in doubt as to what you want to say, and so make no proper headway." Records suggest that Wittgenstein's correspondence with Frege stopped in April 1920. Reck speculates that this may have had something to do with his cold reception to the *Tractatus*.[201] This was at the same time he chose not to return to Cambridge but to take a post as a teacher in Lower Austria.[202]

Russell ensured the publication of *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* in 1921 as both English and German language publishers refused to publish it without his introduction and endorsement.[203] It is less known that Frege also considered pushing for the *Tractatus*' publication. He offered to write to Bruno Bauch, then editor of *Philosophie des Deutschen Idealismus*, in support of its inclusion in the journal – though he could not provide an introduction or detailed endorsement. Frege's harsh criticisms of the *Tractatus* did not detract from his view that his friend's efforts deserved to be widely read.

The last time Russell and Wittgenstein met as friends was in Innsbruck, Austria in 1922. According to Russell, they quarrelled over religious and moral differences. He described Wittgenstein as "much pained by the fact of my not being Christian." According to Ray Monk's research, Wittgenstein did write to Russell after this argument, even asking after his young son, but Russell did not reply.[204] When Wittgenstein returned to Cambridge and to the profession in 1929, Russell had left the University but he was called to be one of the examiners of Wittgenstein's submission of the *Tractatus* as his PhD thesis, along with G. E Moore, and discussion was at least convivial during the Viva.[205] Russell was largely absent from Wittgenstein's life following this

When Wittgenstein returned to Cambridge in 1944 following his war work and six months in Swansea, Russell had also returned the same year. His relationship with Russell strained even further philosophically as well as personally. For one thing, Russell was utterly unimpressed with Wittgenstein's later work and interests, writing "[He] seems to have grown tired of serious thinking and to have invented a doctrine which would make such an activity unnecessary." In-

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[200] Ibid.,163.
[201] Reck, "Wittgenstein's 'Great Debt' to Frege," 19.
[202] Ibid., 21.
[203] Monk, "Wittgenstein: A Sketch of His Life."
[204] Monk, *Duty of Genius*, 214.
[205] Ibid., 272.

kind, Wittgenstein thought Russell "had achieved all he was ever likely to achieve."[206] Wittgenstein was particularly unimpressed by Russell's popular philosophy books.

Wittgenstein never visited Frege again after the war, and, as far as records suggest did not correspond with him between 1920 and Frege's death in 1925. However, there is considerable evidence to suggest he continued to hold "the great Frege" in high regard well beyond their clash about the *Tractatus.* It is reported by colleagues such as Max Black and O.K Bouwsma that on a trip to Cornell University in 1949 Wittgenstein was especially interested in discussing Frege's "Über Sinn und Bedeutung" as a relevant piece for his current philosophical project.[207] Peter Geach, in his introduction to a translation of Frege *Logical Investigations,* reports that Wittgenstein had said "How I wish I could have written about Frege!" days before his death.

Russell wrote Wittgenstein's obituary for *Mind.* He stated "Getting to know Wittgenstein was one of the most exciting intellectual adventures of my life. In later years there was a lack of intellectual sympathy between us, but in early years I was as willing to learn from him as he from me."[208]

I have chosen "mentor" and "idol" to characterise Wittgenstein's relationship to these philosophers in part because of how he mentions them in the introduction to the *Tractatus,* "I am indebted to Frege's great works and of the writings of my friend Bertrand Russell…." Frege was of a prior generation of philosophers, and Wittgenstein initially sought him out for mentorship. It was on Frege's suggestion that Wittgenstein found his way to Cambridge. These terms characterise his closeness to Russell and relative physical and social distance from but enduring reverence for Frege.

3.2. Russell and Language

Historians of early analytic philosophy often consider Russell, Frege, and Wittgenstein to be largely responsible for shifting the emphasis of much philosophical study to language and linguistics. Piotr Stalmaszczyk writes in the introduction of *Philosophy of Language and Linguistics: The Legacy of Frege, Russell, and Wittgenstein*, "It would be difficult to imagine research on, for example, truth, sense and reference, proper names, meaning and use, presupposition, without the achievements of Frege, Russell, and Wittgenstein."[209] Michael

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[206] Ibid., 472.
[207] Reck, "Wittgenstein's Great Debt to Frege," 26.
[208] Russell, "Obituary: Ludwig Wittgenstein," *Mind* 60 no. 239 (1951): 298.
[209] P. Stalmaszcsyk, *Philosophy of Language and Linguistics: The Legacy of Frege, Russell, and Wittgenstein.* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014) 1.

Potter, perhaps more boldly claims that "it is not so much that they applied philosophical methods to the study of language as that they applied linguistic methods to the study of certain problems in philosophy."[210] In this section, I will examine Russell's contributions to the philosophy of language, particularly those contributions that influenced the early Wittgenstein. This will help to shape an understanding of Wittgenstein's immediate philosophical context. Russell did not identify his work to be linguistic or primarily about language. He conceived his contributions as being about logical and epistemological rather than grammatical features of propositions. [211] The distinction is that propositions are not composed of words, but rather of the entities represented by words for the early and middle period Russell. A grammatical investigation by contrast would be interested in what is being done with words. Richard Rorty's rather helpful definition of linguistic philosophy is helpful in this project. He defines it as, "the view that philosophical problems are problems which may be solved (or dissolved) either by reforming language or by understanding more about the language we presently use."[212] As I will draw out, Russell does engage in some practices common to ideal language philosophy, especially in his "On denoting". However, fully drawing out his influence on the philosophy of language broadly, and Wittgenstein specifically requires contextualising his ideas about language within his wider philosophical projects.

To specifically contextualise the areas of Russell's philosophy that are reflected in, or responded to by Wittgenstein, I will be limiting this study to the early Russell's conception of propositions, his theory of descriptions from "On Denoting" onward, and his Multiple Relations Theory of Judgement. This will allow me to discuss Russell's achievements in a loosely chronological order ending early in his relationship with Wittgenstein.

3.2.1. Early Russell and the Proposition

The early Russell, much like Frege as I will discuss shortly, held a sharp delineation between the logical and psychological. As such, his conception of propositions was firmly separate from the mind apprehending them. Stevens finds the origin of this in the influence of G. E. Moore's "The Principles of Judgement." He writes:

> Whereas Frege's earlier attempts to de-psychologize logic had hinged on the extrusion
> of thoughts from the mind... Moore and Russell sought to separate propositions from

[210] M. Potter, "Frege, Russell and Wittgenstein," in *Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Language* (London: Routledge, 2012) 852.
[211] Ibid., 854.
[212] R. Rorty, *The Linguistic Turn: Recent Essays in Philosophical Method* [Introduction] (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967).

thoughts. Propositions, for Moore and Russell, are objective complexes composed of simple concepts which have an ontological status independent of the minds that apprehend them.[213]

His 1904 paper "Meinong's Theory of Complexes and Assumptions" offers some of his most explicit working out of a theory of propositions. We can see the harsh separation of the thought and the proposition one has the thought about. In critiquing Meinong's position he writes:

> ...when we mean to think only of what is psychical, we are almost inevitably led to think instead of the cognitive complex, consisting of the knowledge together with what is known; hence what is known (the proposition) comes to be viewed as also psychical, in spite of the highly inconvenient consequence that two people, in that case, cannot know the same proposition."[214]

Because of this glaring problem, such a theory is unacceptable to the early Russell. In this paper, we also find the other defining feature of propositions – their truth and falsity. Russell writes, in pointing out an inadequacy in Meinong's analysis of the unity of propositions, "...propositions are true or false, while their constituents, in general, are neither."[215] It should also be noted that at this point in his philosophical development, there was not a substantive logical difference between true and false propositions," ...it is plain that logic must concern itself as much with false propositions as with true ones..."[216] He noted that there were some instinctual or intuitive reasons for rejecting this position; "But this theory seems to leave our preference for truth a mere unaccountable prejudice, and in no way to answer to the feeling of truth and falsehood."[217] Thus, for the early Russell, propositions are characterised by being the objects of judgement that can be true or false, are independent of mind, and there is no ontological distinction between true and false propositions.

It should be noted that by 1910, Russell had abandoned thinking about propositions at all and had instead adopted an ontology based on judgements. However, he would not drop the term 'proposition' for long. "...after long habituation, [he] was unable to give up the term

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[213] G. Stevens, "Russell's Repsychologising of the Proposition," *Synthese* 151 no.1 (2006): 101.
[214] B. Russell, "Meinong's Theory of Complexes and Assumptions (I.)," *Mind* 13, No. 50 (1904): 215.
[215] Ibid. 216.
[216] Ibid.
[217] B. Russell, "Meinong's Theory III," Meinong's Theory of Complexes and Assumptions (III.) *Mind* 13 no. 52 (1904): 523.

'proposition', but he no longer had to construe propositions as subsistent complexes, true or false, as he had in *The Principles of Mathematics*."[218]

3.2.2. Russell's "On Denoting"

Russell's most explicitly language-focused text, or at least the most language-focussed before meeting Wittgenstein was 1905's "On Denoting". However, as I have already alluded to, this project was not seen as primarily one about language. In *Principles* Russell was explicit that the entities of study, propositions are not linguistic phenomena; "a proposition, unless it happens to be linguistic, does not itself contain words: it contains the entities indicated by the words. Thus meaning, in the sense in which words have meaning, is irrelevant to logic."[219] Rather, Russell wanted to elaborate on the function of denoting as it had consequences for logic and epistemology. He writes in the introduction to the text, "The subject of denoting is of very great importance, not only in logic and mathematics but also in the theory of knowledge."[220] It is likely better practice to refer to 'On Denoting' as a language adjacent text because as Potter puts it, "...the effect of forcing him to consider the role of language, even within mathematics, more carefully than hitherto, because it showed him that the surface grammar of a sentence may mislead us as to the true form of the thought the sentence expresses." [221]

Regardless of this evolving self-characterisation, the paper was concerned with the other sense of meaning, and in common with Frege's work, is concerned with the units of propositions and that which they do. Indeed, his paper is partially a response to Frege's *Über Sinn and Bedeutung*. He translates the central terms of Frege's paper as "meaning" and "denotation."

Russell proposes that denoting phrases, are not themselves units which have meaning. He writes:

> the theory of denoting I wish to advocate: that denoting phrases never have any meaning in themselves, but that every proposition in whose verbal expression they occur has a meaning. The difficulties concerning denoting are, I believe, all the result of a wrong analysis of propositions whose verbal expressions contain denoting phrases.[222]

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[218] N. Griffin, "Russell's Multiple Relations Theory of Judgement," *Philosophical Studie*s 47 no. 2 (1985): 217.
[219] B. Russell, *Principles of Mathematics*, 47.
[220] B. Russell, "On Denoting," *Mind* 14 no. 56 (1905): 479.
[221] Potter, "Frege, Russell, and Wittgenstein," 854.
[222] Russell, "On Denoting," 480.

For a very brief primer, Russell identifies denoting phrases as definite and indefinite descriptions which can be mapped onto an object. As Russell Wahl puts denoting is "...another meaning relation which held, not between words and objects, but between certain concepts and other objects."[223] He gives examples such as "the present King of England" (definite object), "A man" (indefinite/ambiguous object), and "the present king of France" (a denoting phrase without any denoted object). It is in the latter kind that provides one of the philosophical puzzles that denoting can cause. What is to be done with denoting phrases that are grammatically correct but aim at denoting something which does not exist or in the case of his other example "the round square" might even break the law of non-contradiction. A secondary puzzle that emerges from some of the empty denoting phrases is the ambiguous truth or falsity of propositions that contain them which seem to contradict the law of the excluded middle. Another puzzle emerging from denoting phrases is their role in identity statements. We want to say, to draw out Russell's example that there is a distinction between "Scott is the author of *Waverly*" and "Scott is Scott" despite the object being denoted by "Scott" and the "author of *Waverly*" being the same man. There seems to be an epistemological difference between knowing the first identity statement versus knowing the latter. Russell's theory of denotation has to account for this difference.

The technicalities and aims of the arguments in "On Denoting" have a long interpretive history. As Nicholas Ray puts it, interpretations of the paper "[comprised] a small cottage industry during the 1990s and early 2000s."[224] However, for the purposes of this chapter, I will emphasise Russell's departure from Frege, and innovations upon his earlier addressing of this issue of denotations in *Principles of Mathematics.* Russell's aim is to offer a way to solve the denotation puzzles without introducing any new difficulties. In his view propositions which contain denoting phrases are analysed and therefore properly laid out, and the puzzle regarding them will be solved. A major departure from his reading of *Über Sinn and Bedeutung* is Russell rejects that the denoting phrases themselves have meaning. He writes, "a denoting phrase is essentially part of a sentence, and does not, like most single words, have any significance on its own account."

For an example of a correct analysis of a proposition which includes a denoting phrase let us look at the identity puzzle of 'Scott is the author of Waverly." Russell writes that this proposition, unabbreviated does not include the denoting phrase 'the author of Waverly.' He

[223] R. Wahl, "Russell's theory of meaning and denotation and 'on denoting'," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 31 no. 1 (1993): 75.

[224] N. Ray, "Interpreting Russell's Gray's Elegy Argument," *Dialogue* 51 no. 4 (2013): 668.

writes, "...reverting to the wholly explicit form: 'It is not always false of x that x wrote Waverley, that it is always true of y that if y wrote Waverley y is identical with x, and that Scott is identical with x.'" Here we can see the rejection of a Fregean notion of sense and reference because Russell will not entertain the idea that 'the author of Waverly' has the same reference but a different sense to 'Scott'. [225]

The argument that denotating phrases do not themselves have meaning offers an answer to the puzzle attributed by the apparent non-truth or falsity of "the present King of France is not bald." There are two possible options for a correct analysis of meaning of this statement.

1. "There is an entity which is now King of France and is not bald."

This proposition we can unambiguously say is false. There is no such entity.

2. "It is false that there is an entity which is now King of France and is bald."

This proposition we can unambiguously say is true because it affirms that there is no such entity.

Russell uses the term "primary" to describe the position of "the King of France" in the first extended proposition, and "secondary" to describe it in the second. The first is about this entity's relation to baldness, the second is about the existence of the entity. Russell writes, "The ambiguity is between primary and secondary occurrences is hard to avoid in language, but it does no harm if we are on our guard against it. In symbolic logic it is of course easily avoided." Max Black describes Russell's method in "On Denoting" as one of "translation"[226] . The translated sentence removes ambiguity by removing the "alleged constituent" such as a non-existent person or an apparently identical object.

Though when Russell wrote On Denoting and discussed the relations of meaning and denotation, he did not conceive of these having much to do with language and words, the paper did allow him to articulate further his dissatisfactions with the ambiguities of natural language.

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[225] N. Griffin, "Russell's Use Theory of Meaning," *Journal for the History of Analytical Philosophy* 8 no. 3 (2020): 7.
[226] M. Black, "Russell's Philosophy of Language (in part)," *The Linguistic Turn: Recent Essays in Philosophical Method,* ed. Richard Rorty. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967) 139 – 140.

On Denoting and Principles hold at least the view that "Although a grammatical distinction cannot be uncritically assumed to correspond to a genuine philosophical difference, yet the one is prima facie evidence of the other and may often be most usefully employed as a source of discovery."[227]

3.2.3. Cleaning Out: The Multiple Relations Theory of Judgement

I mentioned previously that by 1910, Russell moved away from a conception of equally subsisting true and false propositions. No exploration of Russell's relationship to the philosophy of language would be complete without examining the theory which came to overhaul the theory of descriptions. In 1910 Russell and Whitehead published *Principia Mathematica* and this work sought to develop a radically simple ontology. It aimed to develop a complete logic with "no classes" and "no propositions."[228] Beyond an appeal to simplification, there were other related factors in abandoning propositions as the object which subsists. These include a commitment to a realist thesis of object, and relatedly, a commitment to a correspondence theory of truth. The resulting theory no longer considered judgements to be a relation between a judging subject and a proposition but instead multiple relations between the objects of the judgement. This is the Multiple Relations Theory of Judgement.

Russell outlines why a correspondence theory of truth, and a commitment to object realism is incompatible with a subsistent propositional theory of judgement through the example of a false belief. The example Russell uses in his essay "Truth and Falsehood" of a false belief is:

> Othello believes that Desdemona loves Cassio.

In his former propositional theory, Othello's judgement can be stated as a two-part relation between Othello and the proposition "Desdemona loving Cassio."

> B (Othello, Desdemona loving Cassio)

In 1910 however, Russell observes that "We cannot say that this belief consists in a relation to a single object, "Desdemona's love for Cassio', for if there were such an object the belief would be true."[229] This was of course not a problem when Russell adopted neutrality about the truth-

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[227] Russell, *Principles of Mathematics*, 46.
[228] Stevens, "Russell's Repsychologising," 102.
[229] B. Russell, *Problems of Philosophy*, ed. John Skorupski (Oxford: OUP, 2001) 72.

status of propositions, but a commitment to object realism means that this judgement cannot be a relation between two subsisting objects. Rather, it is a relation between four objects. This relation is noted as:

B (Othello, Desdemona, *loving,* Cassio)[230]

Othello, Desdemona, and Cassio are the "object-terms", and loving is the "object-relation".[231] The terms "subordinate verb" and "subordinate relation" are also used for the term which takes the place of loving in this example.[232] Thus in the example Eleanor believes that Jenni stole her shoes is a set of relations expressed by B (Eleanor, Jenni, *stealing,* Eleanor's shoes). The multiple relations theory allowed Russell to simplify his ontology and it allowed him to develop a theory of truth without the constraints of his previous view of propositions.

3.2.4. Russell's Logical Form and Wittgenstein's Nonsense Criticism

Russell was not content with the original multiple relations theory. Some problems were initially obvious to him, especially the role of the subordinate relation. Stevens summarises this problem as such:

> ...Russell is caught on the horns of an intolerable dilemma: in order to secure the unity of the judgement, the subordinate relation must be, as Russell calls it, a "relating relation", that is, it must actually relate its referents and relata. But, on the other hand, in order to be itself related by the main relation, it must be a non-relating object.[233]

The problem of unity, the question as to why and how propositions had qualities beyond their component parts had not been solved by multiple relations theory. Its subject had merely shifted from the unity of propositions to the unity of judgements. It was perhaps even more pressing now as Russell had set the subordinate relation as an equal component to the objects. As he put it in *The Problems of Philosophy* the relation "...is a brick in the structure, not the cement."[234]

[230] D. Alford-Duguid & F. Amijee, "Russell on Propositions," *The Routledge Handbook of Propositions*, eds. A. R. Murray & C. Tillman (London: Routledge, 2022), 196.
[231] Russell, *Problems of Philosophy*, 74.
[232] Griffin, "Russell's Multiple Relations Theory," 215.
[233] Stevens, "Russell's Repsychologising," 103.
[234] Russell, *Problems of Philosophy* 200.

The other related obvious problem was that of directionality. There is a distinct difference between the judgements: "Othello believes that Desdemona loves Cassio" and "Othello believes that Cassio loves Desdemona." Russell's theory as initially formulated did not account for the direction of the subordinate relation. Propositions avoid this problem because "Desdemona loves Cassio" and "Cassio loves Desdemona" are distinct subsisting objects. Russell addressed this issue in the 1912 version of MRTJ which appeared in philosophical essays. He writes,

> We may distinguish two "senses" of a relation according as it goes from A to B or from B to A. Then the relation as it enters into the judgement must have a "sense," and in the corresponding complex it must have the same " sense."[235]

Here Russell attempts to allow that the relation is the same object ontologically regardless of direction but introduces a characteristic to allow the difference between judgements with the same objects. It is the judging which orders the terms. Russell did not hold onto this adaption for long, it insisted that the subordinate relation was a relating relation which, without further work, excluded it from being an object for the judging relation.[236] It also ends up looking a lot like a dual-relation propositional view of judgements by fixing the terms in this way.

The directional problem as outlined above was not as devastating to Russell as Wittgenstein's critique of the MRTJ. This critique which I shall argue presented the ultimate consequence of the unaddressed problems with unity and direction, had Russell abandon multiple relations altogether. In the *Tractatus*, Wittgenstein remarks:

> "The correct explanation of the form of the proposition, '*A* makes the judgement *p*,' must show that it is impossible for a judgement to be a piece of nonsense. (Russell's theory does not satisfy this requirement)." (TLP, 5.5422)

Wittgenstein has accused Russell of perhaps the greatest trespass one can achieve in a theory, of allowing, or even encouraging, nonsense. The same critique, appeared in the earlier *Notes on Logic,* wherein Wittgenstein asserts, "Every right theory of judgement must make it impossible for me to judge that "this table penholders the book" (Russell's theory does not satisfy this requirement.)"[237]

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[235] B. Russell, *Philosophical Essays* (London: Routledge, 2014) 158.

[236] G. Stevens, "Russell and the unity of the proposition," *Philosophy Compass* 3 no.3 (2008): 499.

[237] L. Wittgenstein, "Notes on Logic," in *Notebooks 1914–1916*, eds. G. H. von Wright and G. E. M. Anscombe, (London: Harper & Row, 1969).

As phrased in *Notes on Logic,* this critique looks like an expansion of the direction problem. It is querying how Russell prevents "Othello from believing that love Cassios Desdemona" from being a legitimate judgement. With relations on-level with objects, their status as relations is not explicit. Griffin calls it "the wide form of the direction problem."[238] However, I will argue that characterising Wittgenstein's critique as merely a variant of the direction problem, ignores 1) that Wittgenstein was familiar with a version of the MRTJ which Russell believed had solved it and 2) what Wittgenstein means by nonsense.

Russell abandoned the "sense" of relations idea shortly after the publication of *Philosophical Essays* and his next work would offer a much more developed adaption of the multiple relations theory. In drafts of the *Theory of Knowledge,* he developed the addition of logical form. James Connelly outlines Russell's foundation for this addition as "...judgement (or belief) presupposes an understanding of the propositional content being judged. Understanding this propositional content involves being acquainted with the logical form of the complex which exists if the judgement is true."[239] It must be noted that there is significant interpretive debate surrounding Wittgenstein's critique of the MRTJ, particularly considering the full scope of critiques given in letters to Russell as he was developing the version to appear in the never-finished *Theory of Knowledge.*[240] However, for my present purposes, I only discuss the version of the multiple relations theory that Wittgenstein was referring to in both *Notes on Logic* and the Tractatus.

Russell's manuscript differentiates between judgements where the direction of the relation completely changes the judgement's meaning (and truth conditions) and those that do not. We can consider this distinction to avoid the first version of the direction problem in Russell's view. Consider "Lucy thinks the sky is blue" if the terms are switched in any way, we are left without the capacity to even compare the judgement to reality. However, Othello's belief that Desdemona loves Cassio or that Cassio loves Desdemona can be different judgements. Russell introduces an additional object into the judgement relation – the logical form itself. To specify the direction of Othello's belief, this could be noted as:

B (Othello, Desdemona, loving, Cassio, xRy)[241]

[238] Griffin, "Russell's Multiple Relations Theory," 230.
[239] Connelly, *Wittgenstein's Critique of Russell's Multiple Relations Theory of Judgement,* (London: Anthem Press, 2021) 32.
[240] See Connelly's chapter: "The Scholarly Controversy" for a comprehensive overview of this debate.
[241] As used in Steven's "Russell and the Unity of the Proposition".

However, as Stevens notes in a summary of this addition, it is not immediately clear how to take the function of the term xRy. It could simply be another term in the formula which the other terms are in relation to, or it states, "Othello has a belief of the logical form xRy about Desdemona, love, and Cassio."[242] There are problems with both of these had they been Russell's intention. In the latter case, he seems to be granting structuring power to the belief or judgement, as he had done in 1912, despite his intentions for the new theory. Theresa Iglesias makes a strong case that he intended the former, by arguing that Russell considered logical form to be a kind of logical object. In the manuscript of *Theory of Knowledge,* Russell writes, "it is clear that have acquaintance (possibly in an extended sense of the word acquaintance) with something as abstract as the pure form, since otherwise we would not use intelligently such a word as 'relation'.[243] Acquaintance as Iglesias points out is the empirical relation which is "the only way to reach ultimates" and requires a direct subject-object relation. As such, xRy is an object in the Othello judgement complex.

The most obvious problem with treating the logical form as an object in the relation is that you would require another similar object to tell us the shape of the relation between this object and the others. This would regress indefinitely. However, Wittgenstein's main objection is about the possibility of a judgement being nonsensical in Russell's framework. As such, it is pertinent to discuss Wittgenstein's use of the term "piece of nonsense" in the context of the *Tractatus* and his early philosophical project broadly.

There are two reasons that Russell's logical forms are inadequate for ensuring the sensible structure of judgements for Wittgenstein. The first is that Wittgenstein rather famously held that logical form cannot be represented propositionally (thus, in language at all). He was developing his saying-showing distinction while Russell was developing this innovation in multiple relations theory. This is initially notable in *Notes on Logic,* where he writes, "Those symbols which are called propositions in which "variables occur" are in reality not propositions at all, but only schemes of propositions, which only become propositions when we replace the variables by constants."[244] There is some similarity here with Russell's *On Denoting,* wherein Wittgenstein affirms that terms or parts of propositions cannot stand to have meaning on their own. Furthermore, the wording here regarding "variables" seems pointed at the inclusion of

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[242] Ibid., 500.
[243] B. Russell, *Theory of Knowledge: The 1913 Manuscript* (London: Routledge, 1992): 184.
[244] Wittgenstein, "Notes on Logic," 102.

empty symbols in Russell's judgement complexes. This is further developed in the *Tractatus*. Wittgenstein writes: "Propositions can represent the whole of reality, but they cannot represent what they must have in common with reality in order to be able to represent it – logical form." (TLP, 4.12) and "Propositions cannot represent logical form: it is mirrored in them…. Propositions *show* the logical form of reality. (TLP, 4.121.)

The second reason I argue that Wittgenstein found Russell's modified theory inadequate regarded the constraints of his picture theory of propositions. For example, Wittgenstein writes, "In a proposition, there must be exactly as many distinguishable parts as in the situation that it represents. (TLP, 4.04) Russell, in introducing logical form as another object in his representational notation, adds a part which does not represent. This is reinforced by Wittgenstein's comment on representatives:

> The possibility of propositions is based on the principle that objects have signs as their representatives.
> My fundamental idea is that the 'logical constants' are not representatives; that there can be no representatives of the logic of facts. (TLP, 4.0312)

Clearly, these two reasons are bundled up together in that both regard the proposition's ability to represent. The depiction of logic, or lack thereof in any proposition with sense takes up a large proportion of the 4s in the *Tractatus*. Wittgenstein even states, "To ask whether a formal concept exists is nonsensical. For no proposition can be the answer to such a question." (4.1274) Russell's theory, therefore, brings in further nonsense by virtue of having logical form act as an object.[245]

Hanks is perhaps the commentator on Wittgenstein's critique of multiple relations theory who is most interested in how it relates to nonsense elsewhere in Wittgenstein's thought. He writes, that "…by "nonsense" he [Wittgenstein] does not mean something that violates type restrictions. Rather, he means something that is not capable of being true or false.[246] Hanks is responding to the view wherein the problems of the wide direction problem are because universals and particulars stand in impossible relations. This is sometimes called the standard

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[245] See T. Iglesias, "Russell's Theory of Knowledge and Wittgenstein's earliest writings," *Synthese* 60 no. 3. for an account of Wittgenstein developing this anti-formal object stance in his early writing.
[246] P. W. Hanks, "How Wittgenstein Defeated Russell's Multiple Relations Theory," *Synthese* 154 no. 1 (2007) 138.

reading.[247] Hank argues, correctly in my view, that the nonsense critique is not about types. Hank's emphasis in his analysis of Wittgenstein's critique is on the need for there to be a unity in propositions (or in Russell's case, judgements) which Russell continues to. He holds that Wittgenstein attributes sense as that which provides this unity. I am broadly inclined to agree based on Wittgenstein's explicit discussion of sense in the *Tractatus* such as at 3.3 where he writes, "Only propositions have sense; only in the nexus of a proposition does a name have a meaning." (TLP 3.3) Wittgenstein's view of propositions does reinforce that in their unity, they are substantively different from a mere collection of names. However, the notions of sense and nonsense that the early Wittgenstein uses are distinct, and as I will argue, heavily informed by Frege. In Section 3 I will elaborate further on Fregean sense and its necessity for Wittgenstein

3.2.5. On Russell's Influence on Wittgenstein's Language Philosophy

In this section, I have discussed Russell's philosophical development up to and around his early acquaintance with Wittgenstein. I have focussed on his ideas which are of most interest to the philosophy of language. Though Russell did not self-conceive of himself as a linguistic philosopher during this period, there is considerable thematic overlap with the early philosophy of language of Wittgenstein. In "On Denoting" we can draw several key overlaps with Wittgenstein. Perhaps most importantly, Russell's aims in this paper were to dissolve problems by addressing how their structure in everyday language obscured the actual structure of the proposition. There is the idea that the correct analysis of language, such as the language which features in philosophical problems is correctly laid out fully and logically – the puzzles disappear. Wittgenstein credits Russell for this mode of thinking:

> "All philosophy is a 'critique of language' (though not in Mauthner's sense). It was Russell who performed the service of showing that the apparent logical form of a proposition need not be its real one." (TLP 4.0003)

In this discussion of just one period of Russell's language-adjacent philosophy, we have encountered motivational and methodological similarities recognisable in the early Wittgenstein. The most obvious one is the notion of a correct analysis dissolving puzzles. Wittgenstein's core idea is that philosophical problems should not be taken as normal empirical propositions, but rather interrogated and their nonsensicality made apparent, is structurally similar to Russell's approach in "On Denoting".

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[247] Connelly uses this terminology on his exegesis of the scholarly debate.

It should be emphasised that Wittgenstein, even as early as *Notes on Logic* was more interested in propositions as language than Russell was throughout the discussed period. Russell's emphasis is upon the primary empirical relation: acquaintance. This is why logical constants and logical forms are objects, or at least on par with objects because we can stand in an acquaintance relation to them. Iglesias argues that, "By contrast, Wittgenstein in 'Notes on Logic' wants to base logic on the nature of the understanding of the ordinary proposition, without any commitments to the existence of any kind of entities and so of truth about their apprehension."[248] Potter remarks on Russell's language adjacent philosophy that though it involved analysis of language (such as defining the relations in "Othello believes that Desdemona loves Cassio), "The underlying language, that is to say, was to consist of elements corresponding to whatever is most immediate in experience."[249] For Russell in this period, acquaintance was the primary epistemological relation and descriptions - later multiple relations – were secondary. One of the wedges between Russell and Wittgenstein therefore is that Wittgenstein, "questioned...the assumption that our knowledge of our own ideas is somehow more certain than anything else, and hence that the correct method of epistemological enquiry is to work from the inside outwards.[250] This theme becomes even more apparent as Wittgenstein moves into his middle and later works.

My observations about the centrality of language, and Wittgenstein's shift away from an own-acquaintance first philosophy are not to pre-empt commitments that emerge in his later period, but rather to draw out fundamental assumption differences between himself and Russell. Wittgenstein's interests would lead him to the functional analysis of language which hallmarked the *Philosophical Investigations.* In his obituary, Russell concluded his reflection on Wittgenstein's life with, "Of the development of his opinions after 1919 I cannot speak."[251]

Connelly writes of the idea that Russell can be thought of as the starting point of a linguistic turn in analytic philosophy that it was mistaken:

> "It was instead Wittgenstein who fundamentally recalibrated the trajectory of early analytic philosophy, away from an epistemological inquiry into the foundations of mathematics and towards a therapeutic investigation into linguistic usage, for the purposes of resolving philosophical confusion."[252]

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[248] Iglesias, "Russell's Theory of Knowledge," 312.
[249] Potter, "Frege, Russell, and Wittgenstein," 855.
[250] Ibid., 857.
[251] Russell, "Obituary: Ludwig Wittgenstein."
[252] Connelly, *Wittgenstein's Critique*, 185.

Engaging with Russell's work, especially elaborating on the weaknesses of the multiple relations theory, acted as an important starting point in Wittgenstein's most innovative philosophical thought. The multiple relations theory pushed Wittgenstein towards the Tractarian notion of a saying and showing. Had he not been confronted with Russell's "logical form" solution, he may not have laboured the impossibility of depicting logical form in language so heavily. The same issues with the multiple relations theory can also be seen in his development of a truly language-focussed programme in his later work as he began rejecting a Russellian acquaintance based and object-oriented ontology.

3.3. *Sinn und Unsinn*: The Legacy of Frege

I have discussed how Wittgenstein's direct relationship with Frege was more distant and shorter than that with Russell. Part of this was generational. Frege was nearing retirement by the time he made acquaintance with the young Wittgenstein and on Frege's suggestion Wittgenstein moved to Cambridge to study under Russell. Frege's cold reaction to the *Tractatus* likely pushed Wittgenstein even further away, leading to the cessation of their correspondence. As I mentioned in the biographical section, however, if the accounts of his students are not exaggerated, he never wavered in respect for Frege's philosophical project. This is of particular interest as Frege was an underappreciated figure in his day, his work receiving surprisingly little attention.[253] Indeed, Wittgenstein can be credited in part with encouraging interest in Frege in the anglosphere. He had, as Beaney details, suggested the selections for Geach and Black's *Translations of the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege.* This book was published in 1952, only two years after the first English edition of the *Foundations of Arithmetic* was translated by JL Austin.[254] The legacy of Frege and the interpretative history of Wittgenstein's work are historically wound together. G. E. M. Anscombe in her *Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus* writes, regarding the reception of the *Tractatus,* "...almost all that has been published about it has been wildly irrelevant. If this has had any one cause, that cause has been the neglect of Frege and of the new direction that he gave to philosophy."[255] I will take this claim by Anscombe seriously in the proceeding as I explore the role of Fregean sense and nonsense in the development of Wittgenstein's thought.

My aims in this section are fourfold:

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[253] G.Bar-Elli, *The Sense of Reference: Intentionality in Frege* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1996) 2.
[254] Beaney, "Wittgenstein and Frege."
[255] Anscombe, *Introduction,* 12.

1. Explore Frege's philosophy with an emphasis on his development of the idea of Sense (*Sinn*).

2. Draw out the idea of "theories of sense" being a test for nonsense and discuss the shape of both Frege and the early Wittgenstein's theory of sense.

3. Argue that the early Wittgenstein's theory of sense must be understood in alongside Frege's discussions of sense.

4. Explore how the early Wittgenstein's conception of nonsense ties into his critiques of Frege (and Russell) in response to their overtly metaphysical commitments.

Later in the chapter, I will explore how much this approach to the ideas of Frege and Russell is present in Wittgenstein's later work.

3.3.1. The Discovery of Sense

The notion of sense for Frege was primarily a solution to a puzzle which haunted Frege's development of a functional *Begriffsschift* (concept script) which adhered to the principles which he laid out in his *Grundlagen de Arithmetik*. In a concept script, the terms denote, and they can denote physical objects. One of the principles outlined in the introduction to the *Grundlagen* is that the logical must always be delineated from the psychological.[256] In his logic, an identity statement of the form a = b, taken purely as a statement of two terms which denote the same object, is a redundancy. However, there are identity statements which are discoveries, instances where a = b is a genuinely new piece of information. Frege's famous example regards the Morning and Evening Stars (Hesperus and Phosphorus) being the same object, and yet it is possible for one to learn this as new information when presented with the identity statement Hesperus = Phosphorus. If we consider logic to be separate from psychology is there any way to account for the epistemological phenomenon of identity statement discovery? Makin highlights how the problem, though well illustrated in identity statements is not limited to them. He writes," the substitution of co-referential terms in epistemic contexts, and thus it embodies the very same difficulties as Russell's puzzle about George IV wanting to know whether Scott is the author of *Waverley...*"[257] Frege's solution is not to "fully analyse" an expression like Russell, thereby removing the other half of an apparent identity equation. Instead, he introduces the notion of sense and holds that both sense and reference are present in a sign:

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[256] Frege, *Foundations of Arithmetic,* 10.
[257] G. Makin, *Metaphysics of Meaning*: Russell and Frege on Sense and Denotation (London: Routledge, 2000) 86 – 87.

A proper name (word, sign, sign combination, expression) expresses its sense, refers to or designates its referent. By means of a sign we express its sense and designate its referent.[258]

The terms "morning star" and "evening star" have the same astrological body as their referent but they have distinct senses. In this paper, Frege also strictly separates the subjective (psychological) from the sense, "The referent *and sense* of a sign are to be distinguished from associated conception."[259] However, nuance in this separation should be interrogated as he writes that though the referent is wholly objective and the conception wholly subjective "...in between lies the sense...."[260] If the sense lies between and is separate from referent and conception, additional work is required to define the qualities and role of sense. In *On Sense and Reference,* Frege has the following to say in this paper:

The sense of any sign is "wherein the mode of presentation is contained."[261]

Of two individuals, "They are not prevented from grasping the same sense; but they cannot have the same conception."[262]

"The sense of a proper name is grasped by everybody who is sufficiently familiar with the language or totality of designations to which it belongs; but this serves to illuminate only a single aspect of the referent, supposing it exists."[263]

"Sense" therefore refers to shareable, and graspable aspects of the referent which depend on how the referent is presented by the sign. This definition provides the function and location of sense. It is found in the "common store of thoughts which is transmitted from one generation to another."[264] The exact nature of sense as an entity is less clear. Makin holds that the senses as:

"timeless and eternal entities which are 'out there', regardless of whether there are linguistic means of expressing them and, accordingly, that their relation to their referents, if any, is not a matter that linguistic reality can influence in any way (unless, of course, the subject matter is language)... Frege's view was that language can only

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[258] Frege, "Sense and Reference," 31.
[259] Ibid., 29. My emphasis.
[260] Ibid.
[261] Ibid., 26.
[262] Ibid., 29 – 30.
[263] Ibid., 27.
[264] Ibid.

reflect what is provided by the metaphysical framework, and cannot create, or even affect, what stands to be reflected."[265]

The interpretation that senses are timeless entities, in something like a Platonic sense is shared by several commentators. Gilead Bar-Elli calls this "the standard interpretation."[266] However it is not the only interpretation, and even within it, there is disagreement as to the nature and role of these entities. For example, Michael Dummett, whose work on Frege is also credited as a major part of the Fregean revival in analytic philosophy holds that Frege sees sense as primarily a route to reference. He writes, "names with different senses with the same referent correspond to different routes leading to the same destination."[267] Importantly in Dummett's interpretation, a referent is never given unless through the sense's route: "they [senses] are the only objects which we can apprehend immediately, without conceiving of them in any particular way."[268] However, he argues that Frege mistakenly held that senses were metaphysical (and in Dummett's words, "mythological") objects.[269] He highlights this as a major weakness of an otherwise enlightening account.

There is a weakness to Dummett's "sense as the route to referent" interpretation in that it seems to conflict with Frege's claim that empty senses can occur. Frege asserts in *On Sense and Reference* that "In grasping a sense, one is not certainly assured of a referent."[270] A sense like this, on Dummett's interpretation, is a road to nowhere. In his *Frege: Philosophy of Language,* Dummett argues that senses without references are a feature of natural language and Frege sought to eliminate them from *a Beggriffschrift*.[271] Makin, in his *The Metaphysics of Meaning* argues that this interpretation is misguided. He writes, "The matter [of empty senses] is *metaphysical* not linguistic... if there were no such senses, no linguistic misbehaviour could bring them into being."[272] The issue he sees with Dummett's interpretation is that he allows Frege to admit that an eternal metaphysical object could be brought into being by ordinary language.

[265] G. Makin, *The Metaphysics of Meaning: Russell and Frege on Sense and Denotation.* (London: Routledge, 2000) 116.

[266] Bar-Elli, *Sense of Reference,* 23.

[267] Dummett, *Frege: Philosophy of Language,* (London: Duckworth, 1973) 96.

[268] Dummett, "More about thoughts," *Notre Dame Journal of Formal Logic* 30 no. 1 (1988):13.

[269] Dummett, *Frege and Other Philosophers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991) 256.

[270] Frege, "On Sense and Reference," 28.

[271] Dummett developed his views after this point, but for my purposes of surveying major responses to this issue I will refer to this view.

[272] Makin, *Metaphysics of Meaning,* 116.

Makin conceives, contra-Dummett, that the relationship between sense and reference should not be conceived as like that between route and destination, but rather the parallel should be with the relationship between Frege's concept and extension.[273] This interpretation, he argues, offers a more coherent model of Frege's notion of empty senses which also appropriately distances sense from language. In the instance of empty senses, they are as eternal as concepts which do not have the extension of an object.

Opposed to both Dummett and Makin, Gilead Bar-Elli argues that Frege did not hold that senses were metaphysical entities at all. Arguing much literature on the subject wrongly describes him as a Platonist about sense.[274] Bar-Elli's overall interpretation is more in line with how Dummett might argue Frege should have conceived of sense. On his reading senses are objective but they are not self-sustaining objects. They are not objects, precisely because unlike objects (of both the physical and abstract kind) they cannot be presented in a multitude of ways – senses are singular.[275] Senses in Bar-Elli's view are instead characterised by their intentionality. Intentionality here does not mean psychological intention as it might mean colloquially but rather, he uses the word "to characterise the very idea of aboutness and directedness at objects, which applies to propositional contents in general, and not only to mental states."[276]

I find that Makin's theory dismisses remarks that are explicitly about language in Frege's laying out of sense, and characterising "mode of presentation" as a mere accidental feature, obscures Frege's explicit urging that sense "lies between" the objective referent and the subjective idea. However, as Michael Beaney points out in his review of Bar-Elli's book, intentionality is not well supported as Frege's main thesis. Further, this reading does not account for Frege's insistence on valid empty senses.[277] Frege did write of a Third Realm explicitly in *Der Gedanke* and thus he at least at points explicitly characterises senses as metaphysical entities.

The status of sense entities is, at this point, secondary, to the necessary exegesis required for examining Wittgenstein's relationship to Fregean sense. I can acknowledge, as Beaney does, that perhaps some of the metaphysical readings of Frege's sense, take "object" and "Third Realm" in an incredibly literal way. Beaney puts it, in an interview for Hokkaido University, "They [senses, numbers, all abstract objects] are objects abstracted from our practices of using

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[273] Ibid., 121.
[274] Bar-Elli, *Sense of Reference,* 23.
[275] Ibid., 206.
[276] Ibid., 29.
[277] M. Beaney, "Review of The Sense of Reference by G. Bar- Elli." *Mind* no. 437 (2001): 162.

sentences, not 'timeless' entities." However, I am inclined to believe that Wittgenstein, like several of the mentioned Frege scholars found metaphysical commitments in Frege's work. These commitments he found intolerable.

3.3.2. A Fregean Theory of Nonsense

Having discussed Frege's legacy, his theory of sense, and some debate in Frege literature which emerges much later in the century, I will now address the impact of this work on Wittgenstein. Does Wittgenstein inherit Frege's notions of sense and nonsense? For the purposes of this section, I will focus on the *Tractatus* with some supplementation from *Notes on Logic* and early period letters. Silver Bronzo introduces the useful term "theory of sense" to describe any theoretical commitment which "provide[s] a nonsensicality test: we feed in some input, apply the test, and reach a verdict."[278] A theory of sense then will set the perimeters of "making sense." In colloquial English this is the dichotomy with which we judge something to either "makes sense" to be "nonsense." Thus, Hume's test for meaning, where one traces the origin of an idea in an impression counts as an example of a theory of sense. To enable the comparison with Frege, I begin this sub-section by laying out a plausible Fregean theory of sense which is related to, but not identical to the sense which co-occurs with reference. Following, I explore major interpretations of the early Wittgenstein's theory of sense, ultimately arguing that he makes explicit, and develops upon a theory of sense implicit in Frege.

Does Frege's notion of sense as the co-occurring concept to reference include a theory of sense of the kind specified by Bronzo? If not, where is the Fregean test for nonsense located? I will argue that the Fregean notion of sense as is related to an overall theory which excludes nonsense from language. On my view, synthesising work by Dummett, Diamond, and Anscombe on Wittgenstein and Frege, sentences can only make sense (in our colloquial understanding of this phrase) if they have a sense. It is at the level of sentence which nonsense is excluded, not at the terms for object. Frege insists that sentences are the primary unit of language.

A Fregean notion of nonsense, and therefore a sense test has primarily been derived from his *Grundlagen der Arithmetik* rather than *Uber Sinn und Bedeutung.* These now familiar principles are:

1. There must be a sharp separation of the psychological from the logical, the subjective from the objective.

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[278] Silver, Bronzo, *Wittgenstein on Sense and Grammar* (Cambridge: CUP, 2022) 18.

2. The meaning of a word must be asked for in the context of a proposition, not in isolation.

3. The distinction between concept and object must be kept in mind.[279]

Considerable work has been done to derive a coherent and useful Fregean conception of nonsense from these principles, most influentially by Diamond. I wish to examine if there is a strong connection between the *Sinn* which accompanies *Bedeutung* and this conception of *Unsinn.* As stated in my introduction, it is generally accepted that nonsense comes in different forms.[280] A string of nonsense words is taken to be different to a sentence which on the surface appears coherent but makes a major category mistake. Carnap's "Caesar is a prime number" is an example of an apparently grammatically well-formed piece of nonsense – even having the object and predicate in their usual places.[281] Diamond draws upon the *Grundlagen* principles to advocate a notion of nonsense that is singular and characterised by a dearth of meaning. Diamond's characterisation of nonsense takes the context principle to its natural conclusion. She writes, "if a sentence makes no sense, *no* part of it can be said to mean what it does in some other sentence which does make sense- any more than a word can be said to mean something in isolation."[282] This is also taking the separation of the psychological and logical seriously as in Carnap's example, neither "Ceasar" nor "is a prime number" make contributions to this sentence that they have elsewhere. No part of the sentence has a meaning because the psychological associations which might occur when these parts are written or uttered do not contribute to their meaning here. Diamond concludes on Frege and nonsense:

> The discovery that, although we can put words together so that they make no sense, there is no such thing as putting together words with a certain role in the language , or with certain logical powers , so that on account of these roles or these powers , the whole is nonsense - this is surely one of the great things in Frege , and one of the most important things owed to him by Wittgenstein.[283]

For Diamond's Frege, sentences are primary, because only in a sentence can any part of it have a meaning. So, whilst we can talk of parts of sentences, and discuss how they contribute to it, outside of a sentence they lose this function. Can we put Fregean sense and Diamond's w-f

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[279] Frege, *Foundations of Arithmetic*, 90.
[280] Such as in Annette Baier's definition in the *Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*
[281] Contrast with strings like "Caesar is a because" or "it paperwork confess and" which intuitively look more like nonsense.
[282] Diamond, *Realistic Spirit,* 100.
[283] Ibid., 91.

nonsense together? Dummett makes perhaps the strongest connection between the notion of sense and nonsense used by Wittgenstein to the sense of *Über Sinn und Bedeutung.* He writes,

> ...for Frege, the sense of a word or expression always consists in the contribution it makes to determining the thought expressed by a sentence in which it occurs.... The sense of a word thus consists – wholly consists - in something which has a relation to the truth value of sentences containing the word.[284]

A sentence can only have a reference (a truth value) if it has a sense on Dummett's view as senses are the necessary route to reference. As the reference of any sentence is its truth value – sense is the way in which this is given. A word, or component part of the sentence then has a sense only in how this sense presents the truth-value of the whole sentence.

I think that Dummett has offered possibly the best route for closing the distance between Fregean sense and Diamond's Fregean nonsense. We can consider nonsense for Frege, taking both the Dummett and Diamond readings to be accurate, to literally be the absence of sense. When we are presented with pseudo-sentences where the components are familiar but the whole cannot have a truth value, none of these apparent components have any sense. If we take the context principle, and the separation of the logical and psychological seriously, we have to admit that sense is not present in individual sentence components. On Bronzo's definition, this is not properly a theory of sense, as it does not provide a guide for delineating a sentence with sense from one which is nonsense. However, I will use the term, because it is at least a working theory of the kind of thing nonsense is.

I will acknowledge here that, Frege's principles, particularly the context principle just described, have taken on a life of their own in scholarship. There is significant debate about whether he held it in the same way as commentators like Diamond or even Dummett presume. F.J Pelletier offers a comprehensive overview of the debate around this in his "Did Frege Believe in the Context Principle?" My main interest in Frege is in the role his visions of sense and nonsense had on the development of Wittgenstein's philosophy. Wittgenstein held the context principle, almost word for word in the Tractatus: "Only propositions have sense, only in the nexus of a proposition does a name have a meaning." (TLP. 3.3) "In the nexus of a proposition" is the Pears and McGuinness translation of "*Im Zusammenhang das Satzes*" which mirrors Frege's "*im Satzzusammenhange*" (in the sentence-context).

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[284] Dummett, *Frege: Philosophy of Language,* 196.

3.3.3. Theories of Sense in the Early Wittgenstein

A variety of theories of sense have been attributed to the early Wittgenstein, including those which find in the text, an explicit nonsense-test. In this sub-section, I will discuss popular theories in the literature and highlight some limitations or weaknesses which they face. Diamond is explicit in her formulation of Fregean nonsense, that this is also the nonsense we should attribute to the early Wittgenstein, assessing other candidate interpretations will enable me to interrogate this claim.

Many scholars, notably Anscombe, interpret the Wittgensteinian theory of sense as innately connected to bipolarity. That is, the test for nonsense is simply, "Can this proposition be true or false?" If the answer is no, then it lacks sense. She writes:

> Wittgenstein's conception of 'sense' may be called the same as Frege's, if we are careful to add that Wittgenstein had different theses about it: for he held that names had no sense but only reference, and propositions no reference but only sense; and also that a proposition could not have a sense without being either true or false.[285]

There are so many caveats in this equivocation here, that sense hardly seems to be the same between Frege and Wittgenstein at all. Anscombe's point here is that Wittgenstein shares with Frege the notion that there is a distinction between sense and references, references are objects, and senses relate to how these objects are presented/expressed. Anscombe draws attention to Wittgenstein's two remarks about arrows. (TLP, 3.144) and (4.4461). She reminds us that the German Sinn can mean, and in geometry is often used to mean "direction." If we recall Dummett's connection of Fregean sense to the context principle – the sense of any word is only in how it contributes to the presentation of the truth or falsity of a sentence – Anscombe's connection becomes clearer. On her interpretation, the early Wittgenstein attributes sense only to the sentence wholly. The sense is that which a sentence has if it can be true or false.

On this interpretation, there is also a distinction between being senseless and being nonsensical. A tautology is always true, regardless of the arrangement of any objects and a contradiction is always true, regardless of the same. We can see that they do not have a sense, but unlike nonsense, there is still a clear relationship to truth and falsehood. This is why tautologies and contradictions are to be seen as limiting cases, and still have meaning even if

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[285] Anscombe, *Introduction to the Tractatus,* 17.

they convey nothing about the world. [Insert TLP quote. "They are part of the symbolism, much as 'o' is part of the symbolism of arithmetic." (TLP, 4.4611)

For the early Wittgenstein, bipolarity does seem to be an aspect of his theory of sense. He is explicit that propositions can be nothing other than bipolar – "In itself, a proposition is neither probable or improbable. Either an event occurs or it does not: there is no middle way." (TLP, 5.153) However, this is not the only candidate which emerges in the literature. Bronzo lists two other major candidate theories which regard logical syntax. A logical syntax theory of sense sets out conditions for combining parts of a sentence, in Wittgenstein scholarship, and hereby for this discussion these parts are called "signs". Bronzo identifies David Pears as having a logical syntax interpretation which concerns the combinations of meaningful signs.

To briefly describe Pears' reading of Wittgenstein's theory of sense, he assesses that in the Tractatus, "...when a name is attached to a thing, the nature of the thing takes over and dictates its subsequent use."[286] In his reading therefore it is the object, and the possibilities which pertain to that object which set the conditions for sense. Pears uses an art metaphor to further this point, "Names are correlated with objects just as the flecks of paint in a pointillist picture are correlated with points in the scene that it depicts."[287] In other words, the colour at any point in such a painting indicates that is possible that the colour could exist at such a point in the scene depicted. In a more complex model on the same theme, he writes, "any well-formed pair of six-figure coordinates, coupled with the name of a colour, will indicate the real possibility that the colour might be found at the corresponding point in space." We cannot for example put a colour coordinate outside of the space depicted, add another number to the coordinates, or name a colour that does not exist.

Pears wishes to maintain Wittgenstein's commitment to the context principle in his account. He writes that, "Wittgenstein's idea was not that it is physically impossible to combine names in ways that lacked sense, but only that it is logically impossible to do this while they are still functioning as names."[288] This can be contrasted with Glock for example, who views the context-principle as a conflict with the logical-syntactic theory of sense which directly emerges from the picture theory.

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[286] D. Pears, *The False Prison: A Study in the Development of Wittgenstein's Philosophy.* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987) 65.
[287] Ibid., 115.
[288] Ibid., 131.

The Pears logical-syntactic account tracks with at least early motivations and inspiration for the picture theory. The pointillism model he paints tracks well with Wittgenstein's inspiration in the use of model cars to depict the details of accidents. Such models are unable to show impossible configurations of what they depict because they are limited by the same physical laws as that which is depicted. Language, or at least the sounds which compose language, do not have the same restrictions as the other depiction methods discussed. I can quite readily verbalise or write the characters for "Caesar is a prime number." The point of the Pears distinction here is that in such an utterance, I would fail to name any of the objects depicted at all, (none of my paint would be reaching the canvas).

A weakness with such a view is that there is an admission that words are always already related to the objects which they depict in a sentence with sense. There is an attempt to avoid the possibility of nonsense sentences containing names, but this is not fully achieved. An alternative logico-syntactic theory of sense involves identifying the possibilities for names (and other signs) without reference to their objects. Bronzo identifies Hacker as holding a logical-syntactic view in which the concern is not meaningful symbols but rather the rules for governing the combination of signs only considering their roles as signs. Hacker writes, "All names that are intersubstitutable in a well-formed sentence *salva significatione* belong to the same ontological category. It is this that shows that red, green, orange, etc., are colours."[289] The relationship described by Pears is therefore reversed. Names can be placed into certain situations because of their categorisation. This does not need there to be an actual object, in a meaning relation with the name. Hacker understands names and the objects they depict to be linked via projection, writing, "Names are connected to reality by lines of projection. The method of projection is thinking the sense of the sentence."[290] The link between the names and objects only occurs when they are used in a sentence with sense. The difference between Hacker and Pears, at least on the "sense test" is therefore, "there can be nonsensical signs, but not nonsensical symbols, since a symbol just is a sign used according to the rules for its correct use."[291]

The reference to ontological categories of names in this theory of sense has a surface-level resemblance to the third *Grundlagen* principle and to Frege's defence of the distinctions between objects, first-order concepts, and second-order concepts. However, he does think that

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[289] Hacker "Metaphysics from Ineffability to Normativity.," in *A Companion to Wittgenstein,* eds. Hans-Johann Glock and John Hyman (Oxford: Blackwell, 201) 213.
[290] Ibid.
[291] Ibid., 200.

Wittgenstein's method was responding to errors in Frege's view: the view that the logico-syntactic rules for names are from its meaning (and meaning here being the reference, *Bedeutung*). However, as I shall explore in the next brief section, Hacker, like Pears and Glock, may be mistaken in ascribing to the early Wittgenstein having a rule-based theory of sense.

3.3.4. The Context Principle and Non-Factorising Concepts of Language

The theories of sense discussed thus far all account in some way for the context principle. An Anscombean bipolarity account holds that sense only applies to whole sentences, and both versions of the logical-syntactic accounts hold that there are no names (functioning) as names when they are not in a sentence. Furthermore, all these accounts deny that a sentence without sense is a sentence at all. However, Bronzo, taking insight from the Conant and Diamond's austere conception of nonsense argues that these interpretations miss the overall impact of the context principle. He writes, "There is no way of identifying an aspect of one's linguistic performance while bracketing the question of whether it amounts to a case of making sense or rather to a case of failing to do so...They [the theories of sense discussed] are bound to enter the scene too late, when the question they aim to answer has already been settled."[292] He is characterising all of the nonsense tests thus far as mistakenly separating out the capacities of language – such as the capacity for bipolarity of sense – from the whole.

Using the austere conception of nonsense to undermine the theories of sense which emerge in other Tractatus scholarship is not unique to Bronzo. Conant writes that the logical-syntactical theories end up breaking the context principle, even in the use of the principle in Frege. Conant attributes to Dummett a reading of Frege wherein a nonsensical combination of signs is recognisable as nonsense because the signs symbolise a certain role in language. Just like in Frege, "On the Tractarian conception, the only way a sentence can be *Unsinn* is by failing to symbolise."[293] Conant's critique here applies both to the Pears/Glock version of the logical-syntactic theory but also applies to Hacker's. It does so by including the functions of signs as a kind of symbolising.

Any view which takes on the austere conception of nonsense does not find a "test for nonsense" in Wittgenstein's Tractatus. This appears to contrast both with the introduction and with the last remarks of the text.

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[292] Bronzo, *Wittgenstein on Sense and Grammar*, 29.
[293] J. Conant, "The Method of the Tractatus," in *From Frege to Wittgenstein.* eds. E. Reck (Oxford: OUP, 2002Conant, Method of the *Tractatus* 194 -5.

> "The book deals with the problems of philosophy and shows, I believe, that the reason why these problems are posed is that the logic of our language is misunderstood." (TLP, intro)

> ...and then whenever someone else wanted to say something metaphysical, to demonstrate to him that he had failed to give a meaning to certain signs in his proposition. (TLP, 6.53)

How is this showing or demonstrating to be achieved without a theory of sense? It is worth noting that both of these sections are largely taken by resolute readers to be part of Wittgenstein's frame – they are not part of the "body" of the text which composes a ladder to be cast aside. Conant proposes that the Tractatus invites the reader into the illusion of a metaphysical proposal and the illusion that it is possible to view language from "sideways on" and that we can recognise the apparent propositions of such a proposal as nonsensical by "harnessing the capabilities for distinguishing sense from nonsense (for recognising the symbol in the sign and for recognising when no method for symbolising has yet been conferred upon a sign) implicit in the everyday practice of mastery of language."[294] This reading, as many scholars have noted, pre-empts in the Tractatus large methodological commitments found in the Philosophical Investigations. The process Conant here describes could be described as therapeutic – it involves a change in thought pattern through recognising its inability to actually capture a thought. Contra-Bronzo, the method that the resolute readers attribute to the early Wittgenstein, I would argue is properly a theory of sense. Conant clearly describes a nonsense test which can be performed by confronting illusions head on. He gestures at the capacity for human beings to recognise nonsense via an understanding of when a sign has been given no symbol.

I am sympathetic to Conant's description of "fully immersing in illusions" as an answer to the ever present Tractarian ladder problem. There are certainly sentences in the *Tractatus* which are properly metaphysical and therefore are, by its own words, excluded from the proper method in philosophy. However, I think that even if the early Wittgenstein held two of the *Grundlagen* principles as tightly as proposed by Diamond, it is still possible to identify a more practical sense-test that is still true to them, and to the Fregean spirit in which they are used. I do not wish to mount a full critique of the resolute view in this chapter and will be exploring the

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[294] Ibid., 195.

implications of this view in Chapter Four. Rather, I wish to propose that the *Tractatus* inherits other Fregean commitments about sense.

3.3.5. Connecting Fregean Sense and Wittgensteinian Nonsense

In some places, Wittgenstein's remarks about sense bound up the notion with his version of the context principle. At 3.13, he writes "Only facts can express sense, a set of names cannot." (TLP, 3.142) This is, I interpret as an explicit acceptance that sense can only occur in the context of a sentence. Names alone are, as Diamond and Conant argue, without sense. Notably in this remark, Wittgenstein uses the terminology "express" which harkens back to Frege's "mode of expression." On two other occasions this terminology appears:

> A proposition, therefore does not actually contain its sense, but does contain the possibility of expressing it....
>
> A proposition contains the form, but not the content of its sense. (TLP, 3.13)
>
> I call any part of a proposition that characterises its sense an expression (or symbol)
>
> (A proposition itself is an expression.) (TLP, 3.31)

Proposition 3.13 is likely a direct critique of Russell's revised multiple relations theory wherein he tried to show logical form as another term in multiple relation with the judging subject. Expression as used in 3.31, resembles Dummett's characterisation of Frege's sense, wherein the component parts, in their role in the sentence contribute to its sense. Like Frege, he treats sense as distinct from the content of the proposition:

> A proposition shows its sense A proposition shows how things stand if it is true. And it says that they do so stand. (TLP, 4.022)

The notion of expressing sense is here in the context of Wittgenstein's picture theory of propositions. Sense is discussed as a feature of Wittgenstein's saying and showing distinction.

The resolute readers pre-empt too many of Wittgenstein's later commitments in their understanding of a theory of sense. For one thing, the later Wittgenstein does at least suggest that the author of the *Tractatus* did misunderstand propositional structure, by having a reductive view of what can be done with language. The later Wittgenstein writes, "—It is interesting to compare the multiplicity of the tools in language and of the ways they are used, the multiplicity of kinds of word and sentence, with what logicians have said about the

structure of language. (Including the author of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus.}"* (PI, 23)
Hacker's observation that, "...'S is identical' means nothing (*heisst nichts*) because we have
given no meaning to 'identical' as an adjective (TLP, 5.4733)."[295] illustrates that it is quite
possible to see *why* a particular set of words is nonsensical and this why is determined by our
known rules of syntax. The early Wittgenstein is wedded to the proposition, and propositions
are only formed by adherence to rules.

A propositional view of language, such as those held by Frege and the early Wittgenstein,
fundamentally maintains the connectedness of sense and bipolarity. It is the later
Wittgenstein's exploration of language more broadly, and an abandoning of the need to do
philosophy propositionally that allows this commitment to be abandoned. The early
Wittgenstein is like Frege wedded to the proposition or sentence as a unity of language. When
there is nonsense, it fails to be a proposition. The Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus* repeatedly ties
the character of propositions to their bipolarity. A synthesis of the resolute proto-therapeutic
reading of his method and this insistence is that an incapacity to identify truth or falsehood
(direction) is a clue that the sign has no designation of a symbol. The proposition has no sense,
and therefore we should not be able to derive this information about it, but the familiarity of
the signs and their usual symbols allows a quick analysis for bipolarity. A nonsense set of words
does not show anything, but they can be instructive.

I think, contra-the resolute readers that bipolarity will feature in the correct analysis of a theory
of sense as expressed in the *Tractatus.* However, I think that they do correctly express a tension
between Wittgenstein's understanding of nonsense, and his commitment to a strictly
propositional theory of sense. Natural or everyday language, as I will discuss in the next section
becomes his focus precisely because he no longer commits to any formal theory of the
necessary structure of propositions.

Throughout this project, I have argued that Wittgenstein has a more central role for nonsense
than Hume and Kant, despite the idea of nonsense featuring in their philosophical methods. In
this section I hope to have shown that, though his understanding of nonsense is, in some ways
antagonistic to his idol of Frege, he inherits his *Grundlagen* principles, his interest in expressing
or showing, and, importantly for the *Tractatus,* his bipolarity. In the next section, I examine
Wittgenstein's relationship to the philosophy of Russell and Frege in his later work and

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[295] P. M. S. Hacker, "Wittgenstein, Carnap and the New American Wittgensteinians," *The Philosophical Quarterly* 53 No. 210 (2003): 15.

question if it is accurate to describe his work as continuing to hold loyally to Frege's *Grundlagen* principles.

3.4. Later Wittgenstein and the Grundlagen Principles

As I argued in the earlier section, even if the context principle was not of massive interest to Frege, the early Wittgenstein was highly inspired by it. In this section, I will argue that the context principle is the aspect of Frege's work that most inform Wittgenstein's theory of sense (and therefore of nonsense) in his middle and later period work. Anscombe's suggestion that the theory of sense in the Tractatus is effectively a bipolarity test works rather well in that text but, as I will show, is completely inadequate for his identifying nonsense in the *Philosophical Investigations*. For one thing, Wittgenstein's later analysis of meaningful language is, for the most part, not concerned with the possibility of truth and falsehood. If the interpretation of Frege wherein only in the context of a proposition can a word have a sense, then this principle seems to follow Wittgenstein for far longer than bipolarity ever did. The kind of context which is of importance is no longer the bipolar proposition, but rather the context of a language game. To offer a full account of Wittgenstein's shifting relationship to Freudian ideas, I will track changes to his use of the context principle in the middle period, *Lecture on Ethics*. This work establishes that ethical language (such as the term "good") only works within narrowly defined contexts. It also, as I will argue continues Wittgenstein's commitment to the other *Grundlagen* principle of the sharp separation of the logical and the psychological. This distinction becomes less pressing in his later work, as he moves towards discussions of language games, but as I identify, remains present in the *Investigations*.

My argument in favour of considering a heavy Fregean influence extending into Wittgenstein's later work hinges on the ability to consider the context principle applying to non-propositional contexts. I draw upon scholarship from Reck and Tate to develop this position. It is only through considering context that the later Wittgenstein's philosophical therapy can emerge as productive method.

 My argument is that Wittgenstein becomes even more interested in the notion of context. I will also, to round out my discussion of Wittgenstein's influence from Frege, examine the role of the other *Grundlagen* principles in Wittgenstein's thought – particularly in the middle and later philosophy.

3.4.1. Ethical Language and the Logical-Psychological Distinction

Wittgenstein gave his *Lecture on Ethics in* 1929 and outside of the *Tractatus* and *Investigations* is one of his most well-circulated works. In the text, he argues that ethical propositions lack a firm foundation, and are meaningless. His argument hinges on the idea that our language about ethics is entirely made up of allegory and metaphor, but that there is not a solid ground of non-metaphorical language that statements about ethics can be reduced to. In my view, this lecture shows that Wittgenstein maintained the psychological-logical distinction and was developing the context principle further. Associations themselves are not enough to cement the meaning of any of the terms used in ethical discussions.

The psychological-logical distinction, or something like it is evidenced in Wittgenstein's rejection of ethical facts. Wittgenstein proposes that in a book of all facts, there would be no ethical commentary. He gives the example of a description of all the facts pertaining to a murder, writing:

> If for instance in our world-book we read the description of a murder with all its details physical and psychological the mere description of these facts will contain nothing which we could call an ethical proposition. The murder will be on exactly the same level as any other event, for instance the falling of a stone. Certainly, the reading of this description might cause us pain or rage or any other emotion, or we might read about the pain or rage caused by this murder in other people when they heard of it, but there will simply be facts, facts, and facts but no ethics.[296]

It seems quite that the Wittgenstein of the lecture is still working with a propositional account of language, and as propositions are paired with facts, the Fregean bipolar view of propositions as outlined by Anscombe and Dummett. Ethics are altogether excluded from the possibility of factual propositions. Wittgenstein separates the psychological reactions and associations from facts, affirming Frege's principle of the separation of the psychological and the logical.

Interestingly, the appearance of the psychological separation from facts is arrived at via an appeal to context. In the *Lecture,* Wittgenstein offers an exploration of ethical language wherein he examines how terms are used in so-called ethical propositions. The first observation is that such propositions use expressions such as "good," "better", and "valuable" in ways rather

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[296] L. Wittgenstein, *Lecture on Ethics: Introduction, Interpretation and Complete Text*, eds. E. Zamuner, D. Levy, V. E. Di Lascio, Valentina E. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2014) 45.

different from how they are used elsewhere: "I will call them the trivial or relative sense on the one hand and the ethical or absolute sense on the other."[297] He gives the example of a "good chair" wherein whether it is judged as good or bad if it performs well *as a chair.* The contrast is that the ethical proposition is the use of the same term without the context required for judgement. There is not a standard by which to measure the good or the valuable. Without this reference point, Wittgenstein calls the use of such terms in ethical language "similes."[298] However, unlike other instances of a simile, there is no expression without the use of imagery, "...I must also be able to drop the simile and to describe the facts without it."[299] (LE 49) However, without the reference points of the trivial uses of such expressions, there is no simple bipolar proposition with which to express an absolute value. As he writes of ethical propositions, "For all I wanted to do with them was just to go beyond the world and that is to say beyond significant language."[300] Carrying from revelation that the metaphors have no underlying fact attached, Wittgenstein concludes the futility of the ethical proposition.

The Wittgenstein of the *Lecture* begins a project of pointing towards how language is ordinarily used. The examples he uses to show the nonsensicality of ethical propositions are mundane – a good chair, the importance of not catching a cold, and valuable jewellery. This mundanity is revealing in that his context principle appears to extend further than Frege's or his own in the *Tractatus* did. I argue, "good," "valuable," "important" in these meaningful propositions derive their meaning from a nexus of related propositions already understood by both the language user, and importantly these propositions are understood by convention. There is a suggestion of this expansion in the *Tractatus* wherein Wittgenstein acknowledges "The tacit conventions on which the understanding of everyday language depends are enormously complicated." (TLP, 4.002) The *Lecture* brings these conventions to the forefront of the investigation. This use of a non-philosophical use of language to question the meaning of language used in philosophy is developed as his characteristic therapeutic method in the *Investigations.* There is a sense that Wittgenstein's philosophy is starting to consider nonsense beyond failure to make a proposition, but also failure to make use of tacit convention.

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[297] Ibid., 44.
[298] Ibid., 48.
[299] Ibid., 49.
[300] Ibid., 51.

3.4.2. The Context Principle's Application to Language Games

I hold that Frege's context principle is a useful lens with which to approach Wittgenstein's changing philosophical approach. I argue that rather than being discarded in his later works, the context principle informs the later Wittgenstein's construction of sense and nonsense. In this section, I will examine one of Wittgenstein's investigations and demonstrate how it makes use of the principle. I also show how Wittgenstein rejects Frege's notion of sense more completely than is evidenced in his earlier and writings especially and develops a mode of investigating language which requires no reference to the bipolar proposition.

The example I shall use to show Wittgenstein's use of the context principle is the set of problems which I shall line with scholarship call the problem of *intentionality.* I shall focus on the remarks regarding orders, expectations and wishes from around PI 425. Intentionality also includes the simple case of thought directed at objects but for my purposes, the "satisfaction-lack" cases will provide the necessary demonstration of the context principle at work. For correct context, Wittgenstein himself does not use "intentionality" as the term of investigation, but instead, in *the Investigations* is interested primarily in the question, "How was it possible for a thought to deal with *this very* object?" (PI, 428). In the orders and expectations cases, the questions concern the relationship between the expected and ordered event and the expression of the unsatisfied order or expectation. To demonstrate the range of questions regarding expectations, he writes of an unusual gunshot:

> I see someone aiming a gun and say "I expect a bang." The shot is fired. – "What! – was that what you expected? So did the bang somehow already exist in your expectation? Or is it just that your expectation agrees in some other respect with what occurred; the that noise was not contained in your expectation and merely supervened as an accidental property when the expectation was being fulfilled?"

The puzzle concerns both what it means to fulfil an expectation, the necessity of any one element of the expectation, and where the content or event of an expectation can be located. Wittgenstein raises a similar puzzle for orders, writing, "When we give an order, it may look as if the ultimate thing sought by the order has to remain unexpressed, as there is still a gap between an order and its execution." (PI, 433) An order as a linguistic expression, cannot contain the event of it being carried out.

Wittgenstein's method for dissolving the problems of intentionality is characteristic of his later therapeutic method.[301] He rejects that these puzzles are the result of a genuine misunderstanding of metaphysics. Rather they emerge from confusions about how language is used. The investigation therefore is not into characterising some relation between the expectation or order and the world, but rather into language games which are related to intention. As Tim Crane describes, Wittgenstein aims to dissolve two confusing pictures about intention. The first is that the event of an intention must somehow be a part of the expression: "...what you expect must in some mysterious way already be contained in your expectation."[302] The other related picture is that intention is a particular mental process or representation. In other words this is the idea that "the expectation and what satisfies it can be connected by a mental action of 'meaning' something: 'hocus pocus in the soul'.[303]

Wittgenstein dissolves the first idea about expectations having the expected event contained by showing how uncharacteristic this notion is of the way we discuss an expectation being. Wittgenstein has us consider the expectation expression, "I expect he will come in." Such an expectation could be fulfilled in an ordinary fashion wherein the guest enters by the door and sits down. However, we would also say the expectation had been fulfilled if they leapt through the window, or even appeared as I from nowhere. Beyond this, one could even imagine minute difference in the series of events leading up to the ordinary entrance. All of these events would meet the expectation but as Wittgenstein writes, "but the one sequence of events has not the slightest similarity with the other!" (PI, 445). There is no way in which these differing events could somehow be contained in the proposition "I expect he'll come in." The only similarity between all of the cases of the guest arriving is that they could be described by the expression "he came in!"

Wittgenstein wants us to instead consider that, "it is in language that an expectation and its fulfilment make contact." (PI 445) There is an agreement between speakers of a language that the expectation of the guest's entry is satisfied by their entry, and dissatisfied should they fail to enter. This is what it is to set an expectation. Hacker captures this principle in his chapter on this topic: "What appeared to be a metalogical agreement between thought, language, and reality is no more than a grammatical nexus between expressions." The expression "I expect he will come" is another way of saying "If he does not arrive, my expectation will not be met," and

[301] Which I shall fully explore in Chapter Five.
[302] T. Crane, "Wittgenstein and Intentionality." *The Harvard Review of Philosophy* 17 no. 1 (2010) :88 - 104.
[303] Ibid.

"If he arrives, my expectations will be met. There is no additional link to be made between the world's event and the expectation, as Hacker, puts it, "Ostensive definitions do not link words and world—they remain within grammar."[304] There is not a metaphysical puzzle present.

That intention can be understood as a nexus of expressions within a linguistic community also demonstrates that intention is not a mental act. No additional element is required for expectations or orders to function outside of the language. There are limits of intention which prevent it from simply being a mental act. Wittgenstein offers the following example:

> When I say that the orders "Bring me sugar" and "Bring me milk" make sense, but not the combination "Milk me sugar", that does not mean that the utterance of this combination of words has no effect. And if its effect is that the other person stares at me and gapes, I don't on that account call it the order to stare and gape, even if that was precisely the effect that I wanted to produce. (PI, 498)

In this case we see that the mental act of desiring a certain action to place, does not itself constitute an order, even if a use of language has brought that action about. The language game has rules to which the speaker must accord. Hacker identifies further reasons why Wittgenstein was wholly unsatisfied with a mental act account of intention, "One cannot mean something quickly or slowly, one cannot be interrupted in the middle of meaning something, and one cannot forget to mean something by one's words."[305] To intend or mean something bears no resemblance to any other kind of action.

This dissolution of the problems of intention, I argue, is demonstrative of Wittgenstein's development of Frege's context principle, and his ultimate rejection of the other elements of Frege's (and relatedly Russell's) philosophy. Frege's context principle, as Reck understands is a serious commitment to the notion that "one does not assume that words and their meanings are explanatorily *prior* to sentences and their meanings or their meanings, or to their truth-conditions. What is *prior,* instead, are our basic laws and definitions." [306] It is Frege's basic laws which allow the bipolar proposition to be true or false. There is scholarly debate about the status of these laws in Frege's writings – as to whether there is a divine or Platonic reason for their base importance, or if they are merely derived as the only working system.[307] Nevertheless,

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[304] Hacker, *Comparisons and Context*, 179 – 180.
[305]Ibid., 180.
[306] E. Reck, "Frege's Influence on Wittgenstein: Reversing Metaphysics via the Context Principle," in *Early Analytic Philosophy.* ed. William Tait (Illinois: Carus Publishing, 1997) 159.
[307] Ibid. 170.

the context principle, as far as Wittgenstein develops it, requires that meaning can only occur in the context of a proposition. The proposition adheres to the basic laws of logic.

In the *Blue Book*, Wittgenstein comments directly on Frege's conception of the principle, and acknowledges why it led him to a doctrine of sense:

> Frege ridiculed the formalist conception of mathematics by saying that the formalists confused the unimportant thing, the sign, with the important, the meaning. Surely, one wishes to say, mathematics does not treat of dashes on a bit of paper. Frege's idea could be expressed thus: the propositions of mathematics, if they were just complexes of dashes, would be dead and utterly uninteresting, whereas they obviously have a kind of life. And the same, of course, could be said of any proposition: Without a sense, or without the thought, a proposition would be an utterly | (BB, 309,7) dead and trivial thing. And further it seems clear that no adding of inorganic signs can make the proposition live. And the conclusion which one draws from this is that what must be added to the dead signs in order to make a live proposition is something immaterial with properties different from all mere signs.

Frege was right to think that signs only mean anything when they are animated "with a kind of life." Wittgenstein even acknowledges here that to think that there is something present in the sign – sense – when it has this life is an understandable conclusion to reach. Frege's context principle is that any sign only gains its sense in a well-formed sentence. That is, a sentence formed according to the basic laws of logic and derived principles, including the bipolarity discussed in this chapter. Wittgenstein's context principle on the other hand is simply, "But if we had to name anything which is the life of the sign, we should have to say that it was its *use*." (BB, 309, 7) In other words, the later Wittgensteinian context principle is this: a sign only has meaning in a language game, in its *use*.

That Wittgenstein's context principle concerns the context of a use, rather than the context of a proposition is not to say that any use can set any meaning. As discussed, that there are limitations is a strong reason to agree that we should not accept that "use" is derived from a mental act of meaning. There are rules, but they are not like Frege's basic logical laws. There are rules which are accorded within the working nexus of language games. These rules allow meaningful, useful expressions beyond the bipolar proposition. Towards the end of *Investigations* Wittgenstein remarks "The point is not to explain a language-game by means of our experiences, but to take account of the language game." (PI, 655) This anti-psychologistic

stance is shared with Frege. The context principle and the psychological-logical distinction remain bundled up together for both philosophers.

Even if Frege is not best understood as a metaphysical Platonist, his discussions of how propositions have sense are antithetical to Wittgenstein's view. Wittgenstein characterises Frege's conclusions about sense as imagining "that which gives the sentence life as something in an occult sphere, accompanying the sentence." Even if we do not hold Frege to be a strong Fregean, there is a major departure in Wittgenstein's position. He rejects, as Reck writes, "the postulation of a notion of "meaning" (or "sense" or "thought") according to which the meaning of words is *independent* from, or *priori* to their use."[308] The later Wittgenstein's context principle is an extension of the context principle so far that it undermines the other philosophical commitments of his young self's idol.

Frege and Russell are fundamental to the development of Wittgenstein's philosophical project. The direction of his early work is often in direct conversation with them both. Analysing the relationships he had with his idol and his mentor through the connections in language, sense, and nonsense, brings these conversations into clear focus. Russell's theory of descriptions was not a philosophy of language as such. From *On Denoting* through to the development of his multiple relations theory, Russell was most interested in the acquaintance relation and saw it as fundamental epistemologically and ontologically. I have described Wittgenstein's departure from Russell to have been one of a shift from discussing the objects that language picks out, to discussing language as language. To make this clearer, the early Wittgenstein rejected that one could be acquainted with logical form in the manner that one is acquainted with objects. Though one can know the logical form of a proposition, it is not something representative in language. Russell's error in the later version of the multiple relations theory has similarities to Kant's Transcendental Illusion. There is a desire, having established the acquaintance principle as a source of certainty, that this principle applies indiscriminately. For the early Wittgenstein, convinced of the pictorial relation between language and the world, such a view is untenable. Logical form is not an object, and in pushing back against Russell, the saying and showing distinction developed. Wittgenstein's pushback against Russell's multiple relations theory was emblematic of his conclusion that logical form could not be said, and thus could not be

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[308] Ibid., 180.

captured in a proposition. The concluding remarks of the *Tractatus* give way to the anti-metaphysical work that follows and thus Russell's influence should be taken seriously.

Frege's influence on Wittgenstein is similarly profound, and as I have argued, perhaps more enduring in his middle and later-period works. Frege's invention of sense showed that the mode of presentation was a vital stage to bridge objects and idea. The combination of the theory of sense with the primacy of the proposition as a result of the context principle offers a theory of nonsense which is both coherent and likely held by Wittgenstein. Though Wittgenstein rejects that sense is a metaphysical entity attached to the reference, in the *Tractatus* he accepts that it can only be applied to a sentence with a truth value. As laid out by Anscombe this allows the Tractarian distinction between sense and nonsense. I have argued that Wittgenstein's early conception of nonsense was informed by the context principle and the principle of the separation of the logical and psychological. However, I have rejected that this straightforwardly means the "resolute" interpretation is correct. There is tension in Wittgenstein's early work precisely because he elaborates and can apply a test for nonsense in testing for bipolarity.

The later Wittgenstein, I have argued, pushes the context principle further. In the *Tractatus* he is clear that no single expression has a sense, only having one in the context of the bipolar proposition. In the middle period, he maintained Frege's psychological-logical distinction because the metaphors of ethical language are shown to lack the underlying structure of propositions with sense. However, he more readily discusses not only the context of single propositions but makes reference to other propositions which are acceptable in the language. In the later period, he abandons the proposition as the object of study, and is instead interested in the expression or the language game. He maintains, like Frege, that meaning cannot be a mental act. While for Frege, the life of the proposition comes from its sense, which relies on his basic laws, Wittgenstein finds the life of the proposition in its use. With input from Frege's notion of sense and the context principle in mind, the early Wittgenstein developed his own, and a corresponding picture of nonsense. The centrality of nonsense to Wittgenstein's philosophical project, is at least in part, one of his debts to Frege.

Chapter Four

A House Divided: Critical Differences Between the Early and Later Wittgenstein

Throughout this project I have mentioned, often offhand, certain differences and similarities between the early and later Wittgenstein. In this chapter, I draw out the differences between his early and later views on nonsense and therapy. There is an extensive scholarship which effectively asks if we should take there to be one, two, or even three philosophers under the name Wittgenstein. On one hand, I am inclined to dismiss the question – all philosophers develop and change their views over time. On the other hand, Wittgenstein's transition between his greatest contributions to the discipline of philosophy was marked by a significant temporal gap, a radical departure in style, and an apparent complete shift in interest. One Wittgenstein seems to be a founder of the analytic tradition properly conceived alongside Russell, and Frege, this philosopher massively inspired the logical positivists. The later Wittgenstein finds himself at the base of movements such as Ordinary Language Philosophy and Informal Logic. Furthermore, I have been guilty of defaulting to referring to the early Wittgenstein and the later Wittgenstein in this project with little reflection on how to conceptualise the difference. This chapter serves as an outlet for much-needed reflection but does not merely regard the difference as a matter of Wittgenstein scholarship. I aim to reflect on the later Wittgenstein's critiques of his own earlier work as critiques of prevailing, influential approaches in philosophy. In keeping with the aims of the overall thesis, I assess the relationship between the early and later Wittgenstein regarding their approaches to nonsense and therapy.

No discussion of the evolution of Wittgenstein's philosophical approach can avoid a discussion of the debates surrounding the resolute reading of the *Tractatus* which was introduced in prior chapters. Further, the resolute reading hinges upon the Diamond-Conant interpretation of "nonsense" in the *Tractatus*. A common criticism of the resolute reading is that it mistakenly pre-empts philosophical commitments in Wittgenstein's early work that he does not develop until much later. Notably, Conant's interpretation of the Tractarian method uses the language of therapy, which is a defining term in the work of the later Wittgenstein and later Wittgenstein scholarship. It is sometimes taken to be a "mono-Wittgensteinian" reading. I develop on my arguments in the previous chapter that the resolute reading correctly identifies a tension in the

Tractatus and undermines a metaphysical understanding of its aims, but I reject the final conclusions of their observations precisely because of the tension. I explore the possibility that Wittgenstein had a positive role for philosophy, specifically the poorly practised philosophy which he was targeting and therefore a role for nonsense. This then provides a metre stick by which to compare the role for philosophy in the later work.

Beyond the debates surrounding the resolute reading, some scholars have taken to "reading the later Wittgenstein resolutely." I reject this reading, characterised by Mulhall and Hutchison because I read a positive, philosophical role for the later Wittgenstein. He does not propose an end to any philosophical debate. Towards the end of the chapter, I suggest that there were shadows of Wittgensteinian therapy apparent in the "teaching tool" view of the *Tractatus* that I develop in this chapter, however, the influence of the Freudian therapeutic method completely shifts his structure and aims.

4.1. State of Scholarship

The question as to the division or continuity between the work of the early and late Wittgenstein has practical and institutional implications. David Stern lays out in his paper, "How Many Wittgensteins?" the curious case of later Wittgenstein scholars in the US who had to establish the North American Wittgenstein Society because "so few papers on the later Wittgenstein are accepted by the American Philosophical Association's three annual meetings."[309] This society does not seem to have been active since 2014, but in an archived webpage they state that the group was formed in the 1999 – 2000 academic year and that "The organization has tended to show special interest in the work of the later Wittgenstein and its relation to methods of ordinary language philosophers since crucial issues in these areas have been and continue to be neglected."[310] Thus, there is marked evidence in the US that the two-Wittgenstein view was an assumption shared by the philosophical profession and that there was general disregard for studies of the later philosophy. Such an extreme consequence of the assumed two-Wittgenstein's view is naturally an outlier; however, it is emblematic of how distinct Wittgenstein's philosophical periods are perceived to be, and which philosophers he is read alongside. The early Wittgenstein often appears alongside Russell and Frege in histories of

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[309] D. Stern, "How Many Wittgensteins In Alois Pichler & Simo Säätelä (eds.), *Wittgenstein: The Philosopher and His Works*, eds. A. Pichler & S. Säätelä (Berlin: Ontos, 2006) 209.

[310] North American Philosophical Society, "History." 2013 Screenshot from The Wayback Machine. https://web.archive.org/web/20201023105123/https://sites.google.com/site/wittgensteinsociety/history. [Accessed 15/02/24]

the emergence of analytic philosophy.[311] The *Tractatus* is also generally considered foundational to the philosophy developed by the Vienna Circle. Though this is a reasonable place for him, such a distinction between early and later work is not apparent in other philosophers. Russell also continued to develop philosophically after the 1910s but there is not a culture of identifying with the early Russell or the later Russell. The later Wittgenstein's legacy includes the assumption that he is foundational to speech act theory and informal logic. It should also not be ignored the role of the later Wittgenstein in scholarship around the Wartime Quartet and related figures.

In this section, I outline a loose history of the early and later Wittgenstein's reception and lay out the possible answers to the "two Wittgensteins" problem. The two apparent views: that there are either two or one is a radically simplified approach.

The reasons for the distancing of the later Wittgenstein from the so-called early analytic tradition where this does not occur for the later Russell are numerous. The most important biographical fact is that the *Philosophical Investigations* was published posthumously, decades after the *Tractatus*. Wittgenstein was unavailable to engage in discussion about the text which contained most of his later philosophical thought. There was little opportunity for this text to be conceived as a continuation of its predecessor. Other historical factors which should be considered involve the ways that Wittgenstein soon after the *Tractatus* was published began to distance himself from other developments in the analytic tradition he helped found. As discussed in the previous chapter, his personal relationship with Russell was effectively over by the end of 1922. Likewise, he had distanced himself from Frege after the publication of the *Tractatus*. Secondly, though his early work was proving deeply interesting for the Vienna Circle he never integrated into the group. Ray Monk provides an account of Carnap, Feigl and Waismann having meetings with Wittgenstein from 1927 and very quickly realising, "[he] was not the positivist they had expected."[312] Both this difference in opinion and an apparent lack of desire to enter the Vienna Circle perhaps drove a wedge between his later thought and association with the inheritors of Frege and Russell's tradition. Furthermore, as Coffa documents, Wittgenstein was engaging in discussions with the Circle while "his views on fundamental matters were changing rather quickly."[313] On one hand, this means that the eager Circle members were exposed to some of Wittgenstein's post-Tractatus thought, but on the

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[311] For example, Michael Potter's *The Rise of Analytic Philosophy* groups him with Frege, Russell, and Ramsey.

[312] Monk, *Duty of Genius.* 243.

[313] Coffa, *The Semantic Tradition,* 241.

other it means he did not present a fully cohesive viewpoint, often reading poetry or discussing non-philosophical matters as part of his talks. Thirdly, and perhaps most simply, Wittgenstein's two most complete and famous works were separated by more than thirty years, and the latter was released to an audience which had been developing and responding to the former with little input from Wittgenstein in between.

Wittgenstein wanted the *Philosophical Investigations* to be published alongside a reprint of the *Tractatus,* "the latter could be seen in the right light only by contrast with and against the background of my older way of thinking." (PI, Preface.) Unfortunately, such a remark can be understood either as affirming that his work moved through a gradual evolution which is best understood with reference to an old way of thinking, or as an endorsement that the views are so different that they belong to two scholars. Stern notes that early adopters of a "mono-Wittgensteinian" view held "From the 1950s to the 1970s "one-Wittgenstein" interpreters made the later philosophy look as if it is only a reworking of the early philosophy, as that is usually understood on the two-Wittgensteins view."[314] Stern attributes this view to Feyerabend and Kenny. To detail this view, Kenny's most controversial claim is that the later Wittgenstein develops on the *Tractarian* picture theory. Kenny draws attention to PI 291 wherein Wittgenstein describes the thought that propositions are world-pictures is an unhelpful one because pictures "are as it were, idle." He writes, "These passages seem to suggest that the picture theory needs supplementing, rather than it is false: that the theory of meaning as use is a complement rather than a rival to the picture theory."[315] Feyerabend, makes an even stronger claim of continuity, writing, "The *Investigations* basically contain an application of the main ideas of the Tractatus to several concrete problems, the only difference being the use of language-games instead of the language of the natural sciences which formed the theoretical background of the Tractatus."[316] Mono-Wittgensteinianism as explicit as Feyerabend's and even Kenny's remained largely unpopular.

Stern suggests that the next notable surge in a "One Wittgenstein" view emerged from the development of the Resolute view. However, the interpretative direction is flipped. Rather than viewing the *Tractatus* as the base work before the *Investigations,* the latter is used as a key for interpreting the former.[317] Wittgenstein's later developments are used to resolve the mysterious features of the *Tractatus.* A popularising force for the resolute view was the publication of Alice

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[314] Stern, "How Many Wittgensteins?" 207.
[315] Kenny, *Wittgenstein*, 226.
[316] P. Feyerabend, "Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations," *Philosophical Review* 64 no. 3. (1955): 582.
[317] Stern, "How Many Wittgensteins?" 207.

Crary and Rupert Read's collection, *The New Wittgenstein,* and the work of Conant and Diamond are in a larger section titled "The Tractatus as forerunner of Wittgenstein's later writings." It is a core feature of the resolute position that the early Wittgenstein pre-empts the later.

Broadley, a two Wittgensteins view (perhaps one should call it duo-Wittgensteinianism) is the orthodox position, but it is not a homogenous position. At one level there are simply differences in attitude to the importance of the works. There are of course scholars who work on the early work and dismiss his later contributions (adopting an attitude reminiscent of Russell). Likewise, it is possible to treat the *Tractatus* as one of the philosophical works that is dissolved by the method presented in the *Investigations.*[318] There is another dividing line regarding what one considers the purpose of the *Tractatus* to be in light of its closing passages. If Wittgenstein is a realist regarding atomism early in his work, then it is understandable to consider the latter a radical departure from it. Marie McGinn defines this realist Tractatus reading as an understanding, "it is in virtue of an isomorphism between the logical structure of language and the independently constituted structure of reality that the connection between language and reality is made."[319] There are then a multitude of interpretations which do not view the early Wittgenstein as a metaphysical realist of this type. These include McGinn herself, the work of Hacker and the early Baker, and Peter Geach. The full scope of these positions is quite different, but the pertinent idea is that these are characteristic of a middle view rather than an endorsement of mono-Wittgensteinianism.

So far, we have established two axes. One regards whether one is more convinced of the ideas contained in the Tractatus or the Investigations. The other regards the interpretation of the Tractatus. Naturally, the third axis, if we are to visualise these interpretations regards the interpretation of the *Investigations.* Though the text lacks an obvious self-refutation, there are a multitude of approaches to what one is supposed to do with its approach to philosophy. There are a set of scholars, and perhaps the most developed is Steven Mulhall who seeks to read the later Wittgenstein "resolutely." To borrow Genia Schönsbaumsfeld's summary, a resolute reading must contain, a "commitment to nonsense monism."[320] In reference to the previous chapter, this is a commitment to Diamonds Fregean reading of the concept of nonsense wherein no part of a nonsense sentence can have the meaning it has in a sentence with sense. Further, a resolute reading includes the "rejection of the idea that there is something we

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[318] Consider Cavell, or Bouwsma's influential readings.
[319] McGinn, *Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations,* 36.
[320] G. Schönsbaumsfeld, "A Resolute Later Wittgenstein?" *Metaphilosophy* 41 no. 5 (2010): 650.

"cannot do" in philosophy."[321] Related to the resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein is what Robert Fogelin has called a "Pyrrhonian reading." This is the position Fogelin holds, and it consists in seeing in the later Wittgenstein the same aims and similar methods to a Pyrrhonian sceptic. He writes, "Wittgenstein and the Pyrrhonians were concerned with the same object: philosophy as traditionally practised. Their goal was the same: to eliminate it."[322] I link these views because in both the Pyrrhonian and Resolute readings, there is a sense that Wittgenstein is offering a method for putting an end to traditional philosophy. I will, in the course of assessing the role of nonsense and the role of therapy, offer a response to this set of interpretations of Wittgenstein's later thought.

Finally, there is the question of how literally "therapeutic" we should consider the *Investigations.* Those who take "therapy" to mean something inspired by the psychotherapy of the day, are often more sympathetic to the Pyrrhonian and Resolute readings, that Wittgenstein puts an end to philosophy. In my view it is possible to use an understanding of Freud's psychoanalysis, to track how philosophy can at once be therapeutic but also forward arguments and give insights of a kind. In doing so, I reject the resolute and related Pyrrhonian interpretation of the later Wittgenstein. I introduce this idea here and expand upon it in chapter five.

4.2. What is the *Tractatus* for?

The *Tractatus* self-ascribes as a book full of nonsense. Wittgenstein writes, "My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical, when he has used them—as steps—to climb up beyond them." (TLP, 6.54) Though the imagery is rather simple, the philosophical application of this instruction is elusive. What are we supposed to do with a book full of nonsense?

Naturally, this is the cornerstone of interpretative debate regarding the text. The debate hinges on what kind of thing nonsense is in the early work. In this section, I revisit the resolute view, fully lay out the consequences of this view for using the *Tractatus* as an instructive philosophical text, and lay out an alternative view, which I hold adequately addresses the major concerns the resolute readers have about any sort of metaphysical interpretation but does not fully embrace their conclusions.

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[321] Ibid.
[322] R. Fogelin, *Wittgenstein,* (London: Routledge, 1987) 234.

4.2.1. Revisiting The Resolute View and Austere Conception of Nonsense

The *Tractatus* is read "resolutely" because this interpretation takes seriously the claim that its own content is nonsensical. To expand further the three shared features of a resolute reading of the *Tractatus* are 1) A commitment to the austere view of nonsense: that "Nonsense is nonsense."[323] 2) A rejection of the idea that there is something ineffable or sayable being explored in the text. 3) That Wittgenstein provided a frame, usually characterised by the introduction and closing propositions, instructing his readers on how to read the text. Diamond's exegesis on the concept of nonsense, provides the features of an austere reading. She writes, "The Frege-Wittgenstein view does not take any kind of nonsense to be functionally independent of the categories of the terms combined in the sentence...Sentences are not made up of ingredients. "[324] To reiterate from the previous chapter, the commitment to the context principle and the principle of the separation of the psychological and the logical means that when a sentence is nonsensical, no part of it has sense, even if there is a psychological association taking place. A word in a nonsense sentence is on this view, not functioning as a word at all.

From this conception of nonsense, it follows that nothing is said in the main body of the *Tractatus.* The task for the resolute reader is then to answer, "Well, what do we do with it?" Both Conant and Diamond separate Wittgenstein the *author* from the *Tractatus* the text and argue that the reader must come to understand the author by realising that there is nothing to understand in the text. Conant writes, "He does not call upon the reader to understand his sentences, but rather understand *him,* namely the author, and the kind of activity in which he is engaged – one of elucidation."[325]

4.2.2. A Defence of Chickening Out

The resolute view, as I have suggested stands in contrast to more orthodox "two Wittgenstein's" interpretations of his work. Naturally, it stands in contrast to a metaphysical realist account, but it also contrasts with more middling positions which reject a realist reading. Diamond mentions Hacker as holding a "chickening out" position.[326] On her reading he goes all the way up to the line of acknowledging Wittgenstein calling his propositions nonsensical, but still leaves with the logico-syntactical account laid out in the previous chapter. Fortunately for this

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[323] C. Diamond, "Ethics, imagination and the method of Wittgenstein's Tractatus," *The New Wittgenstein*, eds. Alice Crary, Rupert Read (London: Routledge. 2000) 153.
[324] Diamond, *Realistic Spirit*, 104.
[325] Conant, "Elucidation and nonsense in Frege and early Wittgenstein," 198.
[326] Diamond, *Realistic Spirit,* 194.

discussion, Hacker offers a direct rebuttal of the resolute view as the final chapter of *The New Wittgenstein.* The two strongest arguments in my view from Hacker regard the ambiguity of the resolute "frame," and the number of Wittgenstein's writings contemporary to the *Tractatus* which seem to contradict the interpretation.

The notion of there being a distinction between framing propositions, which are instructive, and content propositions which are nonsensical is an appealing position because of the puzzle imposed by the end of the text. However, it is not entirely clear which text of the *Tractatus* composes each section. Certainly, 6.54 and 7 seem like obvious candidates, as does the introduction, which also frames the proceeding content as nonsense: "...the aim of the book is to draw a limit to thought, or rather—not to thought, but to the expression of thoughts: for in order to be able to draw a limit to thought, we should have to find both sides of the limit thinkable (i.e. we should have to be able to think what cannot be thought)." (TLP, Introduction.) However, there are additional passages which seem to readily read as resolute instructions, including remarks about philosophy which seem to neatly foreshadow the 6s. For example,

> Philosophy aims at the logical clarification of thoughts.
> Philosophy is not a body of a doctrine but an activity.
> A philosophical work consists essentially of elucidations.
> Philosophy does not result in 'philosophical propositions,' but rather the clarification of propositions. (TLP, 4.112)

Further, other mentions of what the correct method in philosophy cannot do, appear to fit the instructional format required to be frames. An example is 6. 42: "So too it is impossible for there to be propositions of ethics." Furthermore, Hacker notes that the Introduction, which should be taken literally and instructionally includes the claim that, "On the other hand the truth of the thoughts that are here communicated seems to me unassailable and definitive." (TLP Introduction)[327] This particular critique by Hacker could be answered by the separation of book and author. Wittgenstein's thoughts are to be understood, but not his propositions because they are nonsensical, but he is right that calling such thoughts "communicated" is at least somewhat clumsy if this was his intention. The more pressing critique is the ambiguity as to which remarks are to be taken literally.

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[327] Hacker, "Was He Trying to Whistle it?" in *The New Wittgenstein.* eds. Alice Crary and Rupert Read (London: Routledge, 2000) 360.

Conant and Diamond have replied and stressed that there is not a strict methodological distinction. They write,

> On the contrary, his point is that we cannot get a handle on what a remark such as §6.54 says apart from a detailed understanding of much that happens along the way in the book (such as an understanding of what the book seeks to show us along the way about nonsense and the exemplifications of the practice of elucidation it thereby affords).[328]

Because, as Conant has stressed, they consider the *Tractatus* to be something of a prototype to the philosophical therapy practised by the later Wittgenstein, different readers could use the remarks differently. As Bronzo writes in his assessment of the literature, "Whether a given remark belongs to the frame or to the body of the work depends on the use that the reader makes of it."[329] This capacity for a remark to have a different function for different readers is familiar to the later Wittgenstein where philosophy is practiced as "different therapies." (PI, 133) However, I argue that this is an unsatisfactory position with which to approach the *Tractatus*.

The first issue is historical. Hacker draws upon writing preceding and contemporary to the *Tractatus* to suggest Wittgenstein's intention was not resolute. He references letters to Engelman such as an appraisal of an Apropos Uhland poem in 1917. "And this is how it is: if only you do not try to utter what is unutterable then *nothing* gets lost. But the unutterable will be – unutterably – contained in what has been uttered." Hacker takes this to mean "he took very seriously indeed the idea that there were things that were inexpressible."[330] However, there is a further charge, that of anachronism. The resolute readers place the intentions of the later Wittgenstein too early in history, out of time. Wittgenstein later refers to the *Tractatus* on multiple occasions and seems to affirm that at least some of his philosophical commitments were literal. For example, in *Philosophical Grammar* he compares his Tractarian theory of elementary propositions to Carnap's, stating it was similarly wrong because:

> 1) "because I wasn't clear about the sense of the words "a logical product is *hidden* in a sentence" (and suchlike), 2) because I too thought that logical analysis had to bring to light what was hidden (as chemical and physical analysis does.) (Philosophical Grammar, 210.

[328] Diamond and Conant, "On reading the *Tractatus* resolutely: Reply to Meredith Williams and Peter Sullivan." In Wittgenstein's Lasting Significance eds. Max Kölbel & Bernhard Weiss (London: New York: Routledge, 2004) 69

[329] S. Bronzo. "The Resolute Reading and Its Critics." *Wittgenstein-Studien*, 3, no. 1, (2012): 61.

[330] Hacker, "Was He Trying to Whistle It?" 372.

He also writes of his previous beliefs, "Formerly, I myself spoke of a 'complete analysis', and I used to believe philosophy had to give a definitive dissection of propositions so as to set out clearly all their connections and remove all possibilities of misunderstanding."[331] Both of these remarks suggest an earnest belief that "something" was revealed in the nonsensical propositions of the *Tractatus.* Likewise, in the *Investigations*, Wittgenstein critiques his previous atomic commitments alongside Russell's, "Both Russell's 'individuals' and my 'objects' (Tractates Logico-Philosophicus] were such primary elements." (PI, 46)

Wittgenstein's self-reflections about the *Tractatus* strongly support that he did not want the reader to take him resolutely. However, even if we ignore authorial intent, the therapeutic method described in Wittgenstein's later work cannot apply to the *Tractatus,* and this method is the key which is used by the resolute readers to derive a purpose from the *Tractatus.* Conant explicitly uses terminology from the *Investigations* to characterise his view of the *Tractarian method.*[332] He speaks of "running up against the limits of language" and "the life of the language he already leads." What this interpretation requires of the *Tractatus* is that it functions similarly to the series of individual investigations presented in his second book.

There are several limitations of the *Tractatus* antithetical to it having the therapeutic function like its successor. Firstly, the *Tractatus* lacks the piecemeal approach of the *Investigations,* which presents a range of different philosophical problems and explores the underlying assumptions and pictures which enable the problem, to emerge. Through a set of examples, the *Investigations* shows how one could interrogate philosophical questions and beliefs. Where the *Investigations* completes the dissolution of a variety of problems in a piecemeal fashion, there is a *feeling* of dissatisfaction at the end of the *Tractatus.* If the method is indeed like the *Investigations* wherein the philosophical problems are articulated, and their underlying confusions revealed, the *Tractatus* does not separate out its problems. They are all to be solved via the same process. A resolute reader might say that this is because the *Tractatus* is the first draft of an idea later developed and was written prior to Wittgenstein's engagement with the "therapy" analogy properly. Therefore, that the *Tractatus* does not "work" for all attentive readers is not a mark against its method. However, the *Investigations* also shows on various occasions how problems "should *completely* disappear." (PI, 133). Though this does not mean that every single therapy practised in it will dissolve philosophical nonsense for every reader, the examples given show the complete philosophical process. There is a gap in the final

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[331] Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Grammar,* 211.
[332] Conant, "The Method of the Tractatus," 425.

transition between stating the philosophical problems, engaging with the illusory solutions of his Picture Theory and logical atomism, and the final stage of realising the questions were nonsense. The *Investigations* is explicit whereas the *Tractatus* does not offer similar reflection. The dissatisfaction is present in the inability to definitively distinguish between the frame and the nonsensical content. Again, a resolute reader might bring up that the *Investigations* develops the frame and content distinction further by using the interlocutor as a central aspect of the text's style. Yet, the *Investigations'* interlocutor is given many possibilities for transitioning from the illusion to an appreciation for language as it is. In all, the "therapeutic" reading that Conant and allies apply to the *Tractatus* seems far more like Hume's evasive therapy, or "playing Backgammon," rather than the problem-dissolving therapy presented in the later Wittgenstein.

The resolute readers do a great service by directing attention to Wittgenstein describing the content of his work as nonsensical. They are correct that there is not a straightforward metaphysical system in the *Tractatus.* However, there is too much evidence to suggest Wittgenstein did think there was something beyond the reach of language when the text was produced. Furthermore, the later Wittgenstein reflects on his earlier work to strongly suggest the kinds of commitments which undermine the resolute interpretation. The structure and style of the *Tractatus* do not support an interpretation where Wittgenstein's philosophical therapy can be transposed from his later work.

The end of the *Tractatus* shows a tension in the kind of project Wittgenstein aimed to complete, and it foreshadows the rapid philosophical reflection he would undergo in the years immediately following it.

4.2.3. Nonsense as a Teaching Tool in Frege and Wittgenstein

I have on occasion in this project, offered some praise of Daimond's conception of a Wittgenstein-Fregean nonsense in contrast to "nonsense" traditionally conceived. Largely, I agree with Diamond's assertion that all nonsense is plain nonsense and that no meaning can be derived from a sentence like "Ceasar is a prime number." This does not mean that I interpret the *Tractatus* resolutely. However, like Hacker, McGinn, and Geach, I hold that one can *do* something with a nonsense sentence and that this something is the intended message of the *Tractatus.* Something can be brought to attention through engaging with a piece of nonsense Once again, the best method for interpreting the early Wittgenstein can be found in Frege. Frege uses language which breaks his own rules of the logical structure of propositions (especially the *Grundlagen* principle of the strict syntactic roles for object and concept)

throughout his work, this is similar to Wittgenstein's admission that his work is nonsensical. In this section, I will briefly outline Geach's argument for nonsense as a valuable teaching tool and outline why I consider this to be the most coherent interpretation of the early Wittgenstein's relationship to nonsense.

Geach's 1986 paper, "Saying and Showing in Frege and Wittgenstein," is a foundational text for both the resolute view and for later interpretations in direct contrast to it. Diamond considers the resolute view as going further down a road that Geach points out in this paper.[333] Geach's paper primarily concerns Frege's logical category distinctions, and a central thesis is:

> ...there are logical distinctions which will clearly show themselves in a well formalised language, but which cannot be properly asserted in the language: the sentences in which we seek to convey them in language are logically improper and admit of no translation into well-formed formulas of symbolic logic.[334]

Geach attributes to Frege an argument which allows this saying and showing distinction, but also allows a nonsense statement to aid in showing. The argument relies on Frege's assertions in "On Concept and Object." In this paper, Frege demonstrates that it is not possible to place a concept in the position of an object in a well-formed sentence (that is, a sentence with sense.) An attempt might look like: "The concept 'horse' is a concept." Frege definitively says, "the three words 'the concept "horse"' do designate an object, but on that very account they do not designate a concept, as I am using the word."[335] Clumsily put then, one cannot say of the concept horse what one would say of "the concept 'horse'". Geach argues that it then follows that one cannot use the phraseology "what 'x' stands for" to discuss the concept of x. If x was an object "what 'x' stands for" is simply x. Thus, a sentence like "what "Adam" stands for ate what "the apple" stands for, is simply a long-winded way of saying "Adam ate the apple." Because the "what 'x' stands for" phrase is superfluous, it cannot be used to make a nonsensical sentence sensible.[336]

The example Geach gives is "there is a difference between what "Brutus" stands for and what "killed Ceasar" stands for. This dissolves into "There is a difference between Brutus and killed Ceasar."[337] This is not a well-formed sentence and is nonsensical both in our ordinary

[333] Diamond, *Realistic Spirit.* 180.
[334] P. T. Geach, "Saying and Showing in Frege and Wittgenstein," *in Essays on Wittgenstein in Honour of C. H. von Wright*, eds. J Hintikka, *Acta Philosophica Fennica* 28 (1976): 58.
[335] G. Frege, "On Concept and Object," trans. P. T Geach, Max Black. *Mind* 60, no. 238 (1951: 184
[336] Geach, "Saying and Showing," 57.
[337] Ibid.

understanding of language and by the rules of Frege's *Begriffsschrift*. This has the consequence that any discussion by Frege or a follower of Frege about concepts is also rendered senseless. For example, if Frege says of the sentence "Ceasar conquered Gaul" that, "...the second part is unsaturated" he is saying "conquered Gaul is unsaturated." Such a sentence is nonsense.

Geach's "way out" for Frege's use of apparently senseless sentences is to ascribe to him the following attitude, "All the same, sentences like (c) are didactically useful: they may lead someone to understand my *Begriffsschrift*. And the test of his having actually mastered the symbolic language is his successful use of it, not his ability to parrot sentences like (c) or produce similar ones on his own account."[338] An example of a rule broken can demonstrate the requirement for a rule. It is not such that the nonsense sentence is showing anything, but rather it is directing attention to what is shown in the well-formed sentences. Evidence for Frege accepting that he could not use a sentence corresponding to the rules of a B*egriffsschrif*t to set the rules for the *Beggriffschrift* includes a concluding remark from "On Concept and Object." He writes,

> It is thus easy for us to see that the difficulty arising from the unsaturatedness of one part of the thought can indeed be shifted, but not avoided. 'Complete' and 'unsaturated' are of course only figures of speech; but all that I wish or am able to do here is to give hints.[339]

Though Frege uses the saturation terminology quite extensively, his acceptance that he is using them metaphorically is important to understanding him. Being "only figures of speech" is reminiscent of Wittgenstein's discussion of metaphors without corresponding ordinary language in the "Lecture on Ethics." Geach's reading allows an empty metaphor to be a valuable part of philosophical communication even if the metaphor itself *says* nothing.

Geach proposes that Wittgenstein accepts Frege's commitment that, "the sentences with which we seek to convey them [logical category distinctions] in the vernacular are logically improper and admit of no translation into well-formed formulas of symbolic logic." This therefore answers neatly, explains Wittgenstein's assertion that, "anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical." (TLP, 5.64) The test therefore for having read the *Tractatus* in the intended fashion is not to construct more ill-formed sentences about what can be said but to be able to recognise ill-formed sentences as they arise.

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[338] Ibid., 58.
[339] Frege, "On Concept and Object," 193.

This reading by Geach offers a cohesive approach for finding a use for Wittgenstein's book full of nonsense. However, there remain questions about what it is that the reader is shown. Geach and the resolute readers will all agree that the reader is changed by their reading of the *Tractatus,* but they differ on what kind of change has occurred. For Geach, Wittgenstein closely follows Frege, and what he is delivering to the reader is a theory of category distinctions (with the addition of "further category distinctions which Frege did not recognise.")[340]. This allows for a logical-syntactic theory of sense to be derived from Wittgenstein's work, even if it is not, strictly speaking, a theory communicated in sentences which abide by it. For the resolute readers, this conclusion was unacceptable. Instead, Diamond holds that "It [Geach's theory and others which share his thoughts on Tractarian nonsense] involves holding that the things we speak about are members of this or that logical category really and truly, only we cannot say so."[341] She thinks that this is a step in the process of reading the *Tractatus* "But Wittgenstein's aim is to let us recognise it to be only an illusion of a perspective."[342]

One approach which has attempted to address the concern that any logical-syntactic account pulls a theory out of nonsense sentences is the suggestion that the rules are not merely unsayable but ineffable. A. W. Moore develops a notion of ineffability which is distinct from indescribability. In other words, while he rejects that Wittgenstein was somehow communicating ineffable truths, he was rather pushing his readers to have ineffable insights. The vision of ineffability that Moore uses is correlated with an epistemological distinction between knowing how and knowing that, "I do not think that my knowledge of what it is for an object to be green is knowledge that anything is the case. Nor, crucially, do I think that it is effable."[343] His view is that the early Wittgenstein "The very process of watching it fall apart is what brings us to our understanding of how these illusions arise,[344] an understanding which, if the closest we can come to expressing it is producing just such nonsense, is ineffable."[345] This mirrors fairly closely the ascription by Conant of a therapeutic approach to the early

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[340] Geach, "On Saying and Showing." 56.

[341] Diamond, *Realistic spirit*, 194.

[342] Ibid., 196.

[343] A. W. Moore and Peter Sullivan. "Ineffability and Nonsense," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volumes*, 77(2003) 177.

[344] M. McGinn, "Saying and Showing and the Continuity of Wittgenstein's Thought." *Harvard Review of Philosophy* 9 no.1 (2001): 28.

[345] Moore and Sullivan, "Ineffability and Nonsense", 190.

Wittgenstein. However, it is not generally considered a resolute reading precisely because it thinks "something" is taught by the nonsense statements.[346]

One final approach which has a similar character to Moore's is McGinn's reading of the early Wittgenstein. She is largely persuaded by the Diamond and Conant arguments regarding austere nonsense but does not wish to abandon the saying and showing distinction entirely. She writes,

> The idea of the saying/showing distinction is not that there are unsayable thoughts that lie beyond the limits of language, but that the limit of language-that is, everything that is essential to our using our language with sense-is something on which we have an essentially practical grasp, something that shows itself only in our actual use of words with sense, and something that is therefore itself unsayable.[347]

McGinn's reading, as I understand it, is a development upon Geach's understanding of Wittgenstein as communicating category distinctions in a similar fashion to Frege. She understands the saying and showing distinction to be a matter of accident and necessity or of the a posteriori and a priori, "What is a priori is what shows itself in the use of language, and what shows itself has to do not with something that we know (that is, not with something that is true) but with something that we do."[348] The a priori is the necessary order or logical form of language, necessary for language to make sense. What the *Tractatus* does for the reader on McGinn's account is to draw attention to the variables which are the logico-syntactic categories, but also to demonstrate that these categories gain their significance only from their specific symbols. To put this in a Fregean way, "'a concept' is not a concept" and it is, despite our best efforts, nonsense to say this too. McGinn, like the resolute readers, sees a major continuity between this view and the later Wittgenstein. She writes of the central argument of *On Certainty*, "Insofar as our certainty belongs to the essence of (is presupposed by) the language game, the idea of justifying it by appeal either to a rule or to what is the case is unintelligible."[349] McGinn thinks that the category distinctions are present for the early Wittgenstein, but explicitly are only truly present in a sentence with sense. This is why her view is distinguished from earlier logico-syntactic accounts.

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[346] See Edmund Dain's defence of Austerity, noting Moore's reading as a non-resolute but austere reading." Dain, Edmund "Wittgenstein, Contextualism, and Nonsense: A Reply to Hans-Johann Glock," Journal of Philosophical Research 33 (2008): 33.
[347] McGinn, "Saying, Showing, Continuity," 32.
[348] McGinn, "Saying, Showing, Continuity," 33.
[349] Ibid., 34

This discussion has shown, if nothing else, that the terrain for interpreting the early Wittgenstein since Conant and Diamond is far more varied than a bipolar battlefield of resolute views versus traditional ones. Two themes have emerged in these resolute and middle-ground readings: a tendency towards an early version of a meaning as use account, and a therapeutic account of the early Wittgenstein. In the Resolute view, the frame-body distinction is answered with the counter question, "well, did the reader make use of it as a meaningful proposition?" If the answer is yes that proposition is understood as part of the meaning-making frame, and not the nonsense body. Further, Conant, in "Wittgenstein's Method" emphasises that something is nonsense because sense has not been made with it – i.e. something is nonsensical if it is not used. The therapeutic elements which emerge in the resolute view, as outlined previously. There is also something of both meaning as use, and therapy in A. W. Moore's view. Peter Sullivan's critique of some aspects of Moore's paper finds that to fit his descriptions of the ineffable insights of the *Tractatus,* what is learned cannot merely be logical categories. Rather, the insight is something like knowledge of how to self-reflect on language use. This know-how, to be stable, must include, "The idea that in becoming more reflectively conscious of how we go on we understand our limitations brings into connection with that the thought that our going on as we do rather than otherwise rests in a complex of biological and cultural contingencies." In other words, Moore's interpretation rests on the *Tractatus* partaking in awareness raising of language games and forms of life. I agree with Sullivan here that such a proposal involves an attempt to insert a major component of Wittgenstein's later thought into the framework of the Tractatus... and "it doesn't fit."[350]

I detailed in my first chapter how Wittgenstein shares with Hume a certain respect for ordinary language, even in the *Tractatus* (or as Hume might put it, the vulgar, or common life). However, I would contend that it is not the central claim of the *Tractatus*, he certainly does not fully articulate that use is prior to structure. It would have been easy, given that he was freely using nonsense to have given more explicit hints towards this direction. The first real hint towards a use-first approach is given at 6.211 "(In philosophy the question, 'What do we actually use this word or this proposition for?' repeatedly leads to valuable insights.)" Even then, this actual use is qualified as a means of being shown the *a priori* category distinctions. It is one of many hints Wittgenstein gives, like Frege, to consider propositions with sense and how we might make and use them, rather than philosophical propositions which are empty.

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[350] Moore and Sullivan, "Ineffability and Nonsense," 222.

In my view, the discussion of history presented by Hacker, and my analysis of the *Tractatus* not having the structural or stylistic qualities necessary to support an *Investigations* style therapeutic process undermine the resolute view. Though McGinn, does make some appeals to meaning as use, she is, I think largely correct, and mostly coherent in her exegesis that logical form and picturing relations are *a priori* commitments of the early Wittgenstein that they are real commitments – which allow the stark changes in his later philosophy to contrast. There are meanings prior to their use. Therefore, Wittgenstein's early nonsense is austere in that no part of a nonsensical proposition can mean what it does in a proposition with sense, but this does not mean that nonsense cannot serve as a tool for understanding.

4.3. Philosophy in the Later Wittgenstein

In most overviews of the work of Wittgenstein, it is commented on that one of the great continuities between his early and later work is the role of a "correct method" in philosophy. This observation is one that I agree with and is the primary reason that I do not seriously separate Wittgenstein into two philosophers.[351] The role of philosophy is the clearest area on which he develops one set of thoughts into the other. In specifying the correct role for philosophy, Wittgenstein also mounts a critique of most other philosophical output. The target, as I argue remains the same, but the diagnosis is different. I begin by briefly laying out descriptions of philosophy, both what he deems the correct kind and the mistaken kind across Wittgenstein's early and later work, drawing attention to similarities. Then I expand on some central differences in the critiques of traditional philosophy. I then examine attempts to read the later Wittgenstein with the same approach as used by the resolute readers to the *Tractatus*. I compare this view to the Pyrrhonian reading of the later Wittgenstein which is represented by Robert Fogelin. I argue that neither of these approaches captures the possible achievements of philosophy on the later Wittgenstein's system.

Firstly, I lay out the remarks which critique the work of other philosophers broadly. In the *Tractatus,* these remarks are:

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[351] While I am most interested in the work of the later Wittgenstein, I do not think an appreciation for his later work can exist without engaging with the former. The same holds true for someone only interested in his early contributions.

> This is also evident in its introduction, "This book deals with the problems of philosophy, and shows, I believe, that the reason why these problems are posed, is that the problems of language are misunderstood." (TLP, Introduction)

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

> Most of the propositions and questions of philosophers arise from our failure to understand the logic of our language.
> (They belong to the same class as the question whether the good is more or less identical than the beautiful.)
> And it is not surprising that the deepest problems are in fact not problems at all. (TLP, 4.003)

In the *Notebooks* he also makes a pointed remark about Russell's philosophical method writing, "Russell's method in his "Scientific method in philosophy" is simply a retrogression from the method of physics." (NB, 44.)

In the *Tractatus* then philosophy, both the problems of interest to it, and the propositions which philosophers produce to address these problems are derived from misunderstandings about language. In 3.324 he is referring to a rather simple misunderstanding that a sign can have two symbols, two different meanings. Philosophical problems are not problems at all because any propositions about them are meaningless. The remark about Russell is reminiscent of Wittgenstein's other critiques of scientism (such as those which show up in his critiques of Freud). Philosophy, on Wittgenstein's view, is misguided when it aims for the systematic, factual approach of science.

In the *Investigations,* remarks about traditional philosophy include:

> The results of philosophy are the discovery of some piece of plain nonsense and the bumps that the understanding has got by running up against the limits of language. They – these bumps – make us see the value of that discovery. (PI, 119)

> "A main cause of philosophical disease—a one-sided diet: one nourishes one's thinking with only one kind of example." (PI, 593)

To include some remarks on philosophy from the preliminary work for the *Investigations,* Wittgenstein writes in the *Blue Book,*

And when we are worried about the nature of thinking, the puzzlement which we wrongly interpret to be one about the nature of a medium is a puzzlement caused by the mystifying use of our language. This kind of mistake recurs again and again in philosophy, e.g. when we are puzzled about the nature of time; when time seems to us a queer thing. We are most strongly tempted to think that there are things hidden, something we can see from the outside but which we can't look into. (BB, 309 -10)

The major similarity between the early and later Wittgenstein is that the problems and proposed answers of philosophy traditionally practised are not substantial problems under scrutiny. They share the assumption that if they are worked on, philosophical questions will not be answered so much as dissolved. The *Investigations* has a sympathetic quality, reminiscent of the *Lecture on Ethics,* which acknowledges that though the problems are nonsensical, it is understandable why they take hold. He is also more interested in offering explanations for why philosophical problems emerge in the later work than in the earlier. The selected remark in the *Blue Book* is similarly sympathetic, and its wording is reminiscent of Kant's characterisation of the transcendental illusion. It expresses a largely inevitable temptation to get outside of language.

Throughout his work, Wittgenstein makes suggestions for a better use of philosophy. He describes his "correct method" several times in the *Tractatus.*

The object of philosophy is the logical clarification of thoughts. Philosophy is not a theory but an activity. A philosophical work consists essentially of elucidations. The result of philosophy is not a number of "philosophical propositions," but to make propositions clear. Philosophy should make clear and delimit sharply the thoughts which otherwise are, as it were, opaque and blurred. (TLP, 4112)

...to say nothing except what can be said, i.e. the propositions of natural science – i.e. something that has nothing to do with philosophy – and then, whenever someone else wanted to say something metaphysical, to demonstrate to him that he had failed to give a meaning to certain signs in his propositions... he would not have the feeling that we were teaching him philosophy - this method would be the only strictly correct one. (TLP, 6.53)

This echoes an earlier description of philosophy in his "Notes on Logic," "In philosophy there are no deductions: it is purely descriptive."[352] The characterisations of philosophy as an activity

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[352] Wittgenstein, "Notes on Logic," 106.

and as descriptive are perhaps the most consistent aspect of Wittgenstein's thought. In the *Blue Book* for example it is, "a fight against the fascination which forms of expression exert upon us." (BB, 309 – 44) Philosophy, correctly then, is never a product, only a process.

His later remarks on a better practice of philosophy include:

> "Philosophy just puts everything before us, and neither explains nor deduces anything. – Since everything lies open to view, there is nothing to explain. For whatever may be hidden is of no interest to us." (PI, 126)

The last remarks of the *Tractatus* are therefore the closest to the descriptions of his philosophical method in the *Investigations.* Proposition 6.53 shares with the *Investigations* the possibility of showing an individual where their language has gone awry. It is a recipe for performing something with a similar intention as the therapy of the *Investigations,* but it does not give the same weight to understanding how a confusion has emerged (i.e. tracing its personal history). This is instead a call to apply the contextual and bipolar theory of sense outlined in the previous chapter.

I hold that in the *Investigations* it is important that the better way of performing philosophy is often defined in relation to therapy. Importantly Wittgenstein writes, "There is not a single philosophical method, though there are indeed methods, different therapies, as it were." (PI, 133) As opposed to the application of a theory of sense which includes the assumed but unsayable necessities of logical form and its category distinctions, the correct method in philosophy for the later Wittgenstein is entirely case-dependent and defers to use. The difference between early and late is well-captured by McGinn's remark that "the early Wittgenstein believed there is a vital role for the idea that meaning is something over and above the use of a word, something that we grasp in coming to understand it."[353] The *Tractatus* in striving for clarity, relies on a vision of language independent of its use in order to make the sharp distinctions between sense and nonsense. The later Wittgenstein develops the idea that meaning is fully determined in the context of use to its full potential.

4.3.1. Against Resolute and Pyrrhonian Readings of the Later Wittgenstein

Though I think that the later Wittgenstein's greatest evolution is his embracing of language as use, and an influence from then contemporary psychotherapy, I still hold that something positive is achieved by his philosophical method, and that this method contains arguments.

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[353] McGinn, *Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations,* 37.

This is to say, I think that Wittgenstein offers a means to do a better kind of philosophy, rather than an abandonment of philosophical impulses altogether. Two broad viewpoints are what I will be calling "Resolute" and "Pyrrhonian" interpretations of the later Wittgenstein. A resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein involves taking the core principles of the *Tractatus* Resolute reading: nonsense monism (all nonsense is like Diamond's Fregean nonsense) and the rejection that there is something philosophical going on just outside of the domain of sensible language.[354] Though I agree, with the first of these commitments by the Resolute readers, I do not share their view of their consequences. For example, I hold, contra-Resolute later readers that it is possible to refer to grammatical rules outside of a particular use to conduct philosophical therapy.

The Pyrrhonian interpretation can largely be attributed to Fogelin. It is characterised by drawing parallels between Wittgenstein's philosophical therapy and the aims of a Pyrrhonian sceptic. Stern describes the distinction between Pyrrhonian and non-Pyrrhonian views as the distinction between the *Investigations* as a critique of all philosophy versus a critique of certain kinds of traditional philosophy. Resolute and Pyrrhonian readings share the commitment that Wittgenstein does not have a positive project for his philosophical method. My contention, though I am sympathetic to the spirit of both approaches, is that Wittgenstein offers a method for profound, if distinctly ordinary, discovery. I think one can be a follower of the later Wittgenstein and make arguments about language within language.

Proponents of a resolute later Wittgenstein include Stephen Mulhall, Phil Hutchison and Rom Harre. Mulhall offers several defining features of a "substantial" reading of the later Wittgenstein. One feature, which he takes from James Conant is that such views, "regard grammatical remarks or reminders as putative truths (whether genuinely necessary truths, or ultimately contingent ones, is then held to be a point of essential instability in the self-understanding of the substantial reader)."[355] The reason that taking any of Wittgenstein's remarks in response to his interlocuter as definitive is non-resolute is that they then are understood to set a hard limitation to language and imply that there is something beyond its grasp. Taking any of Wittgenstein's remarks about grammar as true propositions also treats grammar as a means for assessing whether an utterance has sense or is nonsense. This would mean that there are roles and rules for constituents of the utterance outside of the utterance. This would break the resolute commitment to the context principle. In contrast therefore, a

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[354] Reiterating the definition given by Schönsbaumsfeld.
[355] S. Mulhall, *Wittgenstein's Private Language: Grammar, Nonsense, and the Imagination in Philosophical Investigations §§ 243-315* (Oxford: OUP, 2007). 11.

resolute reader of the later Wittgenstein, "can always interpret Wittgenstein's apparently decisive grammatical reminders as essentially responsive to possibilities invoked by his interlocutor, and hence as invitations to acknowledge that the imagined projections of his words either have implications that will not satisfy him, or are in fact insufficiently substantial or contentful to generate definite implications." Mulhall admits that it is even a possibility that Wittgenstein wanted both interpretations to be possible to readers, precisely because it is easy to take these remarks as reminders or as normative rules.

As with Resolute readings of the *Tractatus* the approach just outlined, separates the text into framing propositions and content propositions. Mulhall draws attention to the following, "When a sentence is called senseless, it is not as it were its sense that is senseless. But a combination of words is being excluded from the language, withdrawn from circulation." (PI 500) This remark seems to literally and non-mysteriously support the resolute reading and acts like the frame propositions of the *Tractatus*. Hutchinson allies Mulhall's reading with his own, though he calls it a "therapeutic" rather than resolute interpretation.[356] He also calls the readings that Mulhall calls substantial (such as Hacker's view) "elucidatory". I am inclined to group these readings together because Hutchinson's concerns about elucidatory readings map onto Mulhall's of substantial readings. He is concerned that the elucidatory reader takes Wittgenstein's more definitive sounding remarks as seeing language "sideways on" and the consequence of considering grammar a map with a distinct edge, with philosophy just beyond the barrier.[357]

Replies that one could make to these critiques are that the resolute reader is unfair in their characterisation of a grammatical rule. Hacker for example never suggests that Wittgenstein is providing a survey of all of language, writing, "The relevant sense in which grammar is arbitrary is also the sense in which grammar is autonomous."[358] Hutchinson does anticipate and cede that an elucidatory reading that understood grammatical propositions to be limited and context-dependent would reduce the impact of the critique.[359] However, Hutchinson thinks that maintaining a compromise like this would constitute a rejection of some of Wittgenstein's metaphilosophical remarks, such as remark 128, "If one tried to advance theses in philosophy, it would never be possible to debate them, because everyone would agree to them." The other issue Hutchinson sees for the so-called elucidatory reader is that in order for philosophy to

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[356] P. Hutchinson, "What's the point of elucidation?" *Metaphilosophy* 38, no. 5 (2007): 693.
[357] Ibid., 700.
[358] Hacker, *Insight and Illusion,* 188.
[359] Hutchinson, "What's the Point of Elucidation?" 700.

elucidate about language games there is a requirement that grammar is relatively stable, at least contextually stable to lives, and this, "implies a linguistic conservatism that makes linguistic innovation, poetic use of language, and concept change through new discoveries (at best) difficult phenomena to understand."[360] Further, the elucidatory or substantial reader separates out the activity of elucidation which reveals how one uses how one uses language and how one's language games function in a nexus of others and other forms of life, and therapy – which is the quelling of symptoms associated with philosophical nonsense.

I hold that the biggest issue with the resolute view is that it misunderstands Wittgenstein's conception of philosophical therapy and that this cannot be separated from what Hutchinson calls elucidation. However, perhaps a more obvious concern is that it does not follow that thinking grammar can be contextually stable means that there are metaphysical limitations on what can and cannot be spoken about. Grammar having limits does not mean that there is something just outside of grammar. Schönsbaumsfeld points out, "The rules of chess, for example, precisely in virtue of allowing certain moves, prohibit others. But it would be confusing to gloss this as, say, the rules of chess limiting my ability to play chess, since without the rules, there would be no such thing as "chess" in the first place."[361] Philosophical therapy can help one to survey the rules of grammar as they are used elsewhere and show that no such use is occurring in a philosophical occurrence.

I do think that the resolute readers are largely correct that there is one kind of nonsense that is of interest to Wittgenstein. His stipulation that, "Even a nonsense-poem is not nonsense in the same way as the babbling of a child." (PI 282) does not discredit austerity. Nonsense poetry and the early communication practice of children are language games that are comprehensible forms of life. They are purposeful and embedded in context. Philosophical confusions on the other hand are nonsense because their "language goes on holiday." (PI 38) Wittgenstein uses the word "*Unsinn"* in both cases, but philosophical problems are nonsensical in a distinctly philosophical way. The only way a philosophical proposition or question can be dissolved is because it becomes clear that there is no language game occurring. Even ordinary nonsense has a foundation in life. On my view, Wittgenstein's insistence that "Philosophy only states what everyone admits." (PI, 599) is not a mere banality, nor does it mean that properly practised philosophy never has a, as he says in the next remark, "Does what is ordinary always make the impression of ordinariness?" (PI, 600) I do not think that "everyone admits" requires that the

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[360] Ibid., 701.
[361] Schönsbaumsfeld, "A Resolute Later Wittgenstein?" 651.

findings of philosophy be universal, but rather that everyone performing philosophy in a given context, will be able to admit these findings.

I will present a fuller account of Wittgenstein's later therapy, and its influence from psychoanalysis in the next chapter, but I think it is perfectly possible for elucidation to be part of the therapeutic process, and even for therapy to involve arguments.

To turn to the other reading which I group with the resolute interpretation, Fogelin's Pyrrhonian approach also has some considerable merit. He correctly points out a parallel between Wittgenstein and Pyrrhonian scepticism:

> The sceptic simply takes these philosophers at their word, meets them on their own grounds, and then shows that they cannot satisfy their own demands. Classical scepticism was not a call for the suspension of common belief, for it recognized that, for the most part, it is neither in our power to do so nor useful if it could be accomplished. Classical scepticism was a critique of philosophizing and the anxieties it generates.[362]

I agree that Wittgenstein, like the Pyrrhonian sceptic, makes a distinction between what someone says in ordinary language, and what philosophers try to do with language. This is something like Hume's distinction between the vulgar and the reflective – but unlike Hume's ultimate position that one must mediate the other, Wittgenstein takes the vulgar as perfectly fine as it stands. This is one of the great continuities between the *Tractatus* and *Investigations*. However, where I disagree with him, and other Pyrrhonian readings, is that Wittgenstein wants to put an end to all philosophy, or that this is possible. When Wittgenstein says, "Problems are solved (difficulties eliminated), not a single problem." (PI, 133) I think this is a call to understand that philosophy is an ongoing process. Fogelin also correctly identifies a distinction between Wittgenstein and self-identified sceptics, writing, "Where the traditional sceptics, down to at least Hume, held that philosophical problems are, in principle, unsolvable, Wittgenstein claimed that they lacked sense or meaning."[363] This point, though correct, I think undermines the similarity between Wittgenstein and an sceptic, he offers a well-defined route to solving philosophical problems as they arise, but also a route for learning from philosophical problems. We do not have to treat these problems as genuine metaphysical threats to not use them as a valuable opportunity to learn about our ordinary language.

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[362] Fogelin, *Wittgenstein*, 233.
[363] Ibid., 234

Interpretative work in Wittgenstein scholarship is unavoidably fraught. Any continuity analysis between his early and later work runs up against major interpretive debates. This said, major readings of the early and later Wittgenstein draw attention to different aspects of his work, and a complete analysis of the concept of nonsense requires taking them seriously. Though I do not agree with the picture of Wittgenstein's motivations painted by the resolute reading, I do think that Diamond's analysis of the concept of nonsense is sharp and relevant throughout. Further, though I am not convinced by the Pyrrhonian reading of the later Wittgenstein, Fogelin's comparative work between Wittgenstein and similarly motivated moments in critical philosophy is an impulse shared with this project.

I reject the full extent of the resolute view based on the historical evidence both contemporary to the *Tractatus* and in retrospective reflections that Wittgenstein did intend there to be something which sets the standards for sense and nonsense outside of use. I am also unconvinced by their explanation for the fuzziness of the frame and content distinction, and wholly unconvinced that the *Tractatus* was set up in such a way as to allow a reader to go through a therapeutic process. On my view, it is logical form which allows only the bipolar proposition to have sense and for everything without this to be dissolved as nonsense. He admits that we cannot make meaningful propositions about the logical structure of language in the same way Frege admits he cannot use sentences to teach the logical structure underlying language. However, there is still a philosophical commitment underpinning the work of both thinkers. This commitment, I argue is the basis of Wittgenstein's philosophical development going into the *Investigations.* He rejected the unspoken system underpinning his work.

In this chapter, I hope to have established that while it is reasonable to refer to the early Wittgenstein and the later Wittgenstein, it is also completely reasonable to discuss the middle Wittgenstein or the Wittgenstein of *On Certainty.* These are useful terms of art for scholarship, but they do not constitute a harsh separation in thought. Wittgenstein's wish to have *Investigations* published alongside a reprint of the *Tractatus* is on my view a reason to consider Wittgenstein the later Wittgenstein as a discursive development on his earlier ideas, even if he rejects many of them. It is particularly apparent in his characterisation of the correct method in philosophy as purely descriptive that it is the same philosopher, but one who is subject to growth. Understanding what Wittgenstein says about nonsense and how we should counter it at any stage should be compared to the others.

Having established that for the early Wittgenstein, nonsense can function as a teaching aid for drawing attention to necessary features of language to prevent the production of further nonsense, I argue he abandons this kind of thinking in the *Investigations.* Though he continues to offer a means of countering philosophical nonsense as it occurs, his piecemeal *Investigations* never seek to solve every problem of philosophy in one blow. No feature of language is logically or metaphysically necessary in the view of language in the *Investigations.* This text draws its attention to the contingent rules of language games upon which people agree.

The interpretations which I have built cases, the resolute and Pyrrhonian readings of the; later Wittgenstein have fallen into the trap of treating therapy as something separate from discussion, as something which cannot involve argument. In the next chapter, I present an interpretation of Wittgenstein's method of philosophical therapy which constitutes a better way of doing philosophy.

Chapter Five

Talking Therapy: Wittgenstein's Slow Cure and the Influence of Freud

In my exploration of the critical philosophy of Hume and Kant, I have found elements of their philosophical method which I characterise as therapeutic. In my comparative studies between these thinkers and Wittgenstein I have adumbrated that Wittgenstein's notion of philosophy practiced therapeutically is both more literal (he explicitly uses the word "therapy") and more thoroughly developed than both. In this chapter, I examine the historical context of Wittgenstein's therapeutic method, primarily by offering direct comparisons between his method and the psychoanalytic practices developed by Sigmund Freud. I argue that there is significant contextual and textual evidence to place Freud as a direct inspiration for some of Wittgenstein's later philosophical developments and that this inspiration is sometimes misunderstood or even downplayed in the scholarship. In my view, Wittgenstein's using of a distinctly psychoanalytic structure in philosophical treatments allows his therapeutic philosophy to surpass that of both Kant and Hume in the power to dissolve philosophical confusion. An understanding of psychoanalysis is important for understanding Wittgenstein's later method of addressing the nonsense of philosophy. I reiterate my points from the previous chapter that Wittgenstein's shift from an implicit to explicit therapeutic method is significant and argue this shift can largely be attributed to his development on Freudian approaches to addressing problems.

In this chapter, I begin by contextualising Wittgenstein's relationship to Freud and his psychological theories. Wittgenstein remarked to Rush Rees that he was "a disciple of Freud" and Freud was both the analyst and a friend of his sister Margaret. I also spend some time laying out the historical import of psychoanalysis as a radical alternative to earlier psychotherapeutic treatments. From here, I reiterate some of the discussion in the previous chapter regarding the two Wittgenstein's and track Wittgenstein's evolution from tacit to explicit therapy language in his method. I lay out the key elements of the Freudian psychoanalytic method, focusing in on the patient experience, initially drawing on a summary from Alistair Macintyre's *The Unconscious,* but also drawing on literature from Freud and practising psychoanalysts. I argue that when laid out as abstractly as possible there are four stages to the psychoanalytic breakthrough, realisation, or cure without reference to Freud's

other theoretical baggage. After laying out these four stages, I examine Wittgenstein's later work and locate these in an identical structure throughout the problems laid out in *Philosophical Investigations.* I take time to separate Freudian theory and Freudian method because it is only the latter that Wittgenstein took as influential. The aspects of Freud that Wittgenstein found problematic and even dangerous can be described as his "scientism," Freud's sense that his theories were as concrete as the truths of physics or biology.

In the latter part of the chapter, I contest the somewhat popular interpretation that a truly therapeutic reading of Wittgenstein means that we have no use for argument in our method. Indeed, I argue that the structure of the psychoanalytic session involves a kind of argument and that in sharing a structure, Wittgenstein's later philosophical method also involves an argument. Slow cure involves an argument and insight, though this is different in form from traditional arguments about metaphysics or the mind in philosophy. From here, I can lay out the benefits of Wittgenstein's method against alternatives, including Hume and Kant, and some post-Wittgenstein developments in analytic philosophy. I argue, as introduced in Chapter 2, that it is a strength, rather than a weakness, that Wittgenstein's slow cure does not truly have a definitive end. This is not to say that it never successfully explains why a philosophical question is nonsense, but rather an acknowledgement that, like psychoanalytic therapy, different approaches will work for different kinds of questions and even for different "patients". Importantly, I also argue that the therapeutic nature of correctly practised philosophy does not mean that philosophical confusion should be forever avoided, or even that it can be. I do not hold, and do not think Wittgenstein would hold that therapeutic philosophy is a shield against ever encountering philosophical nonsense. To iterate on his imagery from *Philosophical Investigations,* there are benefits for flies that find some time inside fly bottles.

5.1. Psychoanalysis in Context

Had Wittgenstein been writing in the present day, there may have been more of an analogy visible between therapeutic philosophy and some modern psychotherapy. Robert G. Brice has argued recently that there is a strong parallel between Wittgenstein's method and cognitive behaviour therapy.[364] For this chapter, I will be explicitly homing in psychoanalysis, particularly the frameworks created directly by its founder. Examining this parallel is useful for discerning the details of Wittgenstein's method, and appropriately accounts for how Freud's work in context was deservedly revolutionary. Psychoanalysis was a cutting-edge treatment and

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[364] R. G. Brice, *Wittgenstein's On Certainty: Insight and Method.* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2022) 36 – 37.

transformed both clinical practitioner and public perceptions of psychological malaise. In this section I will briefly contextualise the development of psychoanalysis against the backdrop of previous approaches to mental health concerns, arguing that it is system-defining in its approach to the patient. I then argue that the fact that Freud was part of Wittgenstein's thought world through friends engaging with psychoanalysis, a direct family connection, and a sustained interest in his world is further evidence of an explicit Freudian influence on his later philosophy.

Psychoanalysis is perhaps remarkable in comparison to the psychological treatments that preceded it because its patients were part of society. The asylum was the former paradigm for psychiatric or psychological care. I use both terms because the distinction was not yet fully realised. The asylum model as outlined by Lawrence Ray was characterised by two principles firstly that insanity was a curable illness (thus patients were sick in a medical sense) and secondly that "the asylum was regarded as essential for the care and cure of insanity."[365] Andrew Scull in his history of the social construction of madness argues that the 19th Century European asylum model was largely based on the "moral management" of psychiatric illness.[366] The moral model contrasted with the physiological (or brain-disease) model of mental health. These asylums were characterised by "...a moral treatment that mobilized the remnants of reason even the maddest patient still possessed, and encouraged the lunatic gradually to extend their powers of self-control until these allowed the suppression of unruly thoughts and behaviour..."[367] This demonstrated a shift away from sedation, surgeries, and restraint.

Asylum approaches were rapidly evolving in the 19th Century, Ray writes that former authoritative textbooks about diseases of the mind were understood as massively out of date by the late 1950s.[368] In the mid-19th Century, several countries had implemented legislation mandating the building of additional asylums for the care of the mentally ill. This happened in France in 1845 and the UK in 1850. Further countries that did not explicitly legislate for the expansion of this care paradigm, including Germany, still embraced the construction of the so-called "new public asylums"[369]. The asylum model, despite the promises of a softer moral education approach over a medical one consisting of surgeries, sedating drugs, and restraint, had unforeseen effects. Ray argues that the asylum model's moral approach, resulted in

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[365] L. Ray, "Models of Madness in Victorian Asylum Practice," *European Journal of Sociology* 22 no. 2 (1981): 241

[366] A. Scull, *Madness in Civilisation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 161.

[367] A. Scull, *Psychiatry, and Its Discontents* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2019) 43.

[368] Ray, "Victorian Asylum Practice," 239.

[369] Scull, *Madness in Civilization,* 192 – 194.

psychiatry separating off from other medicine. This also resulted in a distinction between the medic and the asylum psychiatric practitioner. This manner of approaching the profession resulted in the emergence of the "impaired identity model." Contrary to the promises of cure which characterised professional and public enthusiasm for expanding asylum care, this model viewed the illness as chronic and intrinsic to the subject.[370]

It is against this backdrop that Sigmund Freud, a young neurologist derived his theories, found his patients, and developed his practice. Scull writes that the Freudian innovation was that "Madness was not a condition unique to the degraded and degenerate, Freud argued, but something that lurked to some degree within all of us."[371] Psychoanalytic practices offered space for those with even relatively minor complaints about their mental state to work towards a cure. Part of this practice and ideology departure from the asylums was situational. Freud opened his clinic specialising in "nervous disorders" in 1886. His patients were, due to their affliction types which were largely less obvious or disabling than those deemed "insane", and their wealth (Freud worked in middle to upper-class Vienna) spared of the asylums. As a result, these patients had access to the autonomy and freedom to engage with therapy not afforded to patients in long-term asylum care. However, as Scull points out Freud very deliberately naturalised psychological disorders and he rejected both the physiological and the moral models of mental affliction: "The same forces that led one to mental invalidism allowed another to produce accomplishments of surpassing cultural importance." This sense of normalising disorder is also present in his chosen curative method. In his 1985 *Studies in Hysteria*, Freud formalised his "talking therapy". The therapeutic process was in the very act of talking and was explicitly patient-led and based upon free associations. Such a practice would be unthinkable in a purely physiological understanding or one which viewed the patient as innately morally defective.

Psychoanalysis as a practice was taken up by the German-speaking world around the turn of the 20th Century. French and English psychiatrists were initially sceptical. However, there was a large uptake in the interwar period, due to the large numbers of patients with shellshock. Freud also found success and celebrity in North America in this period.

The revolutionary character of psychoanalysis on the backdrop of the asylum paradigm would itself offer an understandable reason for Wittgenstein's interest in Freud. This would be further

[370] Ray, "Victorian Asylum Practice. 257 – 258.
[371] A. Scull, *Desperate Remedies: Psychiatry's Desperate Quest to Cure Mental Illness* (London: Allen Lane, 2022) 66.

understandable given how rapidly psychoanalysis spread through the German-speaking world, especially among middle and upper-class Austrians, the demographic to which he belonged. Rush Rhees writes that Wittgenstein started to read psychoanalytic texts "soon after 1919".[372] This was a departure for Wittgenstein, given he had previously found psychology as a discipline, "a waste of time." Rhees writes, that Wittgenstein would self-describe as "a disciple of Freud" and "a follower of Freud" after this point.[373]

I should also mention there are also personal connections. Freud developed his practice in Vienna, home of the Wittgenstein family. The young Wittgenstein returned from war to Vienna as psychoanalysis was flourishing and as Jacques Bouveresse writes, he "had many friends and relations who were impelled to seek psychoanalysis in an attempt to resolve their personal problems."[374] Wittgenstein's older sister, Margaret Stonborough-Wittgenstein had met Freud while volunteering as a psychiatric aide for the Red Cross in the early 30s, later choosing to be analysed by him for nearly two years.[375] As a recently auctioned letter reveals, the two remained in correspondence until around Freud's death in 1939.[376] Again to borrow an observation from Bouveresse, "the question is surely not how Wittgenstein came to be interested in Freud's work but rather how he could have avoided it."[377] Psychoanalysis was radical, and Freud became an unstoppable force in the field of psychology. It would be hard for any philosopher to entirely ignore his contributions, and perhaps even impossible for a philosopher with Wittgenstein's context and interests to do so.

5.2. What does Wittgenstein say about Therapy?

I have thus far given largely biographical reasons for taking Freud's influence seriously. There is also a wide range of textual evidence. In this section, I will lay out and offer an interpretation of Wittgenstein's use of what I am calling "therapeutic language." This will include instances which use "therapy" explicitly, those which directly mention psychoanalysis, but also those which are not so explicit. I will make the case that when Wittgenstein makes references to

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[372] Wittgenstein, *Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief*, ed. Cyril Barrett. (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966) 41.
[373] Lectures and Conversations, 41.
[374] J. Bouveresse, *Wittgenstein Reads Freud: The Myth of the Unconscious*, trans. C. Cosman (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995) 6.
[375] D. Edmunds & J. Eidinow, Wittgenstein's Poker: *The Story of a Ten-Minute Argument Between Two Great Philosophers* (New York: Harper Collins, 2001), 77.
[376] A 1938 letter was sold by Kedem Auction House in 2019. https://www.kedem-auctions.com/en/content/letter-handwritten-and-signed-sigmund-freud-%E2%80%93-london-1938-%E2%80%93-sent-several-weeks-after-he [Accessed 24/04/2024].
[377] Bouveresse, *Wittgenstein Reads Freud*, 6.

illnesses, ailments, and cures, he is rarely if ever alluding to similarities with physical illness and medical treatment. This study will allow me to track where therapy began to emerge as an explicit theme in Wittgenstein's writings. I stated in the previous chapter that the characterisation of philosophical questions, theorising, and rumination as being based on nonsense is the most striking similarity between the early and later Wittgenstein. However, I stressed that descriptions of the correct philosophical method take on a different character over time. The most radical shift is the later Wittgenstein's use of language associated with psychotherapy in describing his method.

Let us begin with explicit mentions of psychoanalysis. A direct comparison between his method and psychoanalysis appears, according to Hacker only five times in Wittgenstein's entire work.[378] He excludes remarks which appear to be largely copied between manuscripts. Rather than following Hacker directly, I will discuss the five comparative remarks alongside other discussions which mention psychoanalysis to build an understanding of the features of psychoanalysis Wittgenstein was most interested in.

 Set out chronologically (as far as possible using available archival information) the first is from the manuscript put together in 1930, "...our method is similar here to that of psychoanalysis that also makes the unconscious conscious and renders it thereby harmless." (BEE, 109, 174). Hacker proposes that the mention of psychoanalysis in the 1932 document *Diktat für Schlick* is a retread of this one.[379] However, I would argue that the dictation does consist of a development because it uses an example. In a section called "On the character of disquiet" Wittgenstein's dictation reads:[380]

> Our method resembles psychoanalysis in a certain sense. To use its way of putting things, we could say that a simile at work in the unconscious is made harmless by being articulated. And this comparison with analysis can be developed even further. (And this analogy is certainly no coincidence.)[381]

In this part of dictation Wittgenstein is describing a method of ending philosophical disquiet via asking, as one would in psychoanalysis – why is this proposition being said? Where did it

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[378] P. M. S. Hacker, "Gordon Baker's Late Interpretation of Wittgenstein," in *Wittgenstein and His Interpreters: Essays in Memory of Gordon Baker,* eds. G. Kahane, E. Kanterian and O Kuusela (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007) 99.

[379] Ibid.

[380] This is the argument of M. Oakes and A Pilcher, "Computational Stylometry of Wittgenstein's "Diktat für Schlick,"* Bergen Language and Linguistics Studies 3* no. 1 (2013).

[381] L.Wittgenstein, "*Diktat für Schlick"* in 69 in *The Voices of Wittgenstein.* eds. Friedrich Waismann and Gordon Baker. (Oxford: Taylor & Francis, 2003) 69.

come from? I should briefly mention the authorship debate regarding the Dik*tat für Schlick*, wherein it was suggested by both Schulte and Manninen in the 2011 Vienna Institute Yearbook that it may be a work mostly or wholly by Friedrich Waismann. A stylometric analysis in 2013 concluded that the text was significantly more likely to be by Wittgenstein and also dated it to a later 1933, so I will assume his authorship and this creation date. The section develops the example of a philosophical confusion where someone conceives of nothing as "a something," which is capable of doing, hence, "the nothing noths". He describes the kinds of image that one would have to hold of "nothing" in order for this confusion to occur and the importance of communicating this image to the subject.

> But how is it possible to demonstrate to someone that this simile is actually the correct one? This cannot be shown at all. But if we free him from his confusion then we have accomplished what we wanted to do for him. It may seem strange to us what trivial means, as it were, serve to free us from profound philosophical disquiets.[382]

What Wittgenstein is describing here is the kind of results that philosophical treatment can bring. Because such a treatment does not deal with facts as such, there is nothing in the language which sets which way of thinking about it is the correct one or the most helpful one. The test for whether the treatment is successful is not whether the treatment has revealed an undeniable truth but rather if the "patient" can move on from the philosophical stressor. This is how the method resembles psychoanalysis. The wording of the key point is similar to that in MS 109 (that of resembling psychoanalysis) and might be another draft of the same observation. I disagree, however, because the example is an example of a treatment in this style, with Hacker's conclusion that it "adds nothing."

The next mention which Hacker tracks appears in MS 110. To date this remark, he notes it "was incorporated into MS 142 and PI 121 in 1936/7."[383] Wittgenstein writes:

> One of the most important tasks is to express all false trains of thought so characteristically that the reader says "yes, that's exactly what I meant". To trace the physiognomy of every error.
> We can only convict the other person of a mistake if he recognizes that this is (really) the expression of his feeling. || if he (really) recognizes this expression as the correct expression of his feeling.
> Namely, only if he recognizes it as such is it the correct expression. (psychoanalysis)

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[382] Ibid.
[383] Hacker "Baker's Late Interpretation," 12

I believe that this error lies in the idea that the meaning of a word is an idea that accompanies the word."[384] (BEE, 110, 230).

I will discuss later the philosophical problem or question as clearly as possible is the first step of the therapeutic process which is practised in *Philosophical Investigation.* This remark is similar to one that Wittgenstein made regarding the practice of psychoanalysis in a 1932 lecture. Moore describes the setting for this commentary "As for Freud, he gave the greater part of two lectures to Freud's investigation of the nature of a "joke," which he said was an "aesthetic investigation." The remarks Moore recounts, include critiques of Freud which I shall address later in this chapter, however, Wittgenstein does offer praise of Freud here. Wittgenstein distinguishes between being able to find the cause of something and being able to find the reason for it. As Moore writes,

> He [Wittgenstein] said… that Freud did not give any method for analysing dreams which was analogous to the rules which tell you what are the causes of stomach-ache; that he had genius and therefore might sometimes by psycho-analysis find the *reason* of a certain dream, but what is most striking about him is "the enormous field of psychical facts which he arranges."[385]

Here we have both an attribution of genius to Freud, and the attribution of a use case to psychoanalysis. In support of his insistence that psychoanalysis could only produce reasons and not uncover causes Wittgenstein stated, "…a psychoanalysis is successful only if the patient agrees to the explanation offered by the analyst."[386] Here we can once again see that the notion of success requiring affirmation by the subject is a distinctly psychoanalytic practice. In the MS 110 remark, we see the same structure, it is not so much that there is a *fact* of meaning, but rather that the speaker agrees with the general story of his meaning presented by the characteristic expression. Importantly for my argument, Wittgenstein remarks on the necessity of the acknowledgement. He holds that this is a key feature of psychoanalysis which will hold into his method. Furthermore, like in the aforementioned dictation, he thinks that the goal is to have the "patient" acknowledge that they hold certain analogies or similes in order for the expression of the thought to emerge. This exhausts productive use of the term psychoanalysis,

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[384] BEE refers to L. Wittgenstein, *Wittgenstein's Nachlass: The Bergen Electronic Edition*, ed. The Wittgenstein Archives at the University of Bergen (2000) (*http://www.wittgensteinsource.org/*) Translations provided via DeepL translation software and edited by myself.
[385] G. E. Moore, "Wittgenstein's Lectures in 1930-33." *Mind* 64, no. 253 (1955): 20.
[386] Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Occasions,* 108.

though Wittgenstein did discuss Freud more in conversations as I will draw out in discussing his reservations about Freud and his followers.

The third direct analogy that Hacker identifies is in BEE 113 (116 – 117).

> The mathematician must be horrified by my mathematical explanations because his training has always distracted him from indulging in thoughts & doubts such as I am rolling them up. He has learned to regard them as something contemptible &, to use an analogy from psychoanalysis (this paragraph is reminiscent of Freud), has become disgusted with these things, as with something infantile. I.e., I roll up all those problems which a boy || child, for instance, finds difficult when learning arithmetic, etc. & which teaching suppresses without solving them.

Interestingly here Wittgenstein seems to be finding a place for something like psychoanalytic repression in his method. The subject, such as a mathematician, will have a history which has made certain kinds of inquiry difficult to engage with, such that they are harshly rejected prior to engagement. It will take considerable work for such a subject to take such an inquiry seriously.

The fourth instance Hacker identifies as a method comparison occurs at, BEE 145, 58: '"Meaning has a direction, which no mere process has." (One could almost say: "Meaning moves, where any process stands still." (Psychoanalysis of grammatical misinterpretations.)' Hacker describes this instance only as "a curious aside" and offers little commentary. While this mention of psychoanalysis seems jarring, I argue that it is interesting because Wittgenstein has labelled an utterance as an example of his psychoanalysis-inspired philosophy. This aside is embedded in a series of remarks regarding the character of intention (which Wittgenstein equates to meaning). Especially he is interested in the puzzle, "how can I know that a portrait portrays a particular person?"[387] In other words, what is it to mean something or to have meant something?" Wittgenstein is adamant that it is an unhelpful picture to view meaning as mechanical, hence it is not a process. The utterance "Meaning has a direction, which no mere process has," is, therefore, an instance of therapy because it is due to break the image. Wittgenstein continues the therapeutic process for this philosophical problem by further examining the image of intention as a mechanical process, contained in the mind. He finds issues with locating meaning in the processing of a memory,

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[387] Paraphrase of the puzzle presented in BEE 145.

"How do I know that I remember him if the memory is only an image?" But in what way do I know?

(If I remember one of two people who look exactly the same¤: a) how do I know || know whose I remember & how? b) what makes me say that the memory was the memory of N?) (BEE, 145 63)

Rather than solving the problem of intention, memory then only adds additional questions and does not provide a stable base. Notably this remark is similar to the note on memory in *Philosophical Investigations.* The other problem that Wittgenstein identifies with the existing picture of intention is its utter non-functionality without language. In a further example, he shifts from intention to wishing (another sort of meaning). He envisions someone wishing that a table was a few inches higher and waving their hand at the desired height. He concludes that it is only with language that such a gesture can be a wish at all:

How does language solve our difficulty? The difficulty was that the hand over the table expressed nothing; it committed the table to nothing, so to speak, that it was no more a model for him than he was for it.

When I say that language is alive, I could just as well say that what we call 'life' is in fact language. BEE 145: 65

The therapeutic suggestion here is to dissolve the image of meaning as a process of the mind and to instead consider meaning as a thing we do with language, as a form of life. Therefore, in this example, Wittgenstein offers the kind of utterance which could be used in his therapeutic philosophy but also develops on it further. Throughout the portrait portraying example, he explores the images about meaning that dominate philosophical thinking and therefore lead to puzzles.

What we do is much more akin to Psychoanalysis than you might be aware of. Schopenhauer: "If you find yourself stumped trying to convince someone // of something // and not getting anywhere, tell yourself that it's the will & not the intellect you're up against." (BEE, 158, p. 34r–v)

So, though Hacker is correct that these are the direct comparisons between the method of the later Wittgenstein and psychoanalysis, they are anything but insignificant. Each example shows the features of psychoanalysis that Wittgenstein saw himself as using.

Outside of direct mentions of psychoanalysis, there are plenty of other remarks in Wittgenstein's philosophical output that strongly allude to it. The next word of interest is "therapy." It must be noted that there is only one remark in *Philosophical Investigations* that explicitly mentions the term "therapy" (*Therapie*), remark 113 in which Wittgenstein writes "There is not a single philosophical method, though there are indeed methods, different therapies as it were." However, the idea of philosophy as therapy has become entangled with the later Wittgenstein. In part perhaps this can be attributed to popular readings of Wittgenstein which began even before his death (e.g. that of John Wisdom') but predominantly it is because he makes additional allusions to therapy within this text and mentions it explicitly elsewhere. *The Philosophical Investigations* consists of examples of treatments of philosophical problems. It is a showcase of different therapies. This allows us to take other similes in the text as also pertaining to psychotherapy, such as when he writes, "The philosopher's treatment of a question is like the treatment of an illness." (PI, 255). To revisit a telling remark, in *Zettel* regarding diseases of thought: "It must run its natural course, and slow cure is all important." (Z, 382) This cure is psychotherapeutic in character. Psychoanalysis, even compared to other psychological therapies that have developed since, and certainly compared to a medical approach is lengthy.[388] It is a distinctly slow cure. Once again, Wittgenstein uses mathematicians as an example of those who will struggle with the therapeutic method.

Wittgenstein also uses language beyond that of sickness and treatment which is familiar to psychoanalysis. He writes of disquiets in the *Investigations* in a similar manner to the *Diktat fur Schlick,* "They [philosophical problems are deep disquietudes; their roots are as deep in us as the forms of our language and their significance is as great as the importance of our language". (PI, 109) Other therapy-adjacent terminology includes exploring the reasons for temptations (PI, 288), (PI, 277), and compulsions (PI, 140) and in the Blue Book writes explicitly of "curing temptations" (BB, 309, 2). Even more notably the later Wittgenstein writes, "What we 'are tempted to say,' in such a case is, of course, not philosophy; but it is its raw material." (PI, 245) which resonates with the psychoanalytic concept of the patients' material (words and behaviours in the context of the psychoanalytic session) as the object for analysis.[389]

A major objection to taking comparisons to psychoanalysis very seriously is the biographical detail that Wittgenstein disliked the constant comparisons. An example that Hacker mentions

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[388] CBT is usually delivered in 6 to 20 sessions of 30 to 60 minutes. https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/talking-therapies-medicine-treatments/talking-therapies-and-counselling/cognitive-behavioural-therapy-cbt/overview/

[389] H. Racker, *Transference and Countertransference* (London: Routledge, 2019), 22.

is a 1946 BBC interview with A.J Ayer. Ayer described those working on Wittgenstein's later work as treating philosophy like "a department of psychoanalysis".[391] He stated that Wittgenstein was "extremely vexed [by] my suggestion that John Wisdom's view of philosophy [as psychoanalytic] could be taken as a pointer to his own...he did not admit any kinship between the practice of psychoanalysis and his own method of dealing with philosophical confusions." (Ibid.)[392] As argued in the aforementioned article, though commentators like Hacker take such comments as evidence Wittgenstein was not happy with this line of interpretation, this is not so decisive. As I wrote, Wittgenstein "rarely discussed inspirations or sources and likely wished to distance himself from a totalising or reductive view of his work. Further, he questioned Freud's meta-psychological framework and may have wanted to avoid association with popularisations of the latter's theories."[393] I hold that the remarks in his writings about psychoanalysis are significant and that there is ample additional evidence to support a reading which closely compares his and Freud's methods.

5.3 The Structure of the Psychoanalytic Session

For comparison, I lay out the essential features and the desired process of psychoanalytic therapy. The scope of this paper will not allow me to fully explore case studies, but I will refer to Freud himself, philosophical commentary on his ideas, and contemporary psychoanalysts who provide accounts of the psychoanalytic method. Even Freud's *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* does not spend much time discussing the psychoanalytic method in the abstract. He uses case studies often and rarely separates descriptions of his method from those of his theories about the unconscious. Nevertheless, I hold it is possible to describe the method with little theoretical baggage. Alasdair MacIntyre offers this brief overview of the structure of psychoanalytic treatment in his *The Unconscious: A Conceptual Analysis*:

> In psychoanalysis the patient talks, saying whatever it occurs to him to say. In thus talking he will in fact tend to dwell on some subjects rather than on others, he will pass by some topics and continually return to others. When he dwells on some topic or when he displays great emotion the analyst will tend to suggest an interpretation to him of what he is saying. The more the analysis progresses the more the patient will pass from talk about adult life to talk about childhood and incidents that had apparently been forgotten will be recalled. This recalling will be accompanied by an emotional release.

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[391] A.J. Ayer, *Part of My Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1977) 304.

[392] John Wisdom offered an early therapeutic reading of Wittgenstein's work and is the author of the influential *Philosophy and Psychoanalysis* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1935).

[393] Wittgenstein, *Lectures and Conversations,* 44 – 45.

Such emotional release will in turn be followed by a mitigation of the neurotic symptoms which were the occasion of undertaking psychoanalytic treatment.[394]

Jotting down the key points from MacIntyre reveals a fourfold process.

1. The patient speaking freely.
2. The analyst offers suggestions, prompting further speaking.
3. The patient leads as the discussion moves earlier into their personal history.
4. There is an emotional release, and the patient feels comparatively better.

5.3.1. Saying Whatever Occurs

"The patient talks" is a hallmark of psychoanalysis, and perhaps the most enduring image of Freud's theory is that of the patient on the couch and the analyst quietly observing. This image is true to reality. Freud writes in *Studies in Hysteria* that his innovation on his mentor Breuer's work was in understanding the importance of the patient's free association without the aid of hypnosis. He wrote, "If one possesses a procedure which makes it possible to arrive at the repressed material from the associations, at the distorted material from the distortions, then what was formerly unconscious in mental life can be made accessible to consciousness even without hypnosis."[395] Indeed, Freud calls the free-associative talking the "raw material" for analysis, "…the pure metal of valuable unconscious thoughts can be extracted from the raw material of the patient's associations."[396] Here we can see the phrasing parallel with Wittgenstein explicitly.

The free-associative speech will have a variety of features of interest to the analyst. In Freud's *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, he uses "tongue slip" as the foundational example for what he calls the psychology of error: the idea that errors are revelatory of conscious and unconscious intention. To demonstrate this, he sets up three scenarios for the slip of the tongue. In one a speaker has the intention to vocalise a judgement, then intends not to do so before the slip of the tongue, which betrays the judgement occurs. The second only becomes aware of the intention to pass judgement immediately as they begin to speak. The third kind of scenario is where a speaker, even after the slip, does not become aware of their own intended judgement. Of the first two kinds of tongue slip, Freud writes:

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[394] A Macintyre, *The Unconscious: A Conceptual Analysis.* (London: Routledge, 1958) 52.
[395] S. Freud, *Complete Work*s, trans. James Strachey, ed. Ivan Smith for online access (2014) 1259.
[396] Ibid., 1166.

"The speaker had made up his mind not to convert the interfering tendency into speech and then the slip of the tongue occurred; that is to say, the suppressed tendency obtains expression against the speaker's will, in that it changes the expression of the intention which he permits, mixes itself with it or actually puts itself in its place. This is, then, the mechanism of the tongue slip."[397]

The inference that Freud then makes for the third kind is that "*the suppression of the existing intention to say something is the indispensable condition of the occurrence of a slip*." Therefore, even if the subject is unaware of an intention, the structure of the slip reveals that there is one, this time in the unconscious. The patient talking, especially in the free association style at the beginning of a psychoanalytic session offers ample material for analysis, and the examination of errors is only one point of entry.

5.3.2. Analysis: Suggestion and Probing

The second step in the psychoanalytic method is where the analyst will ask further questions and offer suggestions (interpretations) based on what the subject has been saying and how they have been saying it. This is where the relationship between the subject and the psychoanalyst is tested. Importantly, in order to offer helpful interpretations, the analyst requires extensive knowledge about the subject. Freud writes, regarding a dream interpretation, "...I was able to give her the correct interpretation of the dream, which she afterwards confirmed. I was able to do so because I was familiar with the whole of the dreamer's previous history."[398] This is part of why psychoanalysis requires lengthy and numerous sessions, such that the analyst can learn the biography of the patient. Further questions in the lead-up to an interpretation will be based on the specifics of the patient's speech. For example, if they use an unusual turn of phrase. 'I pointed out to her that "the 'centre' of a table" was an unusual expression (which she admitted), but I could not of course question her further directly on that point. I carefully avoided suggesting the meaning of the symbols to her, and merely asked her what came into her head in connection with the separate parts of the dream."[399] Note that the psychoanalyst in this example allows the patient to reach conclusions about her experience, even if the analyst has already some idea of a likely interpretation.

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[397] Ibid., 2468.
[398] Ibid., 508.
[399] Ibid., 669.

The analyst offering interpretations based on what is said is like the first phase of checking the underlying assumptions which contribute to a philosophical problem.

5.3.3. The Patient Travels in Time

The movement to recalling early forgotten memories roughly corresponds to uncovering why we hold these assumptions in the first place – the turn towards how our training causes us to think and speak a certain way. I think McIntyre is generally correct, long-term psychoanalysis will gradually lead to lengthy discussions of childhood experience and Freud's case studies align with this. However, there are examples in his work of helpful interpretations, accepted by patients which stay in the realm of adulthood. For example, in the Psychopathology of Everyday Life, Freud describes a patient case in which a series of unintentional and intentional slips of the tongue, when questioned revealed a woman's preoccupied unconscious thoughts about conception and pregnancy.[400] Even this preoccupation being made patent is a self-discovery without having to delve into the childhood reasons which Freud then probes into. What is universal is that the patient will use the further questions and the interpretations of the analyst to continue to interrogate "why did I say that, like that?" Whether this leads explicitly to childhood, or to revelations regarding their current intentions, the discovery has to be the patient's own.

5.3.4. The Emotional Release

A psychoanalytic programme, or even a single session will likely involve several emotional releases. These are the final steps in rendering the unconscious conscious. A typical example of an emotional release which alleviates a symptom is given in *Studies in Hysteria*. Freud describes a patient who has found themselves hydrophobic, pushing away water in disgust despite feeling intense thirst. Eventually, after several sessions of question and suggestion, the patient recalled living with a woman and her "horrid" little dog and encountering the little dog drinking out of a glass. At the time, the patient did not express her frustration or disgust. During the session however, "After giving further energetic expression to the anger she had held back, she asked for something to drink, drank a large quantity of water without any difficulty, and awoke from her hypnosis with the glass at her lips; and thereupon the disturbance vanished, never to return."[401] This case study took place while Freud was still using hypnosis regularly, but it shows the extent to which he believed the power of emotional release in the alleviation of psychiatric symptoms.

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[400] Ibid., 1153.
[401] Ibid. 30.

Often, the release has to occur precisely because the emotional response was denied, or in Freud's terms *repressed*, when it originally occurred.

To further emphasise the importance of emotion, there is a distinction to be drawn between intellectual self-knowledge and the self-insight as is being aimed at by psychoanalysis. The former is about knowing abstractly about oneself: "I experienced this" "I felt this." The latter as M.T Michaels, a contemporary psychoanalysis scholar writes, "self-insight arises directly out of the first-person experience."[402] The emotional release requires that the subject does not intellectualize or abstract their experiences. They must be experienced, and in that sense, felt. Even without the effects of hypnosis, the aim is for them to re-enter formative experiences.

The psychoanalytic process takes time. There must be a building of trust and familiarity on the patient's part, a building of history on the analysts' part and a slow process of uncovering and personally confronting the intentions, memories, and emotions of the unconscious. Having set up these essential features of the psychoanalytic method, I will now offer an analysis of Wittgenstein's method as presented in the case studies of *Philosophical Investigations.*

5.4. How does philosophical therapy work?

I have argued that there is ample textual and biographical evidence for taking a methodological comparison between Wittgenstein's method and psychoanalysis seriously. In this section, I will lay out, using examples from the *Philosophical Investigations,* the bones of Wittgenstein's therapeutic method. In breaking this down into steps, I can offer comparisons to the steps of psychoanalytic therapy. I argue that the therapy of the investigations resembles the following four stages.

1. Expressing a philosophical problem or question.
2. Querying what underlying assumptions about language allow the question to arise.
3. Investigating why it is that we have these assumptions and if there is any confusion involved in how we have arrived at and combined them.
4. Realising that the philosophical query we started with arises only when we fail to understand how and why we are using language.

I will evidence each of these steps in the text and discuss how each of them mirrors a stage of psychoanalysis. Wittgenstein does not lay out his method so mechanically, but he does show how one would work through these stages of his slow cure. Following this, I will address the

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[402] M. T. Michael, "Self-insight," International Journal of Psychoanalysis 100 no. 4 (2019): 697.

complications of such a one-to-one comparison, particularly regarding the psychoanalytic commitment to the unconscious, of which Wittgenstein was never convinced.

5.4.1. Expressing

The first stage of Wittgenstein's therapy is true of most philosophical practice. One must state the problem to address it. The primary example I use to evidence this is Wittgenstein's lengthy discussion of pain in the *Investigations.* This discussion primarily involves the problem of inner-outer experience. This problem touches at least three issues in classic philosophical terms: the possibility of generalising experiences, the problem of other minds, and at least tangentially the status of body and mind in an individual (am *I* my mind?). Formatted as a question: "What gives us *so much as the idea* that living beings, things, can feel?" (PI, 283) Such a question as phrased perhaps sounds incredulously sceptical or even solipsistic, but it is one that a great many philosophers have touched on. Wittgenstein's therapy aims to explain what might lead us to lose something as fundamental as the idea that others have pain and experiences.

I suggest that this step has the same role as the unprompted speech that the patient begins with at the start of psychoanalytic treatment. One is far more specific and perhaps laboured than the other. The philosophical patient has to think about their words to best express the troubling philosophical problem. However, in terms of the use of the problem as raw material, the laying out of the philosophical confusion, as best as possible is akin to Freud's use of free-associative speech.

5.4.2. Necessary Underlying Assumptions

In the psychoanalytic session, the analyst will prompt work from the patient by asking questions and offering suggestions. In philosophical therapy, after the problem is stated as clearly as possible, the next step is to ask what necessarily underlies the problem. What modes of thinking about pain are necessary such that it is possible to doubt whether another is experiencing it?

Wittgenstein's discussion continues, firstly, there is the commonplace view that very few of us would ascribe pain to something like a stone (PI, 284). Secondly, we have the assumption that pain is something that belongs to psychology: "But isn't it absurd to say of a body that it has pain?" (PI 286) With the assumption that pain is a phenomenon of the 'inner' psychological realm, we have the assumption that pain does not belong to a body at all. Following this second assumption, even if we were, in a moment of agony to be turned to stone, this physical change

would not affect the psychological experience of pain. (PI, 288) Therefore stone things *could* feel pain if we build up from our other assumptions.

The other route into affirming that we know some things feel pain and others do not is one based on similarity to self. This is a worrying situation for the reason that "If I say of myself that it is only from my own case that I know what the word "pain" means—must I not say the same of other people too? And how can I generalize the one case so irresponsibly?" (PI, 293) The problem arises from two conflicting assumptions:

>   A) That we can (easily) distinguish between that which feels pain and that which does
>   not.

>   B) That pain is a fundamentally private experience rather than a public one.

We are led to ask the troubling question, "How can I say something has pain?" by the worrying conclusion that because of B) we only ever engage in unfounded projection and generalising. I do not think that these underlying assumptions and their consequences are exhaustive, even for the Wittgenstein of the *Investigations.* However, these are the assumptions which are of interest in this particular addressing of the problem.

Like in the psychoanalytic session, suggestions are presented in a non-committal fashion. If they are consequential, wherein the person with philosophical confusion thinks they are important, they will be explored further.

5.4.3. Assessing The Assumptions

The third stage of philosophical therapy mirrors the patient-led uncovering that Freud describes. It does not involve the uncovering or revisiting of a personal memory, but it does require the uncovering of some unexamined features of language.

For the example in question, Wittgenstein leads his interlocutor to examine the language used in talking about pain and the reasons for it. There is a temptation to, in response to a strongly held belief in B) to, as far as possible, let go of A). One might embrace this notion of not *really* knowing and only allowing oneself the notion of a 'belief' in others' pain. Wittgenstein anticipates this response:

>   I can only believe that someone else is in pain, but I know it if I am."—Yes: one can
>   make the decision to say "I believe he is in pain" instead of "He is in pain". But that is all.
>   ——What looks like an explanation here, or like a statement about a mental process, is

in truth an exchange of one expression for another which, while we are doing philosophy, seems the more appropriate one.

Just try—in a real case—to doubt someone else's fear or pain. (PI, 303)

What I glean from this response is that the movement from "he is" to "I believe he is" does not in any way solve the problem. If we are to suggest that there is doubt, such as doubting that we can know if someone else is in pain, should be genuine doubt. When there is no accompanying change in behaviour when this shift in language is made the doubt is very likely disingenuous and achieves nothing. This mere belief in someone's pain has the same effect on behaviour as would the fact of them being in pain – there is still something to justify.

To begin to unpack the belief in B) and the consequences thereof we must interrogate where it is coming from. What a session or project of philosophical therapy is supposed to do is help us understand how our education has led us to assumptions that do not actually underpin how we use language. In some cases, then, there is an element of uncovering a personal history. Wittgenstein, like Freud, is aware that this stage is difficult:. Recall that Wittgenstein stresses the prejudice that gets in the way of describing language as it is, "is not a *stupid* prejudice." (PI, 340)

In psychoanalysis, the questions and suggestions of the analyst are often met with resistance from the patient. This could be because the session is leading towards shameful or taboo thoughts and memories, and the resistance might not even be based on conscious knowledge of these thoughts or memories. There is work to be done to undo repression, just as in philosophical therapy there is work to remove the prejudice.

At remark 244 Wittgenstein writes,

A child has hurt himself and he cries; and then adults talk to him and teach him exclamations and, later, sentences. They teach the child new pain-behaviour.

"So you are saying that the word 'pain' really means crying?"—On the contrary: the verbal expression of pain replaces crying and does not describe it.

Here Wittgenstein takes the question of how we come to know the word "pain" and how to use it in a sentence back as far as it is possible, to before the child has ever used the word. In effect, "I have pain" or "I am in pain" are not, and never were sentences which describe the ownership of something or a declaration of a state of being – they're rather a common linguistic replacement for primitive behavioural expressions. Kenny writes, "The word 'pain' cannot, as it

were hook on to pain directly; it must be attached to pain through its connections to the natural expressions of pain. To try to connect 'pain' with pain in isolation from unlearnt pain behaviour would be to try to insert language between pain and its expression."[403] Analysis like Kenny's can get confusing because we still end up using words to describe sensations to make the point. If we concede however that "I am in pain" is a learned alternative to natural pain behaviour, then it is perfectly acceptable to say, "he is in pain," when someone else exhibits pain behaviours even the replacement kinds learned in language.

One might be drawn towards the complication that people can both consciously refrain from exhibiting their pain behaviours, or exhibit pain behaviours when they are not actually in pain. Wittgenstein has answers to both of these "doubts of truthfulness" problems. He uses general observations of natural behaviours. We are not inclined to say that a dog or infant can lie in their expressions. Even a dog trained to exhibit an anguished howl on command would not be the dog pretending to have pain. (PI, 250) He notes, "Lying is a language game that needs to be learned like any other." (PI 249). We do not generally attribute deliberate falseness to beings who do not have language. We should not take Wittgenstein's word that lying is explicitly linguistic. There is evidence to suggest that several species are capable of deception. Some American grey squirrels pretend to dig and hide the food they are carrying before choosing a hiding place to lower the chances of competing animals finding them.[404] Chimpanzees have been shown capable of deceiving human researchers in captivity.[405] Chimps are highly social and adept at problem-solving, and in experiments, they take some time to establish how to utilise misinformation for a desired outcome (in experiments, this was misleading a researcher so as to take food for themselves). Perhaps our language game of lying is a more complex version of this deception behaviour seen in squirrels and apes, replaced with words in the same way that "I am in pain" replaces an anguished cry. Regardless of outliers in animal deception, we can generally accept it is possible to know when those without a grasp of the language games of deception have pain. Just because we may doubt an older child who has 'cried wolf' about an ailment before, does not mean that the pain of others is something that cannot be communicated to us. Concealment, like lying, is learned. Babies cry to alert their caregivers to all issues – but some adults can conceal a debilitating health problem for years. Concealment by

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[403] Kenny, *Wittgenstein*, 183.
[404] See Steele et al, "Cache protection strategies of a scatter-hoarding rodent: Do tree squirrels engage in behavioural deception?" *Animal Behaviour* 75 no. 2 (2008): 705 – 714.
[405] G Woodruff & D Primak, "Intentional Communication in the Chimpanzee: The Development of Deception." *Cognition* 7 no. 4 (1979): 345.

omission is not a language game as such, but the false "I'm fine" constitutes an acquired language game.

The diagnosis of the problem of other's pain is a specific example of Wittgenstein's broader arguments against the notion of private languages in the *Investigations.* As puts it, "From what has been said up to this point it follows *our* word 'pain' does not belong to a private language."[406] The private language argument is vitally important for our understanding of philosophical confusions of this kind. We cannot create names for, and thus describe private sensations without shifting them into ordinary public language. Naming something is itself a specific language game; "one forgets that a great deal of stage setting in the language is presupposed if the mere act of naming is to make sense." (PI, 257) Even if we *pseudo-named* something just for ourselves, and assigned it a special code as in the diary of internal sensations at PI 258, how can this be of any use to us or even constitute something like naming and using new words and concepts?

The assumption that pain is an essentially private experience is one that does not rest on how we engage with the word "pain." Why are we so led towards this assumption? One of Kenny's suggestions is that the expression "I am in pain" looks a lot like commonplace descriptions, for example, "the bedroom curtains are blue." This causes us to treat the former as a declaration of the same type as the latter, describing a state of affairs in the world. However, "The language-game of describing the room begins with observation of the room; the language-game of describing sensations begins with criteria for sensations."[407] The considerable difference hinges on the fact that "I am in pain" is doing the work of natural pain expressions. There's no observing a state of affairs and then describing them with pain expressions, "to treat the expression of pain as a description of pain is to make it seem too distant from pain."[408] This said, there are instances where "I am in pain" could be utilised in a similar way to another description – a doctor might ask for an update on their patient's condition to assess the efficacy of her treatments. This does not mean that it normally functions in the same way as these.

There are likely many reasons that the assumptions underlying philosophical problems arise and are so pervasive. Given that these problems are agonised over again and again in the discipline of philosophy, it may also be worth acknowledging that these assumptions may be, for many people, the result of learning philosophy in a certain historical context. The

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[406] Kenny, *Wittgenstein*, 190.
[407] Ibid., 199.
[408] Ibid.

scepticism inherent in a question like, "How do I know if something feels pain?" can be traced back to Descartes in the Early Modern period. The Cartesian system of seriously doubting the existence of anything that can be doubted due to the possibility of reality being the work of a great deceiver leaves only the existence of the self and one's thoughts (and God on his ontological argument).[409]

Wittgenstein does not address the history of philosophy in his philosophical therapy. Hamilton suggests a major reason for this ahistoricity is a strict delineation between the conceptual and factual apparent throughout Wittgenstein's work. Attributing importance to the historical context of philosophy blurs this boundary. This builds into the tradition, on which Wittgenstein was a key influence, of what may be termed *analytic purism* "seeing concepts as timeless objects of analysis."[410] Further, Wittgenstein's projects were always characteristically wholesale, as in the *Tractatus'* "I therefore, believe myself to have found, on all essential points, the final solution to the problems." (TLP, Introduction). There is little need to address particular thinkers when one's project targets not any particular argument but the foundations of philosophical thinking. If my ensuing comparisons to psychotherapies are convincing, I also hope to demonstrate that therapies are rarely concerned with history beyond the history of the individual due to their targeted, individual nature. Perhaps this also goes some way to addressing the counterintuitively ahistoric approach in *Investigations.*

5.3.4. Out of the Fly Bottle

In psychoanalysis, the result of the patient's work is some kind of emotional release accompanying their new self-insight. Wittgenstein does not describe exhibitions of frustration or grief accompanying his therapeutic process so the parallel is less immediately obvious than in the other stages.

However, there is some change in the emotional state which comes from dissolving a problem as worked on above. What becomes of someone who entertains philosophical questions of the kind just discussed but does not pursue philosophical therapy? In this case, one might become a solipsist, or one might dedicate many hours to discussing pain as a metaphysical object with fixed attributes. These results are the "bumps" that one gets by repeatedly running up against the limit of language. (PI, 119) Philosophy as therapy enables practitioners to rid themselves of the anxiety and painstaking work that results from stressful philosophical questions.

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[409] Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy.* (Oxford: OUP, 2008): 9.
[410] Hamilton defines this term in *Wittgenstein and On Certainty*.

When Wittgenstein says that the purpose of philosophy is "To shew the fly the way out of the fly-bottle." (PI, 309) what change happens to the metaphorical insect?

Figure 1: Fly bottles are designed such that the conical entrance is small and dark.[411]

Though perhaps unfamiliar outside of rural or waste management settings today, fly bottles are a pest extermination tool. (As pictured) they are traps consisting of transparent containers with a conical entrance. A sweet substance is used to attract the flies and vinegar, water or beer is added to the bottom of the bottle. Due to phototaxis behaviour, captive flies are not drawn towards the dark hole from which they entered and will instead repeatedly collide with the glass until eventually drowning in the liquid. The metaphor is powerful because it shows that an escape is possible, if only the fly could consider how they have gotten themselves trapped, but their natural impulse is to fly against the clear glass. This evokes a similar feeling to the closing lines of *Lecture on Ethics*, where Wittgenstein writes, "This running against the walls of our cage is perfectly, absolutely hopeless... But it is a document of a tendency in the human mind which I personally cannot help respecting deeply and I would not for my life ridicule it."[412] There is sympathy for the trapped subject in both cases, and, in the case of *Investigations,* there is hope in the form of philosophy as therapy.

The fly bottle is representative of all the insoluble problems of philosophy to which great effort and stress are tied. It is, put simply, the importance and power placed on problems that under

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[411] Illustration my own, 2020.
[412] Wittgenstein, *Lecture on Ethics*, 51.

careful consideration have no foundation. They are nonsense questions and what results are nonsense answers, even though the motivations for asking them are rarely stupid. The *Investigations* offers more hope than the *Lecture* because it offers a solution to speaking nonsense, allowing the previously doomed fly to escape from the cruel bottle.

Philosophical therapy allows the patient to realise their problem is something which is occurring as an issue in how language is being used. An example external to Wittgenstein which demonstrates how a linguistic approach can solve conflict is Carnap's notion of the pseudo-problem. Looking at one of his examples, Carnap writes that two people who propose the two following expressions may be inclined to disagree with and debate one another.

      1a) The expression 'C' and '3+2' mean the same number.

      2a) '5' and '3+2' do not mean the same number but two equal numbers.[413]

Carnap's diagnosis is that if we shift from speaking in a connotative fashion into a formal one, both of these proposals would agree with the alternative.: 1b, 2b) The expressions '5' and '3+2' are synonymous in the arithmetical language (i.e. always interchangeable with one another)[414]

In Carnap, connotative questions concern the meanings of expressions, the features, and placements of concepts, contingency, and the relationships between different propositions.[415] A connotative expression is one that readily invites these questions, and a formal one seeks to only consider the logical syntax of propositions.

Wittgenstein says that a problem of substitution like this is something worth a "philosophical treatment" (PI, 254). To address it in a more Wittgensteinian fashion we can instead say that the word "same" can be used in a multitude of language games. In some instances, it is used to show identity – "That's the same dog I saw yesterday." In others it might be to show equality "the same quantity of flour as sugar" and in others, it means profound similarity "You and your brother are just the same". The users of "same" in both 1a) and 1b) are neither wrong nor inaccurate, they simply use it differently. If they were to discuss what they were doing with language together, they might very well agree that they both have the understanding otherwise expressed in Carnaps' alternative expression. When the two users finally agree with one another they are by extension agreeing that they never had a problem at all. When I, the fly, am free of my bottle I am free of the stresses and work involved in arguing with someone who is 'talking

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[413] R. Carnap, "On the Caracter of Philosophic Problems," *Philosophy of Science* 1. No. 1 (1934): 13. Numbering my own.
[414] Ibid.
[415] Ibid. , 8 – 9.

past me' due to differences in how we use language. The argument might end therefore in us agreeing to use a different expression like Carnap's or to just be aware of language nuances in our future discussions.

Even Hacker who is critical of using psychoanalysis as a key for understanding Wittgenstein admits, "Like the psychoanalyst, the philosopher aims to give the afflicted insight into their own understanding and misunderstanding."[416] In the psychoanalytic method outlined above the patient becomes aware of repressed memories and therefore comes to understand a reason for her behaviour or feelings. In the philosophical case, the patient becomes aware that they have been speaking nonsensically and not engaging with language in the context of their forms of life. Pseudoproblems, because their terms lack meaning, are not philosophical problems. As Eugen Fischer writes, "When such a pseudoproblem worries us, the only problem we actually face is the emotional problem that consists in the unwarranted feelings of disquiet, which our misunderstandings or mistakes cause us."[417]

There are few issues for my one-to-one comparison which are pressing. Perhaps the biggest concern is this: Who is the patient? Where is their concern located? Psychoanalytic treatment is, as Freud lays out, entirely concerned with the individual patient. Notably in his *Introductory Lectures,* there are limitations to teaching psychoanalysis because one cannot bring an observer into the practice.[418] [Insert quote] The psychological ailment can be conceived as residing within the mental life of the patient. Freud writes, "If a pathological idea of this sort can be traced back to the elements in the patient's mental life from which it originated, it simultaneously crumbles away and the patient is freed from it."[419] In the analysis conducted by Freud or those who followed the emphasis is upon "the patient" a single person. Can philosophy be this radically individualized when it has traditionally been concerned with metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical truths – that is, problems that afflict whole communities, or even the whole of humanity and not particular individuals? If we continue to conceive of philosophy as offering metaphysical, epistemological or ethical truths, as directly answering questions in these domains, rather than treating them as material for philosophical treatment, then the comparison is significantly weaker.

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[416] Hacker, *Wittgenstein: Connections and Controversies,* 32.
[417] E. Fischer, "How to Practice Philosophy as Therapy and Therapeutic Philosophy," *Metaphilosophy* 42 no. 1 – 2 (2011): 58.
[418] Freud, *Introductory Lectures,* 4 – 5.
[419] Freud, "The Method of Interpreting Dreams." in *Complete Works,* 100.

On my view, philosophical therapy is as individualized as it needs to be. An individual might be able to follow the Wittgensteinian procedure for their own philosophical confusions, and satisfactorily understand where the confusions have originated through an evaluation of their linguistic and philosophical training. Though I have discussed the primary psychoanalytic situation, Freud writes extensively about his self-analysis.

In the example I have discussed involving doubting another is in pain, I have reflected that the reasons Wittgenstein suggests for the confusion might not be the only reasons. I suggested that the influence of dualism in the background of philosophical approaches might account for some of the confusion. Nevertheless, the reasons explored will work to dissolve the problem for some people. We can envision the same story or picture presented about why a certain mode of thinking has come about as working for students from the same linguistic community. Some philosophical confusion could be relieved in the classroom. Otherwise, therapy could occur between two people in a similar fashion to the dialogues between Wittgenstein's interlocutor and narrative voice in the *Investigations*.

5.5. Wittgenstein's Critiques of Freud

Wittgenstein was not an uncritical disciple. Though he apparently declared himself a follower, Rhees writes that, "he thought the enormous influence of psychoanalysis in Europe and America was harmful..." So, at once, readers like me would like to use psychoanalysis as a key for understanding Wittgenstein's method and also contend with a series of critical remarks about Freud's work. I hold that the conflict is solved, if we can separate the psychoanalytic method as described, and Freud's psychoanalytic theory.

Rhees writes regarding their conversations with Wittgenstein about Freud, that he, "was trying to separate what is valuable in Freud from that 'way of thinking' which he wanted to combat."[420] To go some way to identify what 'way of thinking' Wittgenstein was thinking here, consider his comment in 1942:

> When we are studying psychology we may feel there is something unsatisfactory, some difficulty about the whole subject or study-because we are taking physics as our ideal science. We think of formulating laws as in physics. And then we find we cannot use the same sort of 'metric', the same ideas of measurement as in physics.[421]

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[420] Wittgenstein, *Lectures and Conversations*. 41.
[421] Ibid., 42.

This, I think, is Wittgenstein's core critique of Freud. He wanted to present a theory of psychology which was as measurable and predictable as the hard sciences. Despite this ambition, Freud was severely limited in his scientific credibility, "Freud is constantly claiming to be scientific. But what he gives is speculation-something prior even to the formation of a hypothesis."[422] As an example, Wittgenstein discussed Freud's view of anxiety:

> Take Freud's view that anxiety is always a repetition in some way of the anxiety we felt at birth. He does not establish this by reference to evidence-for he could not do so. But it is an idea which has a marked attraction. It has the attraction which mythological explanations have, explanations which say that this is all a repetition of something that has happened before.[423]

Wittgenstein identifies in Freud's work the same appeal that appears in metaphysical explanations. It is the same appeal that Hume described in ancient philosophy – safety, comfort, and ease. Bouveresse writes of Freud, "[he] is convinced that through rigorous scientific procedures, he has managed to reveal a truth which, like most scientific truths, is not very agreeable and may even be unacceptable to most people..." however, Wittgenstein thinks that Freud's "scientific truths", "have nothing in their favour except the fact that that they correspond to a way of thinking which, when proposed to us, seems extremely natural an easily accepted."[424] What is captured in Wittgenstein's critique is that though, provocative and even shocking, Freud's explanations could build a palatable mythology, and his claims that he was engaging in science was part of this mythology.

Some of Wittgenstein's most scathing comments regarded *The Interpretation of Dreams.* His issue with Freud's dream analysis was his generalising principle. In 1943 he said to Rhees, "And some dreams obviously are wish fulfilments, such as the sexual dreams of adults, for instance. But it seems muddled to say that all dreams are hallucinated wish fulfilments."[425] The sentiment here is as Bouveresse writes, "Freud simply does not manage to take seriously the possibility that he might have found a satisfying explanation for a certain kind of dream, but not for all dreams."[426]

Freud's insistence that his theory was derived from the scientific method, and his insistence that his observations were largely generalisable are both elements of scientism. Perhaps the

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[422] Ibid.
[423] Ibid., 43.
[424] Bouveresse, *Wittgenstein Reads Freud*, 45 – 46.
[425] Wittgenstein, *Lectures and Conversations*, 7.
[426] Bouveresse, 45.

simplest definition of scientism which is at play is given by Tom Sorrell in his introduction to his book on the subject, "Scientism is the belief that science, especially natural science, is much the most valuable part of human learning— much the most valuable part because it is much the most authoritative, or serious, or beneficial."[427] The later Wittgenstein clearly has reverence for science. Science adds to human knowledge. He thinks that there are benefits to activities which do not add to our collective knowledge. As Hacker writes, "To succumb to the scientific method in philosophy is one of the sources of philosophical confusion."[428]

Wittgenstein writes at PI 109, "It was true to say that our considerations could not be scientific ones. It was not of any possible interest to us to find out empirically 'that, contrary to our preconceived ideas, it is possible to think such-and-such'—whatever that may mean." And continues, "The problems are solved, not by giving new information, but by arranging what we have always known. Philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language." Freud's mistake is to be so bewitched by the success of his therapeutic method that he has extrapolated an elaborate theory about all cases. As Phil Hutchison writes, Freud is, for Wittgenstein, "emblematic of the "darkness of the times" (PI, Preface) owing to his propensity to wrap up the therapeutic method with a metaphysics of mind for which he then claims scientific credentials."[429] Thus, Freud succumbs, in the same way that many philosophers do, to scientism. Jacques Bouveresse writes, voicing a Wittgensteinian critique of Freud, that "The therapy of philosophical maladies must therefore renounce once again the consolation of leaning on any scientific foundation."[430]

The rejection of Freud's metaphysics of mind, of his ideas that he found truths about the entire human condition, is revelatory of Wittgenstein's aims for philosophical therapy. Indeed, his critiques of Freud are themselves emblematic of the middle stages of the therapeutic technique laid out. It should be noted that Wittgenstein's renouncement of psychoanalytic theory also includes a rejection of Freud's conception of the conscious and the unconscious. Though he uses these words in one of his comparative remarks between he and Freud's theory, this should not be interpreted as an endorsement of Freud's distinction. For example, in a May 1933 lecture at Cambridge, Wittgenstein stated "...what Freud says sounds as if it were science, but is in fact a wonderful representation."[431] Freud thought he had discovered something rather concrete in

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[427] Tom Sorell. *Scientism: Philosophy and the Infatuation with Science*, Taylor & Francis Group, 1994.
[428] Hacker, *Insight and Illusion,* 173
[429] Hutchison, "What's the Point of Elucidation?" 696.
[430] Bouveresse, *Wittgenstein Reads Freud* 19.
[431] L. Wittgenstein, *Cambridge Lectures: 1930 – 1933,* es. D. Stern, B. Rogers, G. Citron. (Cambridge: Cup, 2016) 365

the subconscious or unconscious.[433] He is not merely referring to knowledge or emotions which are temporarily out of mind, despite being the cause of a behaviour, but as, are permanently out of mind prior to psychoanalytic therapy because they are repressed.[434] When Wittgenstein is using the language of the unconscious he is not in agreement with Freud that there is an unearthed realm of the mind where truths about a person lie, waiting to be uncovered. Wittgenstein's project is less about the individual's mind, than about their relationship to language. As Leon Botstein puts it, "Wittgenstein's fundamental difference from Freud was his notion that only what people actually say and what can be understood counts. Meaning and intention reside in language. Truth emerges from understanding the rules with which we agree..."[435] When Wittgenstein writes that "assembling reminders" is the work of the philosopher, he means that the tools for dissolving philosophical problems are there in the language as it is used in the linguistic community of agreement, we just require nudges to be made aware of them. To see them, we might have to untangle ourselves from metaphysical assumptions that are removed from the ordinary use of language.

5.6. Argument and Elucidation: The Achievements of Therapy

Through my comparative analysis of the stages of psychoanalytic treatment and Wittgenstein's philosophical therapy, I have established a plausible four-stage process with which to understand Wittgensteinian therapy. In examining Wittgenstein's critiques of Freudianism, I have established that Wittgenstein rejected psychoanalytic theory, including the Freudian unconscious because it represents the same kind of philosophical mistake characteristic of all philosophical nonsense. There is debate in the literature about what philosophical therapy, when practised correctly, is supposed to achieve. As discussed earlier, there is the question, "Who is the therapy for?" Possible answers range from the individual to a small group, to all those who use the same language, to all of humanity. The other questions of interest for my investigations regards whether philosophical therapy can be described as philosophical argument, and if so, what kinds of conclusions can its arguments draw. It is my view that philosophical therapy does engage in argument, though I do not think the conclusions it draws are ever beyond "what everyone admits".

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[433] His early writings use the subconscious (*Unterbewusste*) and unconscious (*Unbewusste*) interchangeably before settling on unconscious, we can assume Wittgenstein is also using these interchangeably.

[434] See Bouveresse, *Wittgenstein Reads Freud,* 23 – 24.

[435] Leon Botstein," Freud and Wittgenstein: Language and human nature," *Psychoanalytic Psychology* 24 (2009): 617.

5.6.1. Therapy for who?

In terms of the target for philosophical therapy, I firmly hold that "it depends" is both the correct answer, and the one that Wittgenstein would hold. Perhaps the best evidence for this is that he demonstrated philosophical therapy in his lectures for a room of students, in the works he intended to publish for a wide audience, and in personal letters and notes. However, I do not think that Wittgenstein would accept that there is a therapy which would solve a single philosophical puzzle for all speakers of a language or all of humanity, nor do I think such an ambition for philosophical therapy is plausible. Furthermore, Wittgenstein seems to endorse self-therapy in the vein of Freud's investigations, and one can as he does use an imagined interlocutor as a conversation partner in this practice. The phrase "ask yourself..." appears throughout *Philosophical Investigations* as an invitation to engage in the work of philosophical therapy. (PI, 77, 137, 154, 687 etc) Nevertheless, Wittgenstein is firm throughout his later writings that language cannot be a radically private affair. His private language argument shows that there can be no standard of correctness without the possibility of the language being shared. For this chapter, I will not take a stance on communitarian views of Wittgenstein such as those of Saul Kripke or Normal Malcolm, but I will share the insight given in Backhurst's assessment of these views, that virtually all of the necessary context for language as it is used is social context. Backhurst writes, "...the point of Wittgenstein's philosophy is to direct attention away from philosophical abstractions to the actual character of our lives."[436] We can see an echo of Hume's philosophical therapy in Backhurst's phrasing, whereby attention, directed to ordinary activities diminishes the power of the grand philosophical question, but Wittgenstein's aims are different. It is not so much that directing attention is fleeing the question, as in Hume, but in turning to the ordinary uses of language (which in all ordinary activities are uses agreed upon in linguistic communities) reveals that the question asked was nonsensical.

5.6.2 Ordinary Uses and Where to Find Them

The term "ordinary uses" deserves some clarification. In the third stage of philosophical therapy, I have detailed that the "patient" assesses the necessary foundations required for them to formulate a philosophical question and finds that at least one assumption is divorced from the ordinary use of language. What one is referring to as ordinary use is not settled. One interpretation is outlined by Hacker. He writes that there are two correct roles for philosophy outlined in the *Investigations.* One is characterised as a quest for a surveyable representation of

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[436] David Backhurst, "Wittgenstein and Social Being," in *The Social Self,* eds D. Backhurst, C. Sypnowich, (London: Sage, 1995) 44.

grammar of a given problematic domain," and the other is "characterised as a cure for diseases of the understanding."[437] The surveyable area is an area of ordinary language.[438] For example, in *Insight and Illusion* Hacker discusses the impulse of a metaphysician to consider colour as an impression in the mind. Such a metaphysician might arrive at working definition like "red is what looks red to the individual" or "red is a particular experience". Hacker rejects this conception of colour writing, "But the use of 'red' in the phrase 'appears red' or 'looks red' is parasitic upon (internally related to) the ordinary use and meaning of colour words."[439] Thus for Hacker, the therapeutic process would compare the metaphysical use of a term, to the ordinary use, and show that the metaphysician is using language in a way on which no one agrees. Hacker also addresses the Wittgenstein treatment of the "doubting another's pain" example as a problem arising from superficial similarities across very different uses of ordinary language:

> ...we may concede that the surface forms of grammar are altogether deceptive (e.g. the surface forms of concepts such as *pain* deceptively resemble the forms of concepts of objects: the grammatical appearance of concepts such as fact is misleadingly akin to that of event or process). The antidote to this is not to pursue what is submerged, but painstakingly to examine the diverse uses of these similar forms, (e.g., events and processes occur or go on somewhere, somewhen, but facts have no spatio-temporal location).[440]

Hacker's observation here, like that of Kenny's mentioned earlier that some confusion about pain might be that it appears in sentences reminiscent of simple descriptive clauses like "the curtains are blue." There is a sense that the ordinary use is stable and that the confusions lack such stability. If one can survey the ordinary uses the lack of sense expressed by a non-ordinary one becomes clearer.

A criticism of such a view of ordinary language and an opposing interpretation of Wittgenstein's meaning is Phil Hutchison's. He writes, "There is no such thing as a word outside of some particular use: but that is a claim which is different from Hacker and Baker's clam that words belong to a type of use. For a word to be is for a word to be used. Language does not exist external to its use in the world."[441] The worry is that Hacker (and the early Baker) set up Wittgenstein's philosophical aims such that there is a consistent set of ordinary uses with which

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[437] P. M. S, Hacker, *Wittgenstein's Place in Twentieth Century Analytic Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996) 111.
[438] And Baker while they were writing together.
[439] Hacker, *Insight and Illusion*, 203.
[440] Hacker, *Insight and Illusion*, 205.
[441] Hutchinson, "What's the point of Elucidation?" 706.

to compare the metaphysical uses. Hutchison's main concern is that the goal for philosophy in Hacker's reading relies on there being a rather concrete ordinary language. He writes, "for if clarification per se is the goal then it presupposes a particular view of how language must be."[442] In other words, he suggests these views, despite their efforts to be practice and therapy-based, attribute to Wittgenstein's view of a language a "scientific foundation". Hutchison's worry is one which I share, particularly because Hacker does not readily caveat what the particular domains of language are, or who speaks within these domains, or what the criteria for the ordinary might be. He argues that such a view fails to capture the inherent changeability and flexibility of languages, and, as it attributes to language an existence outside of its uses, it is not in line with Wittgenstein's metaphilosophical motivations.

In simple terms, I agree with Hutchison's remark that "language is its use." Hutchison is right in two main regards: it is important to point out that elucidation is a piecemeal thing to use when the need for therapy arises and important to remind us that our therapy should be contextual to the use in question. Wittgenstein writes "There is not a single philosophical method, though there are indeed methods, different therapies as it were." (PI, 133) Where we diverge, and where I think he is led to such harsh criticisms of the readings he calls elucidatory in what it means "to use" a word. The idea that this is determined only in individual instances of use gives power to the speaker (or writer) in that instance. I and I believe the later Wittgenstein would agree with me, would argue that the power is to be found throughout a speaker's linguistic community. Wittgenstein writes, "What is true or false is what humans *say*: and it is in their language that human beings agree. This is agreement not in opinions but in form of life." (PI, 241). What the elucidation part of therapy does is remind us of how language serves our linguistic community, and reminds us that it is a form of life interlinked with the others we practice. Unlike Hacker, I do not think that this constitutes a dual goal for philosophical therapy. Rather, the act of finding out which of one's assumptions have no foundation in a shared language is itself therapeutic. It is a stage of the therapeutic process, not a separate aim. The dissolution of philosophical problems arises from enquiries into the way language is used and agreed upon between its users.

Elucidation serves as therapy because, as outlined in the problem of others' pain, it quells the philosophical problems that cause confusion and distress. That language is determined by the forms of life for a community does not mean that it exists external to its use, merely that to use it, is to engage with these things. It also does not mean that language is fixed or eternal in any

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[442] Ibid., 700.

way. Whom we refer to as "our linguistic" community need only be the people we share a particular language and therefore form of life with. [I have been writing on "our" – will send you a paragraph] The functions of secret codes used by a children's gang need not be affirmed by the adults in the wider community they belong to. The same is also true for the esoteric language of academics. The only thing needed for their secret language to be a language is that it will serve a function for their group. Wittgenstein affirms this kind of description of language when he writes, "orders are sometimes not obeyed. But what would it be like if no orders were ever obeyed? The concept of an order would have lost its purpose."

Though I disagree with Hacker's de-emphasis of psychoanalysis in his interpretation of the later Wittgenstein, it is a misreading to attribute to him a reading which genuinely has a metaphysical conception of language. To be unable to refer to similar uses, or types of uses leaves philosophical therapy at a stalemate. One must refer, within a context to the language as it is otherwise used. Hacker even emphasises that, "[philosophy] leads one to abandon certain combinations of words as senseless, and that involves a kind of resignation not of intellect but of feeling."[443] There is rightly an acknowledgement that philosophical problems are not problems at all, because the language which constructs them falls away as nonsense.

5.6.3. Philosophical Therapy: A Kind of Argument

The final puzzle that the psychoanalytic interpretation creates regards whether an instance of philosophical therapy involves an argument. Several prominent readings of the later Wittgenstein which take seriously that psychoanalysis was a model for Wittgenstein's philosophical therapy, also reject the idea that philosophical therapy involves arguments. Such *argument-les*s interpretations include those by Kenny, Harre, Bouwsma and Jacquette.[444] For an example, Kenny writes,

> First, there is the negative, therapeutic task of philosophy: the resolution of philosophical problems by the dissolution of philosophical illusion. Second, there is the more positive task of giving us an overview of the actual working of our language... In neither activity is there any room for deduction, for the drawing of conclusions from premises in accordance with logical rules. (Kenny, 2004: 175)

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[443] Hacker, *Wittgenstein's Plac*e, 112.
[444] "*argument-less"* is the term that Andy Hamilton and I use in our paper in preparation, "Wittgenstein as Freudian: The Role of Argument in his Therapeutic Philosophy."

Here Kenny is commenting on Wittgenstein's remark in the *Investigations,* "In philosophy we do not draw conclusions. 'But it must be like this!' is not a philosophical proposition. Philosophy only states what everyone admits." (PI 599) Other remarks which also seem to reject the core features of philosophical argument include: "Philosophy simply puts everything before us, and neither explains nor deduces anything." (PI, 126) and "If one tried to advance theses in philosophy, it would never be possible to debate them, because everyone would agree to them." (PI, 128).

The examples of philosophical therapy that Wittgenstein gives can acceptably be considered arguments in the sense proposed by informal logicians. The essential features of an argument in informal logic require only that, as Fogelin puts, "some statement must be marked out as a conclusion and other statements must be marked out as reasons or premises."[445] This pairing of premises with a conclusion is ""all that there is to an argument."[446] Therefore, if we take the pain example. The earlier explanation given for the confusion around other's pain, largely taken from Kenny's exegesis of Wittgenstein looks like this:

> Premise 1: Descriptive sentences like "the curtains are blue" pair a subject with a predicate adjective.
>
> Premise 2: "I am in pain" looks like a descriptive sentence.
>
> Conclusion: Therefore, we treat sentences about pain like descriptive sentences and therefore treat pain like a predicate adjective.

This is of course not the whole of the therapeutic process described, as Wittgenstein also demonstrates how pain sentences are extensions of natural pain behaviour. (PI, 244) However, it is clear that something consisting of both premises and conclusions can be used in the therapeutic process. Informal logicians also give further tools for identifying argument structures where it is not immediately evident. Hedged claims can be part of an argument in both premises and conclusion. Hedged claims include phrasing like "perhaps," "possibly," and "probably. They allow the arguer to make suggestions without committing to a more definite position as they settle the argument. [447] The therapeutic process does not have to commit to one view of how language must be to suggest possible origins for confusion. Even more

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[445] R. Fogelin, *Understanding Arguments: An Introduction to Informal Logic.*
(New York: Harcourt, 1978), 40.
[446] W. Sinnott-Armstrong, "Begging the Question," *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 77 no. 2 (1999): 174.
[447] Fogelin, *Understanding Arguments,* 46 – 47.

fundamentally, language use will always include a great deal of context and the marking of the premises and conclusion might be hidden by what Fogelin calls *conversational implications.*[448]

I suggest that when Wittgenstein's remarks that the correct method in philosophy does not draw conclusions, it is not the case that an insight about language use can never be reached by the recipient of philosophical therapy. Rather, no conclusion will be of the kind which occurs in philosophy traditionally conceived can enter the picture. No new metaphysical truths will be uncovered in the process.

5.7. A Philosophy Without an End

Psychoanalysis is famously a slow process, and Wittgenstein emphasises that "slow cure is all important." However, there is a sense that philosophical therapy is not only slow, but a task without end. This is, as I argued the reason Wittgenstein writes, "In philosophy we do not draw conclusions." It is not that there is no argument structure in philosophical therapy, but rather that the conclusions cannot be of the definitive metaphysical kind. They can only be contextual working conclusions which quell a philosophical worry for an individual or small group. However, this use of philosophy appears to create an understanding that philosophy cannot progress, and that it is never possible to resolve a dispute forever. I argue that this is the feature of Wittgenstein's method which honours how philosophical confusion happens and sets him apart from others in the "critical tradition" I discussed earlier in the thesis. Furthermore, there is a benefit to having dealt with philosophical confusion and practised philosophical therapy.

For comparison, let us compare Wittgensteinian therapy, to remarks about philosophical problems made by Gilbert Ryle. For Wittgenstein, bad philosophy arises from speculation based on misunderstandings of language; the dissolution of such speculative claims is good philosophy**.** If this is all that good philosophy involves, if good philosophy is only the dissolution of bad philosophy, then it seems to follow that we should seek to stop doing philosophy altogether. Especially, as has been remarked on there is genuine distress and frustration solved by unquelled philosophical questioning. Would it be better never to have fallen into the confusion of bad philosophy? Would the fly have been better off had it never entered the fly bottle?

This is a view expressed by Ryle in some passages of his *On the Concept of Mind.* He seems to suggest that certain types of philosophical thinking can put an end to confusion

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[448] Ibid., 29.

provided future thinkers avoid previously confused ways of thinking. For example, Ryle describes the pervasive Cartesian myth of dualism, the assumption that "every human being has both a body and a mind", as a *category mistake[449]*. Expanding, he writes:

> It represents the facts of mental life as if they belonged to one logical type or category (or range of types or categories), when they actually belong to another. The dogma is therefore a philosopher's myth.[450]

This description of the formation of a philosophical myth also appears, for Ryle, to be generalisable. He is using "myth" in a rather idiosyncratic sense here: "A myth is, of course, not a fairy story. It is the presentation of facts belonging to one category in the idioms appropriate to another."[451] For Ryle, like Wittgenstein, the problems of philosophy arise from a misapplication of language – from failing to understand the rules of language games. However, there is a sense that category mistakes are, despite their persistence, *mere* mistakes.

On my therapeutic interpretation, Wittgenstein disagrees. Though philosophical therapy does not treat philosophical problems like scientific ones – that is, as the result of genuine ignorance – it does result in genuine insight. Ryle does not recognise the fundamentally personal nature of this insight. The Wittgensteinian method aims at personal relief and well-being through insight. Thus, there is an important distinction between Ryle's and Wittgenstein's conceptions of philosophy. Both believe that it often produces misguided ideas. But for Wittgenstein – though not for Ryle – the fly is better for entering the bottle, and then escaping. Whilst Ryle does express some theoretical benefits of the dualist picture over earlier views of mind, in his view it is a historical error that will, with a better approach, fade away.[452] Those who begin their philosophical thinking after the correction will be better for it, having never been caught in error.

The distinction between Wittgenstein's and Ryle's view of the correct method in philosophy might be compared to the distinction between mere *intellectual self-knowledge* and *self-insight through* psychoanalysis discussed earlier. The distinction explains how intellectually understanding the cause of psychiatric symptoms does little to alleviate them. Thus, one can know intellectually that spiders are harmless, and that one

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[449] Gilbert Ryle, *On the Concept of Mind* (New York: Hutchinson and Co.: 1949) 1.
[450] Ibid., 6.
[451] Ibid., ix.
[452] Ibid., 12 – 13.

is afraid only through childhood trauma – but still have an aversion strong enough for a diagnosis of arachnophobia. Correction of a category mistake, even one that has become a cultural myth in Ryle's sense, lacks this dimension of personal insight. Treatment of what Wittgenstein calls "diseases of thought" takes time and investment; they cannot be treated the way a mathematician treats an error.

One cannot stop doing philosophy, firstly because there are always language games that confuse – bad philosophy persists. There will always be uses of language which have superficial resemblances to other uses with different conventions. Secondly, investigating a philosophical problem as a piece of nonsense reveals something about the language, and thus about the forms of life which are misunderstood in their specificity. One of Freud's great contributions to the practice of psychology was his insistence that mental maladies were not rare diseases that only occurred in those deemed ill enough for asylum care. He held it was possible neurosis and dysfunction lurked in everyone, and most could benefit from therapy. When we consider the influence of Freud upon Wittgenstein, this radical reframing of disorder as something altogether quite ordinary should not be forgotten.

Wittgenstein does not flee from philosophical problems into the comfort of the everyday as Hume's early therapy suggests, nor does he subscribe to a transcendental idealism enabling the end to confusion as in Kant. Philosophical problems arise frequently, and in practising philosophical therapy on ourselves, or in our communities, we are both engaging with an ordinary impulse which can cause distress, but also gaining relief by turning our attention towards our language, and therefore to our forms of life.

Psychoanalysis has been largely overtaken by other psychological therapies in both popularity and professional recommendation. Nevertheless, Freud's talking therapy was a major departure from previous paradigms for treating mental illness and has had an enduring influence in popular culture, literature, and philosophy. Wittgenstein, as I have argued was influenced by Freud, and there is both biographical and textual evidence to support such an assertion. Though he rejected totalising interpretations of his work, is it evident that Wittgenstein was earnestly a "follower of Freud."

In this chapter, I have suggested that when abstracted from most of Freud's theoretical baggage (save a commitment to his theory of the unconscious) that there is a four stage therapeutic process. This process, I argued can be mapped onto what Wittgenstein believes to be the correct

method in philosophy. Therapeutic philosophy involves the expression of a philosophical problem, an investigation of the necessary assumptions and context for such an expression to arise and testing these necessary assumptions in other language games. When the subject of the therapy realises that they are using language in a way which is not precedented by ordinary use, the problem falls away and they are relieved. Philosophical therapy as Wittgenstein writes, "to pass from a piece of disguised nonsense to something that is patent nonsense." (PI, 46) The realisation that the philosophical problem is meaningless frees the subject from it.

The parallels with Freud's theory are strictly parallels to his therapeutic method and not to psychoanalysis as a set of metaphysical beliefs about the human condition. Wittgenstein rejects Freud's scientism. Indeed, scientism can be an underlying cause of some philosophical nonsense. Comparisons to psychoanalysis also offer answers to puzzles regarding the practice of philosophical therapy. They show that the "subject" can be an individual practicing on themselves, an individual in a dialogue with another, or a small group in a situation like a classroom. Furthermore, philosophical therapy, like its inspiration is individualised, and therefore does not presuppose a view of how language must be. This said, in order to make suggestions and progress through the therapeutic process it is necessary to refer to other uses of language, to similar expressions in other language games to track a history of the confusion. Language is only meaningful is there is agreement about its use and therefore it is possible to refer to uses within the bounds of the linguistic community. Despite there being no "once and for all" metaphysical claims resulting from Wittgenstein's method, I contest that it is still a kind of argument. There is a process of suggestions being made, and these being accepted or rejected by the subject. It is simply not of the same kind of argument as that as a metaphysical claim. Finally, philosophy on Wittgenstein's view never definitively solves any one problem. Similar problems will emerge from similar confusions about language within and between linguistic communities. Nevertheless, being tempted to say philosophical nonsense is an opportunity for philosophical therapy which not only dissolves philosophical nonsense but directs the attention to forms of life around the confusion. Philosophical therapy never provides a whole map, but it can offer an individual insight into how they use language and how doing so is bound up with their life.

Conclusion

Beyond Hume, Kant, and Wittgenstein

The main aim of this project was to show that investigating nonsense is a productive, valuable lens for critical analysis and comparison. The way a philosopher conceives of and uses a notion of nonsense is an important aspect of their work. Whether a philosopher thinks that a philosophical position is wrong or that the questions underpinning these questions themselves are nonsensical is a pressing distinction. The ways in which different thinkers have applied the label of nonsense, and what we are supposed to do with something when its foundations are dissolved are of historical and practical importance. Assessing how these figures identified and managed nonsense can provide working methods for addressing philosophical questions as they occur both inside the discipline of philosophy and in philosophical questions which emerge in all disciplines.

Hume's approach to philosophical nonsense was to sympathetically, but sharply, show where different philosophical traditions have failed to put an end to questions. Like myself, he used a historical approach to critique other philosophical impulses. His characterisation of the fictions of the "Ancient philosophies" straddles the line between nonsensical and obviously wrong. As he moved into critiquing the "modern philosophy" he established that there are modes of doing philosophy which are always self-undermining. Hume advocates a balance of the reflective and the vulgar to keep such philosophising at bay. Further, his characterisation of sceptical questions as "spectres in the dark" reveals them to be monsters in the night that have no power when one is occupied in the day. Hume's final method of philosophical therapy certainly does not offer the full dissolution that Kant and Wittgenstein strive for, but it is simple, practical advice that many philosophical traditions have latched onto. For example, there is an approach to global scepticism wherein one challenges the assumption that there is only one standard for knowledge, and the standard for knowledge in the philosophy classroom about everything should be held higher than the standard of knowledge for knowing where to find the Backgammon table. This is Hume's "step away" approach in action.

I argued that Kant's conception of nonsense in his third critique and the absurd in his first critique are structurally the same. I also argued that the transcendental illusion is a force for producing nonsense: for creating philosophical understandings that have no foundation. The illusion is at the heart of Kant's theory of error. Kant's characterisations of philosophical

nonsense as enduring, inevitable, and persistent maps neatly onto Wittgenstein's sentiments, but it is also a picture of how natural and often helpful ways of thinking can also be the cause of great confusion and stress. Kant naturalises philosophical confusion, and in diagnosing its cause as the transcendental illusion is able to provide an escape. I locate Kant's therapy generally in his Critical method, but more specifically in his notions of *discipline* and *recognition* – the activities which put a limit to the faculty of reason. Kant, like Hume, thinks that certain faculties should be limited, and restrictions respected to deal with philosophical nonsense.

Through this study of Hume and Kant, I hope to have shown the potential of this lens for comparative philosophy. Parallels between their work and Wittgenstein's were drawn out by asking how these philosophers understood nonsense. This lens could be used to critically assess any philosophy with largely critical aims. For example, one could assess the approach of American pragmatists as an approach which in valuing usefulness, finds philosophy without success or practical benefits to fail to produce meaning. One could then evaluate the therapy offered by the pragmatist approach. This approach is not limited to assessing large bodies of work and could be a valuable way to approach single arguments. The following questions can provide valuable insights into how a philosopher's approach works.

> Does this philosopher consider the terms of the debate nonsensical?
>
> What conception of nonsense do they have?
>
> Do they offer an approach to prevent the philosophical questions from emerging, causing distress, or persisting?

Wittgenstein's conception of nonsense is informed by his context as a student of Russell and Frege. Russell's forays into language-adjacent philosophy form central ideas that Wittgenstein rejects and develops upon. Problems with Russell's multiple relations theory pushed the early Wittgenstein to think more extensively about logical form, and about the pictorial relationship between language and world. It is also no coincidence that Wittgenstein takes Russell's notion that philosophy is "critique of language" further. He inherits from Russell's "On Denoting" an analytical approach that dissolves a question rather than answering it. There are echoes of Frege's theory of sense in Wittgenstein and much bolder traces of his *Grundlagen* principles. I argued that Frege's theory properly understood only attributes sense to words in the context of a proposition with a reference (truth-value) and so the context principle also applies to sense. The early Wittgenstein took this principle and states that the sense of a proposition is its capacity to

have a truth value. Nonsense is therefore when a proposition (properly, a pseudo-proposition) does not have a sense.

I argued that Wittgenstein's commitment to the *Grundlagen* principles is evident in his later work, and he maintains a version of the logical-psychological distinction. Ethics are founded entirely on psychological associations in his *Lecture on Ethics;* hence it produces nothing but nonsense, and meaning is never derived from psychological intention for the later Wittgenstein. These are important principles for Wittgenstein's conception of nonsense, and what he thinks we can do with nonsense.

In Chapter Four, I addressed the variety of ways that "nonsense" has been understood in Wittgenstein's early work, focusing on the readings which have developed since Diamond and Conant's resolute reading. I argued that resolute readers are correct to take the meaning of nonsense, and Wittgenstein's call to understand his propositions as nonsense seriously but rejected their pre-emptive reading of the *Tractatus* as a therapeutic exercise. Further, though I think Wittgenstein was committed to an austere view of nonsense throughout his work, I do not think that he tried to use nonsense as a teaching tool in the *Tractatus,* indeed this is the most reasonable approach to his work – there was a tension between his commitment to this understanding of nonsense and his goals for the text. In this chapter, I also argued that though a resolute reading of the later Wittgenstein is founded on reasonable interpretative principles, I argue Wittgenstein does make reference to grammatical rules, and at a community scale these rules can be understood. I reject the conclusions of the Pyrrhonian reading of the later Wittgenstein for a similar reason, but primarily because I think there is a positive role for Wittgenstein's philosophical method and even a benefit to falling into philosophical nonsense for a time.

Wittgenstein's conception of nonsense, and I will specify philosophical nonsense, is the most well-defined, and the most important for his philosophical project. He also has the most developed method for addressing philosophical nonsense when it emerges. Freud's innovations in psychotherapy were nothing short of revolutionary against a context of the asylum model and a competing medical model of psychopathology. Wittgenstein's later method I argued is best understood as directly inspired by Freud's method, and I mapped on the procedural steps of psychoanalysis onto philosophical therapy. Wittgenstein may have rejected Freud's scientistic psychoanalytic theory but the best way to interpret philosophical therapy is as a philosophical version of Freud's therapeutic method. I addressed a number of concerns which emerge in this interpretation, but most importantly argued that any case study of a

psychoanalytic session consists of a dialogue and an argument between patient and analyst. Philosophical therapy therefore also consists of arguments.

The four-stage therapeutic method that Wittgenstein employs has a host of potential applications. When working in philosophy, it is always worthwhile to ask whether the question one is asking itself makes sense and to ask where the question has come from. Furthermore, because there are benefits to spending time with a philosophical problem, even if it is nonsensical, the model removes the pressure to settle debates or to forever end them: it offers endless opportunities for reflection. Outside of academic philosophy – approaching other kinds of questions or beliefs with the same kind of curiosity that Freud did towards the accounts of his patients. For example, rather than merely considering conspiratorial thinking to be false, there may be benefits to considering it nonsensical and investigating it as such. A nonsensical belief might have more staying power than one which is simply false.

At the end of Chapter Five, I argued that Wittgenstein found value in the never-ending number of philosophical confusions which can arise. It is neither the goal, nor realistic for a method to put an end to philosophy. What Hume, Kant, and Wittgenstein all emphasise in their critical projects is that nonsense is an easy, even inevitable trap to fall into. It can never fully be put to rest, nor forever avoided.

Wittgenstein, like Hume identifies philosophical nonsense in a separation between ordinary life and the practice of philosophy. Nevertheless, like Kant he articulates that philosophical nonsense is largely unavoidable because of features of ordinary human life. So long as we engage in language games confusion about them will arise, and we will always seek answers to questions that lack meaning. Wittgenstein, in finally being able to find a productive role for philosophical nonsense, not as philosophical insight, but as the raw material for a kind of self-insight reflects and refines the understandings of nonsense given by Kant and Hume. Critical comparison shows that Wittgenstein has the strongest and most developed understanding of philosophical nonsense of the three, and in-turn the most pointed method of philosophical therapy. If as Freud believed, "[madness] lurked to some degree within all of us"[453] then we should consider philosophical nonsense too to be an incredibly ordinary human affliction.

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[453] Scull, *Desperate Remedies:* 66.

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Abbreviations: Works of David Hume

E: *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*

T: *A Treatise of Human Nature*

Abbreviations: Works of Ludwig Wittgenstein.

BEE: *Wittgenstein's Nachlass: The Bergen Electronic Edition*. Edited by the Wittgenstein
Archives at the University of Bergen. http://www.wittgensteinsource.org/

BB: *Preliminary Studies for the "Philosophical Investigations" Generally Known as the Blue and
Brown Books*

PI: *Philosophical Investigations*

TLP: *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*

Z: *Zettel*